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COPING WITH POST-SOVIET TRANSITION:
ACHIEVEMENT VS. SURVIVAL LIFE STRATEGIES OF
POST-INDEPENDENCE UKRAINIAN MIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIA
(1991 – 2013)

Olga Oleinikova
(B.A. Hons, M.A. Hons)

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Sociology and Social Policy
School of Social and Political Sciences
The University of Sydney
August 2015
DECLARATION

I declare that the present work is the product of my own research and all references to the work of other researchers have been acknowledged. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted for examination in any other course or accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution.

The research project received approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Sydney – Reference Number 2012/15095.

Signature of the Candidate: ………………………………………………………………………

Date: ……………………………………………………………………………………………
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PREFACE

This work was completed in the School of Social and Political Sciences, Department of Sociology and Social Policy of the University of Sydney during the period from March 2012 to August 2015. Part of this work has been published as peer reviewed articles in international journals, peer-reviewed conference proceedings papers and comments and interviews in the media:

Media comments/interviews


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Peer reviewed journal articles


Peer reviewed conference papers/ invited talks


ABSTRACT

This thesis discovers and explains post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia through the analysis of migrants’ life strategies, seen as the outcomes of personal characteristics and individual actions as well as of cultural frames, institutional and structural conditions (relating micro and macro levels of analysis within agency-structure perspective).

Relying on the 51 interviews with migrants in Australia, this study examines the survival and achievement life strategies of migrants across two spaces, the sending and receiving countries, in three ways. First, it examines how micro structuring life strategy components (values, aims, needs and sense of agency) are formed by life in Ukraine and by Australia migration policy (macro structuring factors of life strategy). Second, it examines how Ukrainians utilise the international migration and how they adopt it in order to get into Australia and change their temporary visa status into permanent. Third, the thesis explores how life strategies are recreated or changed after migration. In all three aspects of the thesis the central questions of inquiry are: how are survival and achievement life strategies formed and implemented in relation to migration and how has the migration experience impacted on the ways in which the participants’ life strategies were enacted in two different migration periods (1991–2003 and 2004–2013) and how they determine the success or failure of integration in the Australia society.

This study resulted in a collaborative research to the body of knowledge on the post-independence Ukrainian immigration to Australia with a potential for contribution to the development of social and migration policies of both countries. The originality of this research is in its approach that brings the concept of life strategy within migration methodology and deploys it in sociological context rather than its original psychological focus.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION, RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 INTRODUCTION: RESEARCH OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 RESEARCH CASE STUDY: WHY UKRAINIAN MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA?</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 THESIS STRUCTURE</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 PART ONE: TRANSITION RESEARCH: FROM WESTERN TO POST-SOVIET EAST EUROPEAN SCHOLARSHIP</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 AGENCY/STRUCTURE</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 PART TWO: CONCEPTUALISING LIFE STRATEGY</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 WESTERN PERSPECTIVES</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 EAST EUROPEAN POST-SOVIET SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 TYPOLOGIES OF LIFE STRATEGIES</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 PART THREE: LIFE STRATEGY RESEARCH FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 MIGRATION</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1.1 Brief history of Ukrainian migration to Australia</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 SOCIAL IDENTITIES: NATIONAL IDENTITY AND CLASS</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 EMOTIONS</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 CONCLUSION</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 TWO-FOLD METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 FIRST METHOD: SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 SECOND METHOD: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4.1 Interview Data Collection ................................................................. 64
3.4.2 Recruitment and Respondents’ Selection ........................................ 66
3.4.3 Interview Script .............................................................................. 68
3.5 Analytical Framework of the Interviews .............................................. 69
  3.5.1 Narratives within Context ............................................................. 70
  3.5.2 Thematic Analysis ......................................................................... 73
3.6 Conclusion .......................................................................................... 75

CHAPTER FOUR: CONTEXT: MACRO FACTORS SHAPING LIFE STRATEGIES OF MIGRANTS
4.1 Introduction .......................................................................................... 76
4.2 The Structural Context of Ukrainian Migrants’ Life Strategies from 1991–2013 ......................................................... 76
  4.2.1 Economic Situation ....................................................................... 76
  4.2.2 Political Situation ......................................................................... 81
  4.2.3 Demographic Situation ................................................................. 85
  4.2.4 Emigration Dynamics from Ukraine and Australia’s Migration Policy since the 1990s ....................................................... 88
4.3 Conclusion .......................................................................................... 96

1. Introduction .......................................................................................... 97
2. Respondents’ Profiles .......................................................................... 98

CHAPTER FIVE: BEFORE MIGRATION: LEAVING UKRAINE
5.1 Introduction .......................................................................................... 107
5.2 Micro Components of the Survival Life Strategy ............................... 107
  5.2.1 Aims ............................................................................................ 107
  5.2.2 Values ........................................................................................ 116
  5.2.3 Needs ........................................................................................ 123
  5.2.4 Sense of Agency ......................................................................... 127
5.3 Decision to Migrate .............................................................................. 133
5.4 Conclusion .......................................................................................... 138

CHAPTER SIX: SURVIVAL MIGRATION PATHWAYS: VISAS, STREAMS AND TACTICS
6.1 Introduction .......................................................................................... 140
6.2 Short-Term Visas ................................................................................ 141
6.2.1 GETTING A VISA: REGULAR/IRREGULAR MIGRANTS ........................................ 141
6.2.2 LIFE ON THE VISA: EXTENDING THE STAY ............................................ 147
6.2.3 PRECARIETY AND SOCIAL NETWORKS ..................................................... 154
6.3 FAMILY REUNION VISA ............................................................................. 160
6.3.1 GETTING A VISA .................................................................................. 161
6.3.2 LIFE ON THE VISA .............................................................................. 164
6.4 CONCLUSION ......................................................................................... 167

CHAPTER SEVEN: AFTER MIGRATION: ADJUSTMENT TO NEW LIFE
7. 1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................................... 169
7.2 EMOTIONAL REACTIONS AND MIGRATION ............................................... 169
  7.2.1 POSITIVE EMOTIONS ........................................................................... 170
  7.2.2 NEGATIVE EMOTIONS .......................................................................... 173
7.3 SURVIVAL OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCES IN AUSTRALIA ..................... 180
  7.3.1 CASE STUDY: SERHIY’S AND YULIA’S OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCES ...... 180
  7.3.2 DEAD-END AND PATCHWORK SURVIVAL CAREERS IN AUSTRALIA ........ 183
7.4 MIGRATION OUTCOME ......................................................................... 188
  7.4.1 CLASS MOBILITY ............................................................................... 189
  7.4.2 ADAPTATION: MAXIMISING PROFITS, MINIMISING INTEGRATION .......... 192
  7.4.3 PERSONAL CHANGE AND SHIFTS IN LIFE STRATEGIES ................. 198
    7.4.3.1 Shifts in national identity .............................................................. 199
    7.4.3.2 Emotional and professional transformations: from materialist to non-
materialist ................................................................................................. 202
7.5 PLANS FOR THE FUTURE ..................................................................... 208
7.6 CONCLUSION ......................................................................................... 211

PART TWO: LIFE STRATEGIES IN THE SECOND (2004-2013) POST-INDEPENDENCE MIGRATION PERIOD
1. INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................... 213
2. RESPONDENTS’ PROFILES ........................................................................ 214

CHAPTER EIGHT: BEFORE MIGRATION: LEAVING UKRAINE
8.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................ 223
8.2 MICRO COMPONENTS OF ACHIEVEMENT LIFE STRATEGY ...................... 223
  8.2.1 NEEDS ................................................................................................ 224
  8.2.2 AIMS .................................................................................................. 229
  8.2.3 VALUES ............................................................................................... 235
  8.2.4 SENSE OF AGENCY ............................................................................. 238
8.3 MIGRATION DECISION AND RATIONALITY ............................................ 243
8.4 CONCLUSION .......................................................................................... 248
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction: research objectives

This thesis explores post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia through a case study analysis of the life strategies of a group of migrants. Life strategies, the key framing device, are understood as the outcomes of personal characteristics and individual actions as well as of cultural frames, institutional and structural conditions (relating to micro and macro levels of analysis) that individuals use to guide their lives during and after migration. This study identifies two key life strategies in particular—survival and achievement—and argues that they are associated with two distinct waves of migration to Australia. Using this idea of two waves and their distinct life strategies the thesis analyses the migrants’s lives as they move across two spaces, the sending and receiving countries, and through time, before, during and after migration.

The thesis examines these life strategies in three ways. First, the thesis scrutinises the micro and macro factors that structure the life strategies that emerged as a response to post-Soviet transition and are implemented through migration to another country. The micro-factors, based on models developed by Reznik (1996), Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991) and Legostaeva (2011) are shaped by the migrant’s values, aims, needs and sense of agency. The macro factors, on the Ukrainian side, are economic, political, demographic and migration situations in Ukraine; on the Australian side, the shifts in Australian migration policy since the 1990s. Second, it considers how Ukrainians plan and adopt international migration in order to get into Australia, and then change their visa status from temporary to permanent. It examines the differences in the actual mechanisms used when implementing an achievement life strategy and a survival life strategy across sending and receiving countries, depending on the period in which the migrants began to leave post-independence Ukraine. Third, the thesis explores how these two life strategies are re-created or changed after migration (in terms of emotions, national identity and occupations). It analyses how Ukrainian migrants over time have become more integrated into and beneficial for Australian social and economic life, and at the same time less active in the Ukrainian community. The thesis explores the evolution of life strategies of survival into strategies of achievement.
Across the thesis, the central questions of enquiry are: how were survival and achievement life strategies formed and implemented by a group of Ukrainian emigrants, and how did that migration experience impact on the ways in which this group of Ukrainian emigrants’ life strategies were enacted across sending and receiving countries? The thesis argues that the two waves of migration, and the life strategies associated with each wave, have a role in determining the success or failure of the migrants’ integration and their quality of life in Australia.

This research started with the hypothesis that representatives of different migration periods implement different life strategies depending on how macro and micro-factors combine in their lives. It was hypothesised that different combinations would lead to the formation of different life strategies. The hypothesis was that migrants who emigrated in the 1990s just after the USSR collapsed, would implement a survival life strategy and their decision to come to Australia would be shaped by survival, which was reflected in the micro-factors underpinning their life strategies. Those migrants who migrated to Australia in the mid-2000s had configured their micro factor differently so that they were focused on achievement, and adopted an achievement life strategy. This hypothesis has been confirmed and the details of this argument are woven through the whole research project.

The project is based on the case study of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia. This is not a study of migration itself, rather, it examines migration in so far as it provides the context for life strategy implementation in a specific historical period in Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union (referred to in this study as the transition period). To further limit the focus of the discussion, two particular periods of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia were examined—1991–2003 and 2004–2013.

1.2 Autobiographical context

In undertaking this research, I acknowledge that my personal experience and interest in life strategies influenced my decision to research the life patterns of Ukrainian migrants in Australia. For some investigators, the inspiration for their choice of research field results from a mixture of experiences and events (White, 2000). For me, it began at the age of 23 late on the night of 3rd March 2012 when I landed at Sydney Airport. After a 28-hour flight, exhausted and struck by the humidity and heat of an Australian summer, I went
straight from the airport to a campus residence for Sydney University students. My migration contributed to the stream of Ukrainian international students to Australia that significantly increased from the late 2000s, and, as was the case with the majority of international students, the main purpose for my migration was to get a world-recognised degree and, if possible, to become a new citizen of the exotic and geographically remote continent of Australia.

After a couple of months in Australia I started to build connections with Ukrainian migrants in Sydney, and realised that the real on-the-ground Ukrainian migrant in Australia significantly differs from the picture I had in my head before migrating. Back in Ukraine, having no friends or relatives in Australia, I was among that majority of Ukrainians who did not know much about Australian life and viewed it as a country at the edge of the world with a stable economy, super positive people, fascinating landscapes and exotic animals. Good for travel, but rather expensive, and thus, affordable only to exclusive groups of the Ukrainian population. In addition to the lack of Australian-lived experience in my surroundings, I did not find much information either in journals or scholarly publications, except for a couple of beautifully framed and fascinating articles in National Geographic and a few scholarly papers which were more descriptive than analytical.

When I started my PhD I thought I would find that there were large differences between the narratives of recent migrants like myself and those narratives of immediate post-Soviet Ukrainian migrants. I was interested to listen to the stories of people who had chosen to leave Ukraine and to see what values, needs, aims and sense of agency motivated them, and reflect on what different life strategies they adopted in leaving Ukraine and finding their place in a multicultural Australia. My initial feeling was that in many ways, the core of Ukrainian migration to Australia is a rich cohort of Ukrainians who moved to Australia because they were attracted by its high living standards, family-friendly lifestyle and safe conditions for investments. Put simply, I was expecting to see Ukrainians from the upper social class—achievers by nature, who already possessed economic, social and cultural capital I thought that the overwhelming majority of participants in the study would think and speak about their narratives of migration in the context of achievement, either professional (economic) or personal (self-realisation).
It turned out the group of Ukrainian migrants in Australia is a socially and demographically mixed group, which is, as proved further in the research, made up of two distinct cohorts of migrants implementing (1) dynamic, risk-taking and future-oriented “achievement life strategies” or (2) conservative, risk-minimising and survival-oriented “survival life strategies’. Being a Ukrainian migrant myself, this thesis is a self-reflection as well as an analysis of the real stories of migrants whose lives have been changed dramatically by migration.

1.3 Research case study: why Ukrainian migration to Australia?

As well as emerging from my personal experience, there are other reasons why this case study is significant. International migration in post-Soviet Eastern Europe is a striking example of how quickly population processes respond to political and economic transformations. Until the early 1990s, Ukraine, together with other Soviet countries, was isolated from other parts of the world through administrative restrictions on foreign travel. The freedom of movement that was reinstated in the region around 1990 led to massive migration. In particular, following Ukraine’s independence in 1991 the number of people who sought emigration rapidly increased (Pyrozhkov et al., 1997).

According to the Ukrainian National Academy of Science, by 2050 the population of Ukraine will decline from the current 46 million to 36 million (Institute of Demography and Social Studies, NAS of Ukraine, 2010). The United Nations presents an even more pessimistic figure of 26 million (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2010). International migration plays a pivotal role in the population decline. National survey results reveal the number of Ukrainian citizens who travelled abroad for employment at least once between January 2005 and June 2008 reached 1.5 million, or 5.1 per cent of the working age population (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2009, p. 25). Various estimations further show that between four and seven million Ukrainians are migrant workers (Golovaha, 2008, p. 63), or 19.5 per cent and 34.1 per cent, respectively, of the economically active population (Malynovska, 2011, p. 6). Every tenth Ukrainian family has some experience of migration (Pribytkova, 2003). Many of those who have already experienced international migration express a desire to go abroad again in search of a better life (Pribytkova, 2003). This global and mass outflow of Ukrainians abroad has shaped the mode of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia.
Beyond the specific trends of post-Soviet states, international migration is a steadily growing phenomenon worldwide and Australia is one of the largest beneficiaries of these movements of people, cultures and ideas (Bedford et al., 2005; Hugo, 2006b; Castles and Miller, 2009). The countries from which migrants to Australia originated have varied over years. Ukrainians have never comprised a significant proportion of the migrants to Australia historically, although there has been a steady intake over recent years. Given the lack of knowledge and substantive research about Ukrainian migration to Australia and the complete absence of studies about the post-independence Ukrainian migration period, the choice of this case study seemed important. It is driven by the aim to discover and explain qualitative characteristics of post-independence Ukrainian migrants and recent Ukrainian migration trends to Australia.

Presently, all existing scholarship on Ukrainians in Australia focuses on the first and second generations of Ukrainian migrants, while a lack of research on Australian Ukrainians of the third post-independence migration wave persist. Only occasionally can one find independent research in scholarly editions that touch on some aspects of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia. Research by Pavlyshyn (2000, 2008) provides useful descriptive, though rarely analytical, publications about Ukrainians in Australia. Markus’ (1995) encyclopedic entry is primarily an overview of prominent Ukrainians and community leaders. Research by Koscharsky (2000), Boiko (2001), Jupp (2001), Serbin (2006), Chornopuskyi (2006), examines predominantly the following: the number of Ukrainians in Australia, locations of the Ukrainian communities on the continent, language issues and cultural community life. This research fills some of the knowledge gaps and makes a significant contribution to Ukraine migration research in relation to life strategies and pathways in Australia.

There is also a perceptible lack of specialised materials and research on the life strategies of international migrants (exceptions include, Geisen, 2013; Volodko, 2007; Mrozowicki, 2011) and this thesis fills that gap. As such, this research project strives to develop a conceptual explanation of the life strategies of migrants through the prism of the life strategy research framework. It does so because migration appears to be a key/important instrument for life strategies realisation.
1.4 Theoretical background

Though it is constantly ignored by mainstream post-Soviet transition and international migration scholarship, a life strategy approach helps researchers “gai[n] new insights on migrants as social actors” (Geisen, 2013, p. 1) in recent migration research and the broader transition scholarship. The post-Soviet transition and migration processes and their impact on individual life strategies were the subject of some sociological research in Western European and North American, (hereafter Western sociology). This scholarship tended to privilege economic theories of household strategies and related more to tactics than to the complexity of building and implementing individual life strategies with the help of international mobility. It argued that socio-economic transformations alter the decision-making environment of individuals while also enhancing the role of life strategies to adapt to structural change, notably through migration (Jazwinska and Okólski, 1996).

The phenomenon of life strategies has only come to the attention of academics in Eastern European Sociology (Ukraine, Poland and Russia) since the late 1990s (Mrozowicki, 2011; Golovakha, 2000; Zlobina, 2003, 2012; Bevzenko, 2008); Babenko, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007; Volodko, 2007; Naumova, 1995; and Zaslavskaya, 1999, 2000). The emergence took place in relation to the post-Soviet transition crisis in Ukraine and other post-Soviet states. Despite the fact that the phenomenon of life strategy is not entirely new to post-Soviet countries, in the independent Ukraine it gained new characteristics, which demand research of micro (individual) and macro (structure) levels of life strategy formation and implementation.

There are a number of existing life strategy frameworks that can be used in different contexts, but they are limited to an agency approach. I suggest, to explain the life strategy of migrants a more complex model is needed. In order to find a theoretical justification and to present empirical evidence on how the combination of structure and agency facilitate or impede individual life strategies, and to explore how through migration individuals become active agents of their biographies, an integrated life strategy research framework that enables the exploration of structure and agency was developed for this study. The basis of the developed life strategy framework is formed by two life strategy typologies by Reznik and Reznik (1995) and Babenko (2004). This life strategy framework is an attempt to solve the macro/micro-complex problem by suggesting that the concept of life strategy enriches the understanding of how macro-social and structural conditions within a particular
historical context shape the biographies of international migrants reflected in their life strategies.

Central to this broad structure/agency life strategy research framework are the following key ideas: transition, structure/agency, life strategy, migration, social identities (class and national identity), and emotions. The definition of life strategy in this thesis is based on the definition suggested by Reznik and Smirnov (2002): they suggest a life strategy is a dynamic, self-adjusting system of socio-cultural presentations of individuals about their own lives, which orients their behaviour across a protracted period of life. Being a dynamic phenomenon, life strategies were analysed in this study across two dimensions, the temporal and the spatial. These two suggested dimensions form the frames of the life strategy research framework developed for this thesis. The temporal layer is used to investigate how life strategies are shaped across two different post-independence Ukraine migration periods to Australia: 1991–2003 and 2004–2013. The spatial layer of analysis of the life strategies of Ukrainian migrants in Australia was used to conduct analysis across three sites: (1) before migration: in Ukraine, (2) during migration: the actual space of migration, and (3) after migration: in Australia.

The empirical research that was undertaken was guided by this life strategy research framework. Within this framework, migration is understood from a wider perspective to be a tool used to assist in the implementation of a life strategy that is designed to help an individual cope with the economic, political and social changes in Ukraine caused by post-Soviet transition. Seen from such a perspective, not only are the different migration pathways and tactics identified through narratives, but the following issues are highlighted as well: the relevance of the experience of migration to individual actor’s lives after migration; the rationales that are relevant for migrants in different immigration periods; and lastly, the structural and personal factors that facilitate the implementation of life strategies through migration from a post-Soviet Eastern European country to Australia. Therefore, this thesis discusses the complexity of migration from post-independence Ukraine to the distant and unfamiliar Australia by illuminating the micro-level of life strategies and also by enriching the understanding of the current macro-level processes of integrating minorities into multicultural Australia.
1.5 Significance

The significance of the study is three-fold. Firstly, by incorporating life strategies, post-Soviet transition and migration literature, this study brings the three research fields together in order to examine aspects of the continuity of migrants’ life strategies as they move from Ukraine to Australia in an era of socio-economic and political turbulence in post-Soviet Eastern Europe. This is uncharted scholarly territory. In this sense, the originality of this research is in its approach—one that explores the use of life strategy within the context of migration and which further deploys life strategy in a sociological context rather than within its original psychological focus.

Secondly, by simultaneously capturing the structure (macro) and agency (micro) factors shaping life strategies in both host and ethnic/origin(al) contexts, the current research extends the understanding of life strategies as an integral part of the broader Australian state development processes. By tracing the evolution of life strategies from survival to achievement across two periods of Ukrainian migration to Australia the research also emphasises its importance as a pre-eminent indicator of the success of the integration of Ukrainians in social and economic life in Australia.

Thirdly, by developing an original life strategy research framework (based on the integration of a structure-agency perspective, and Eastern European and Western life strategy perspectives), this study provides new conceptual and methodological tools for social scientists who want to study the life strategies of mobile social actors. A two-fold methodology was used to gather data from secondary statistical sources and qualitative data obtained through interviews. With the help of such methodology this study captures and explains the most recent migrations of Ukrainians to Australia and their life strategies, and elucidates the trends in their integration into multicultural Australian society. This study aims to provide a more inclusive and integrated portrait of the life strategies of post-Soviet Eastern European migrants (using the example of Ukraine) in Australia than is currently available.

1.6 Thesis structure

This thesis is organised into eleven chapters. To introduce the background to the argument, the initial four chapters discuss the research area and its significance. They offer a literature review and a conceptual research framework, introduce the methodology, and
provide background about Ukraine in order to explain the emergence of the achievement and survival life strategies before migration. The seven following chapters, are, in turn, divided into two parts and make up the main part of the thesis. The remainder of this section outlines the content of each chapter.

Chapter Two outlines the literature review and sets out the theoretical framework employed in this research. The literature and theories reviewed in this chapter are organised in three parts. The first part discusses the field of transition research, and then the structure-agency approach, born out of the post-Soviet transition scholarship. The second part of chapter two presents life strategy perspectives through an analysis of the recent developments in life strategy studies in Eastern European (Ukrainian and Russian) and Western scholarship. Part three of the chapter sets out the new life strategy research framework developed for this thesis. It explains why this new framework is useful for studying the life strategies of migrants. Also analysed in this section are the building blocks of the new life strategy framework—migration, social identities and emotions. Lastly, this part of the chapter explores the temporal and spatial layers of the enactment of a life strategy.

Chapter Three explains the research design and methodology. The theoretical structure/agency dichotomy, outlined in Chapter Two, maps onto the two methods used. A secondary data collection method, and the use of semi-structured interviews in combination with participant’s observations enabled the capture of information about the content of their life strategies. This chapter also outlines the methodological principles of the two methods of interview data analysis. First, it sets out the logic of the thematic analysis using Nvivo. Second, it explains the narrative analysis utilised in this study.

Analysis of the findings from interviews commences in Part One and proceeds to Part Two, which is comprised of Chapters Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine and Ten. Using a combination of migration literature analysis and statistical data from the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Chapter Four examines the context and structural logic of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia. The main focus is on the macro factors shaping the life strategies of the migrants. These are presented in this chapter as Ukraine/Australia structural factors emerging from the economic, political and demographic constraints in
post-independence Ukraine, and migration dynamics from Ukraine into Australia as a result of shifts in Australia’s migration policy since the 1990s. Macro factors, analysed in detail in this chapter, are disputed to have affected the capacity, choices and life strategies of migrants. I argue they have strongly influenced and formed the micro-components of the life strategies, based on the different types of life strategies migrants use.

Part One (Chapters Five, Six and Seven) is concerned with the life strategies and journeys of the migrants in the first migration period (1991–2003) – hereafter ‘transition migrants’ – and focuses on their survival life strategies. The analysis spans pre-migration, the actual act of migration, and the post-migration stages, aiming to explain the survival life strategy that dominates the narratives of these arrivals. Based on 26 narratives, Chapter Five sets the scene for the study as a whole, and looks into the lives of ‘transition migrants’ before migration. This chapter focuses on the micro-components (aims, values, needs and sense of agency) of the life strategy framework and analyses them in terms of how they are shaped and attached to emotions, class and the national identity of the participants.

Chapter Six outlines the process of how ‘transition migrants’ came to Australia, focusing on the humanitarian and family migration streams, and the tactics used by this group of Ukrainian arrivals to get permanent residency in Australia. It demonstrates the ways the actual act of migration is implemented by survival migrants, and explains in detail the opportunism, manoeuvring, conspiracy, social networks, precarity and emotional insecurity attached to the survival life strategy.

Chapter Seven also explores the lives of the ‘transition migrants’, but this time after migration. It particularly brings to the forefront the ways the micro-components of the life strategy that were formed before migration, interact with aspects of the migrants’ life strategies after migration. The chapter provides insights into post-migration experiences linked to emotions, occupational experiences, class mobility, national identity shifts, emotional and professional transformations, as well as the future plans of the cohort.

Part Two shifts the focus to the life strategies of post-independence Ukrainian migrants who arrived in Australia in the period from 2004 to 2013 – hereafter ‘dividend migrants’. It commences with Chapter Eight, which again utilises the life strategy framework and logic to provide insights into adventurous dreams about Australia; the micro-components of the achievement life strategy, formed while in Ukraine, and migration decision-making. As
with Part One, the analysis presented in here spans pre-migration, the actual act of migration and the post-migration stages, Chapter Eight examines the micro-components that shaped the achievement life strategy type before leaving Ukraine, focusing on what influenced the ways migrants entered and stayed permanently in Australia and how they continued their achievement patterns after their migration to Australia. Chapter Nine argues that the skilled and marriage migration streams were popular ways used by this cohort to implement their achievement life strategies. Chapter Nine argues that the achievement life strategies of the two groups—skilled and marriage migrants—mimics the achievement experiences of one another, because they are both linked to the global order and processes. Chapter Ten presents analysis of the lives of the 2004–2013 ‘dividend migrants’ after migration and looks into the migrants’ adaptation, occupational outcomes, language and national identity, and also explores the future plans and aspirations of the migrants.

The last chapter—Chapter Eleven—concludes the thesis. It sets out trends in terms of the migrants’ integration in Australia and the benefits to Australia of bringing well-educated professionals from Ukraine to the country—creating a ‘brain gain’ (Straubhaar, 2000; West & Dasgupta, 2011). The thesis concludes with a discussion of the life strategy dynamics and trends, develops a new hypothesis and suggests some avenues for future research.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The literature review and theoretical framework employed in this research draws on six key ideas that are pulled out of several bodies of scholarship. They are:

1) Transition
2) Agency/Structure
3) Life Strategy
4) Migration
5) Social Identities
6) Emotions

The review of the literature and theory in relation to these key ideas are organized in three parts. Part One is an exploration of transition research in Western scholarship and post-Soviet scholarship, and its relevance for explaining the specifics of the transition from a Soviet state to an independent Ukraine. In particular, this first part will set out the various ways in which post-communist democratic transition has been theorized – from a structuralist to an agency-structure approach – while arguing that the role of agency in transition research was underestimated for many years. By agency I mean the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices. A useful and initial definition of agency was given by Anthony Giddens (1984, p. 14). He defined it as the ability of individuals to ‘intervene in the world, or to refrain from such intervention, with the effect of influencing a specific process of state of affairs’. Later, Carter and New (2005, p. 4) extended Giddens definition adding to the characteristics of agency notions such as ‘self-consciousness, reflexivity, intentionality, cognition, emotionality’. These characteristics are contrasted with social structures, defined as ‘systems of lasting relationships among social positions’ (Porpora in Mrozowicki, 2011, p. 55). Agency/structure dichotomy informs the theoretical approach explained in this chapter and is the focus of Part One.
Part Two will review the main literature, theoretical approaches and recent developments in life strategy studies in East European (Ukrainian and Russian) and Western scholarship (hereafter, Western European and North American literature), exploring the various ways the notion of life strategy is conceptualised. Part Three brings together this macro analysis of post-Soviet transition and the micro-analysis of life strategies within the post-Soviet Eastern European and Western sociological perspectives. It synthesises the new life strategy research framework developed for this study, and analyses the building blocks of the framework, that is, migration, social identities and emotions.

2.2 Part one: transition research: from Western to post-Soviet East European scholarship

The idea of transition shapes my analysis of the structural space in which the participants’ life strategies were formed. An exploration of the transition scholarship, which emerged in the 1950s in the West (Western Europe and North America), is critical for the study of life strategies of migrants from Ukraine for several reasons. Firstly, transition scholarship explains the Ukraine’s post-Soviet transition to democracy and a market economy, which enables a mapping of the wider political and economic conditions that shaped Ukrainian life strategies over this period. In other words, Ukraine is a country in transition and in order to understand how Ukrainian citizens behave at the micro level, I need to first understand the macro-level conditions of transition in Ukraine. Secondly, transition scholarship is informed by the relation between structure and agency. These two key concepts are used to reveal and develop the life strategy research framework, which, in turn, is employed to examine the particular life strategies of the participating migrants in this study.

Historically, the interplay between agency and structure perspectives in transition scholarship, when applied to the contemporary life strategies of migrants (either inside their country, in transition or in the new country) resembles a circle where these approaches exclude or substitute for one another, or combine or integrate with one another. This logic of circulation of these two approaches in transition research (see Figure 1) is analysed in several sections below.
Here I will briefly reflect on the origins of transition scholarship and its usefulness in understanding post-Soviet transitions in Ukraine. Transition research starts in the early 1950–1960s in the West, at a time “when democratic forms of government were the exception rather than the rule” (Wucherpfennig & Deutsh, 2009, p. 1). Lipset (1959), an early theorist in the field, introduced what he called the ‘requisites of democracy’. By doing so, he contributed the first formative input and laid out the transition research agenda for generations to come. He established the first theoretical link between the level of development of a given country and its probability of being democratic. Under ‘requisites of democracy’ Lipset (1959) described the foundations for successful democratic consolidation, which he saw as variables that create conditions favorable for democratisation and economic development — such as urbanization, wealth and education.

Concerned with structural and societal conditions conducive to democracy, especially in socio-economic terms, Lipset (1959) outlined a structure-centered framework that analysed transitions in terms of economic development and legitimacy. He argued that these two key structural characteristics were necessary to sustain democratic political systems (he used the examples of European and English-speaking nations and Latin American nations). Lipset’s (1959) idea that economic modernisation leads to democracy was further developed by Rostow (1960), who theorised that the path from economic modernisation to democracy is linear and inevitable. Rostow (1960) was later criticised by Moore (1966), who formulated a historical analysis and critique in which structural transformations...
caused by socio-economic development (industrialisation) were not necessarily conducive to democracy.

Contrary to the modernisation approaches of the 1950s–1960s that were concerned with structural transitions, at the beginning of the 1980s Western research on transition was driven by the agency-centered perspective propagated specifically in the writings of O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986). The retrospective analysis of transition research undertaken by O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) helped scholars to understand that the incorporation of concepts such as human agency — in addition to structural factors — bore more fruit. O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986), discuss the factors influencing the success or failure of transitions revolved around the ruling elite as the driving force in initiating shifts at all levels. They believed that any type of transition is possible if the relevant elite groups (ruling and opposition) could agree on common ways of implementing democracy (O’Donnell & Schmitter, 1986). The earlier socio-economic conditions (Lipset, 1959; Lerner, 1958; Rostow, 1960; Moore, 1966) were understood as being irrelevant for transition research (Merkel, 2010).

In Eastern Europe at that time (1980s), no similar research was being done as few scholars could even conceive of a possible future shift from communism to democracy that would actually necessitate research on transition. Any work on Eastern Europe was done in the West. Interestingly though, around the same time as the end of the USSR, the Western agency perspective faced challenges in the form of a wave of “structuralism and the wave of pessimism” towards democracy (Merkel, 2010, p. 19). The main focus of Western theoretical explanations of transition shifted from agency back to structure-centered transition theories and Eastern European scholars were part of this rethink. Merkel argued that scholars such as O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) overestimated the power of political elites. The belief that democracy can be promoted, supported or even imposed from the outside began to dominate (Merkel, 2010, p. 436). Agency perspectives in the form of action theory were claimed to have shown themselves to be deficient in the analysis of political and socio-economic system transformations that overwhelmed post-communist East Europe. The works of Merkel (2004, 2010), Carothers (2002), Ottaway (2003), Levitsky and Way (2003), and Nathan (2003) are indicative of the shift in focus of transition research from an actor-centered perspective to a structuralist perspective. These works also highlight the shifts in the perception of ordinary citizens of the democratic
changes in new post-Soviet democracies from optimistic attitudes in the early 1990s to more pessimistic attitudes that have been increasingly common since the 2000s.

Therefore, in the first years after the dissolution of Soviet Union and communism’s collapse, most studies of state transition to markets and democracy, which tended to emerge from the West, were rather formal and structural, as more and more Western scholars without contextual expertise identified post-communist Eastern Europe as the natural laboratory for testing their generalising transition theories. The authors of the new wave of Western theories explaining transition (Mansfield & Snyder, 2002; Zakaria, 2003; McFaul et al., 2004) tried to take into account some of the features of the post-Soviet countries, for example, they sought explanations for the development of modernity in the history of particular countries. These scholars emphasised the negative role of the Soviet legacy as a factor that not only inhibits processes of liberal democratisation, but makes it impossible to even apply the general theoretical concepts of democratisation to the post-communist region. Their assessment of the current state of affairs in post-Soviet countries was pessimistic, although they did not neglect the possibility of a gradual change towards democratisation.

This led to significant debate, especially in the political and social sciences, about the relative value of these Western studies for providing an explanation of post-Soviet transition towards democracy. Much of the contestation hinged upon how much one needed to know about national and local culture and history to produce a good explanatory framework.

The first scholarly works on transition in the post-Soviet East European scholarship appeared relatively recently, after 1990, when there finally appeared a real need to understand the consequences of reforms and transitions from the inside. The first research on transition in post-communist countries was determined by the dominant structural paradigm, which was drawn from existing research in the Western tradition. The post-Soviet social science in the late 1980s and early 1990s favoured the authority of Western theories, and applied them, almost without adaptation, to explanations of the post-Soviet social reality. These theories included path dependence theory (Pierson, 2000; Mahoney,

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1 ‘Path dependence’ is an important concept for social scientists engaged in studying processes of change. Being based on models of technological development used in economics, the first wave of scholarship in political science and sociology applied the concept of path dependence to political institutions, emphasising
2000; Collier and Collier, 1991), the third wave of democratisation theory\(^2\) (Huntington, 1991), and political mobilisation theory\(^3\).

Furthermore, theories of modernisation were revived to explain democratic transition in post-Soviet countries. This involved dominant discourses such as ‘catching up’ with processes of modernisation and westernisation, the need for development, overcoming dependency, and reforming the state. In searching for their own approach, the post-Soviet scholars started to apply and develop early ideas about the path from economic modernisation to democracy and empirically test the relation between democracy and economic development. As in the early 1950–1960s (Lipset, 1959; Rostow, 1960; Moore, 1966), structural factors such as the degree of development of national economies, the power of social classes, the autonomy of the state, and the efficiency of its bureaucracy, once again became central to research on system transformations (Merkel, 2010). Despite the fact that the critique of modernisation theory from the Third World was severe (Frank, 1969; Roxborough, 1979) — in terms of promoting the paternalism of developed states over underdeveloped states — Pye (1990) and Lipset et al. (1993) proclaimed the renaissance of a series of modernisation theories by Roxborough (1979), Lipset (1959) and Moore (1966) in the post-Soviet democratisation and transition theoretical discourse. In 1999 Zaslavskaya, a Russian scholar, under the influence of Roxborough (1988), described “modernisation in post-Soviet countries as contributing to a growing capacity for social transformations” (Zaslavskaya, 1999). In this approach the argument was that underdeveloped post-Soviet states, in terms of democracy and market economy, are subject to social transitions only through structural modernisation effects.

\(^2\) Huntington (1991) argued that international structural factors during the 1970s were the causal sources for initiating Third-Wave democracy. Under structural factors he meant the “regional contingency factor” or the Soviet equivalent of the “domino theory”, where the success of democracy in one country causes other countries to democratise. He suggested that post-Soviet states are being influenced by democratisation effects, most notably by the efforts to spread democracy by the European Union and the United States.

\(^3\) Political mobilisation is a framework that is utilised to understand political participation in a transition period.
Post-Soviet structuralist scholars argued that a positive feature of modernisation theory was the emphasis on, and concrete analysis of, a wide range of modernisation processes that took place immediately after the collapse of Soviet rule: urbanisation, industrialisation, rationalisation, secularisation, marketisation of the economy, democratisation policy, the progress of education and other cultural processes. In other words, it suggested a framework for the interconnected study of all major aspects of social development that took place in post-Soviet countries. An important step in the development and application of modernisation theory in the post-socialist countries was undertaken by well-known scientists and sociologists in Hungary (Andorka and Spéder, 1994), Poland (Adamski, 1998; Domansky, 1990), the Czech Republic (Keller and Westerholm, 2007; Machonin, 1997), and Germany (Zapf et al., 2002; Zapf, 1998). These scholars, applying modernisation theory to the post-Soviet context, ended up criticising it for its failure to reflect the multidimensionality of the transition process and for its limited explanation of structural and cultural factors in the development of post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Their criticism even extended to the updated and renewed versions of the ‘catching-up’ and ‘reflexive’ modernisation theories proposed by Beck and colleagues (1994; Keller, 2002).

Therefore, the more research was done using modernisation theories to understand social change in post-Soviet countries, the more problems they encountered and the more concerns post-Soviet scholars had. These critiques of modernisation theories and their applicability to the post-Soviet transition context, were based on the argument that they did not sufficiently explain the nature of the structural shifts that were taking place in post-Soviet space “simply because the historical vector of these changes was not objectively set up, not preconditioned” (Yadov, 1999, p.14).

This growing critique of modernisation theory was further escalated after the release of a provocative series of publications by Przeworski et al. (2000) in the West questioning the relationship between development and the transition to democracy. It was argued that economic factors alone are not sufficient to account for the fates of democratic and authoritarian regimes. The theories emphasising the role of economic growth (Lipset, 1994; Przeworski et al., 2000) were replaced in the West as well as in the post-Soviet scholarship by more moderate concepts. These concepts include the concept of “gradual transition” (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986; Carother, 2007), where the transition is
understood to gradually develop from a time of “liberalisation” to “democratisation”, followed by the deepening of democracy and its adoption by all social groups at the stage of socialisation. This latter stage provides a transition to a more “stable democracy” which is the ultimate goal of transition. As Carother (2002) suggests, “gradual transition” is based on a recognition of the possibility and inevitability of constant evolutionary change towards democracy, even in those countries with strong authoritarian regimes.

Russian and Ukrainian scholars (Naumova 1995, Zlobina 2003) argue that given the limits of the structural transition paradigm of the 1990s for understanding what is happening in post-Soviet societies, and in Ukraine in particular, there is a need for a different approach with more of a focus on agency that would explain the structural shifts that are the related to changes on the level of agency (micro-level). Naumova explains that a new theory should be able to widen our understanding of societies in transition to include deeper, spontaneous shifts in social and individual consciousness that find expression primarily in the transformation of the value system and in the formation of new, individual life strategies (Naumova, 1995, p. 7).

Subsequently, by the beginning of the new century in the post-Soviet countries, scholars had begun to create theories related to the cultural and historical originality of post-Soviet people to explain the unique historical development of the political tradition, national mentality and cultural heritage (Titarenko, 2008). At the start of the 2000s post-Soviet scholars made significant advances in empirical descriptions and conceptualisations of post-communist transitions. These scholars suggest that the most theoretically pertinent way to approach the interrelation between the components of transformation processes in the post-Soviet space is to focus on: (1) targeted reforms of basic institutions; (2) semi-natural changes in the social structure and change in agency (Zaslavskaya and Yadov, 2008; Kutsenko, 2004; Golovakha and Panina, 2006). However, it should be noted that studies of the interrelation of these combinations of structure and agency are still relatively rare.

The addition of agency to the structuralist model of transition gave birth to the conceptual unity of ‘agency-structure’ that has become the main theoretical model in post-Soviet transition research from the mid-2000s onwards. The combined agency-structure approach was primarily used to understand transition through the study of agents of social change.
Borrowing the agency-structure approach from post-Soviet explanations of transitions in Ukraine, I apply this approach to understand the life strategies of individual migrants from such societies in transition.

2.2.1 Agency/structure

Drawing on the transition scholarship outlined above, I argue that agency and structure are both equally important in the life strategy research framework developed further in the part two of this chapter. I found that the vast research on agency and structure that emerged in the 2000s in post-Soviet countries, as well as in the West, focused on community (or group) agency and underestimates individual agency. The framework for this study, which is informed by the agency-structure approach, draws on the power of individual agency and the role of structures in the shaping and enactment of life strategies. In this section I will analyse how the agency-structure approach was established, based on an interplay between the actions of social actors and structural constraints, and became central for the study of transition and the lives of migrants who left countries in the transition.

The first attempts in the transition scholarship to bring structure and agency together relates to the concept of social action, which was the basis of the voluntaristic approach. In the 1980s and early 1990s, transition research began to be equally committed to voluntarism and structuralism, for the first time in its history. This paradox generated a variety of attempts to view structure and agency as mutually constitutive. The ground-breaking approach to the combination of structure and agency was made by Giddens in his work on the *Theory of Structuration* (1979), where he describes structure and agency theories as two sides of the same coin: structures make social action possible, and social action creates and transforms structures. Giddens calls it the ‘duality of structure’ and develops a stratification model of social action. According to Giddens’ (1984, p. 5) ‘stratification model of human action’, individuals are knowledgeable within the constraints and opportunities presented by social structures. Their knowledge is distributed at three levels of consciousness. First there is the unconscious, where motivations cannot be articulated; second, practical consciousness, where knowledge of personal motivations and institutional rules/resources can be exploited to provide a rationale for action but cannot readily be verbalised; and third, discursive consciousness, where knowledge can be employed and communicated in a verbal explanation.
These ideas of the mutual determination of agency and structure were revived during the mid-to late 2000s in post-Soviet studies on transition, particularly in the works of Zaslavskaya (2000), Panina (2002, 2004, 2005), Babenko (2004, 2005, 2007), Kutsenko and Babenko (2004), Kutsenko (2001, 2004) and Petrushyna (2008). These works have strongly established the agency-structure approach in post-Soviet social science. In the mid-2000s, Zaslavskaya introduced her own model of social transition of post-Soviet states that brought together the mutual determination of agency and structure, based on twenty years of research and experiments conducted on Russian society. Kutsenko, an outstanding Ukrainian scholar who applied Zaslavskaya’s theories to develop her own class-system approach, has defined Zaslavskaya’s work as a model “that is built on the understanding of the fundamental place of social action in society and its dynamic structural conditionality and important role of the self-organizing processes in social dynamics” (Kutsenko, 2001, p. 49). In Zaslavskaya’s model, the agency factor of social change comes first. Structural factors, according to Zaslavskaya, limit the transformational activity of agents; at the same time being its product and result.

Following the developments of Zaslavskaya, the Ukrainian sociologist Nataliya Panina has contributed to the structure-agency perspective, which was becoming established and increasingly popular in post-Soviet scholarship since the 2000s. Panina introduced her own original theory of the post-Soviet transition of Ukrainian society based on a normative-personal concept of Ukrainian social transition. According to this concept, the institutional changes in the transition society are conditioned by the set of values of the social actors and their personal resources, which defines their strategies of adaptation to the changing environment. This, in turn, causes shifts in lifestyles and the nature of their activities. The routinisation of these new social practices and the formation of new normative value systems result in the emergence of new institutions that correspond to the declared aims of the democratic development of Ukrainian society (Panina, 2000). Panina (2000) asserts that this complex model offers a holistic theoretical and methodological model to study Ukrainian transition processes from a structure-agency perspective.

Many Ukrainian scholars applied Panina’s methodological developments and Zaslavskaya’s model of societal transition and elements of her structure-agency perspective in their own theories. Babenko (2004) relied on Zaslavskaya’s conclusions while studying the social mechanisms of post-Soviet social transitions. Kutsenko (2002) has employed
Zaslavskaya’s structure-agency framework in her study of class formation and exploration of system transformations in other former socialist countries. Petrushyna (2008) has referenced Zaslavskaya’s work in her study of the socio-economic behaviour of Ukrainian citizens in conditions of institutional change. Through the prism of Zaslavkay’s concepts, Reznik (2011) has explored the factors and methods for realising civil practices in transition societies.

As noted in post-Soviet scholarship as well as in Western studies focused primarily on the agency of actors at the group level. The role of individual agency, as an agent of social change, remained outside the focus of scholarly attention during the 2000s.

Post-Soviet scholars offered instead a vision of society as a set of community associations and groups who were mainly joined horizontally (Habermas, 1991). This approach fitted with a postmodern paradigm of social development, which countered the classical idea of society as a single organism organised around a central hierarchical state with a vertical construction. Such an approach influenced the emergence of a new sociological vision in post-Soviet scholarship around the dynamics of social processes as the results of efforts by different communities and groups as well as separate individuals (Zlobina & Tykhonovych, 2001).

According to this approach, which further develops the traditions of phenomenological sociology (Schutz, 1967), symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969), ethnosociology (Garfinkel, 1967) and the Chicago school (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1958; Park and Burgess, 1921), social reality has a subjective nature and is created by individuals who experience it and give it a special meaning. The traditional sociological approach to social transitions — though not ignoring the role of individuals in transition processes — focused either on the role of separate individuals in history, or examined the subject (the individual) in the context of group interactions. Based on the idea that social reality is a constant interplay between macro (objective) and micro (subjective) processes, comprehended through an analysis of the components of reality, sociologists endeavor to ‘imagine the imaginative’; what Cooley (1902) has conceptualised as a ‘looking glass self’. The idea that individuals have the capacity to reflect on their own behaviours (Cooley, 1902) constitutes a subjective picture of social reality and emphasises its connection to objective reality. In post-Soviet studies (Lapin & Belyaeva, 1996; Babenko, 2004) even
when individual agency is taken into account, attention is still mainly concentrated on the impact of society on the individual, rather than the reverse. Study is directed from society to the individual, who is regarded as an object of transition rather than as its subject. The emphasis was on individual in terms of their capacity for adaptation to the new social realities.

In the current study, I apply the agency-structure approach in order to concentrate on social actors as individuals with their own set of resources and independent will. This runs contrary to the longstanding tendency to “underestimate the role of individual agency in shaping institutional change in novel and historically contingent ways” (Eyal et al., 2000, p. 40). It also challenges even the most recent post-Soviet research that focuses more on group agency than on individual agency. The structure-agency perspective used in this research to understand and explore life strategies of Ukrainian migrants to Australia is introduced and developed through the life strategy research framework, which is born out of the unity of structure and agency.

2.3 Part two: conceptualising life strategy

Another key idea that shapes my analysis and is central to this study is life strategy and following is a review of the different ways life strategy has been conceptualised in two theoretical traditions, Eastern and Western. Drawing on these two different interpretations, I will explain the way I apply the notion of life strategy in this study. This section also relate the literature on the concept of life strategy to the previous section on agency/structure.

There are significant differences in the way the notion of life strategy is conceptualised in the Eastern European and Western academies. When referring to the Eastern European academy in first instance I mean scholarly works completed in post-Soviet (after 1991) East European countries, and secondly, more specifically, works of Ukrainian and Russian scholars. In referring to the Western perspective I discuss the theories of scholars from the beginning of the 20th century. The significant divergences in life strategy approaches between these two dissimilar academies are determined by historical, geographical, socio-economic and political differences, as well as different traditions of social research.
However it should be noted that even today the concept of individual life strategy is still an under-theorised phenomenon and lacks a clear and concise definition and research methodology. This concept is especially vague when it comes to the role that social structures play in life strategy formation and enactment during the current transition stage of post-Independence in the Ukraine, and related migrations. Therefore, it is necessary first to look more closely at the theoretical traditions in conceptualising life strategy.

2.3.1 Western perspectives

In the Western tradition (North America and Western Europe) the notion of a life strategy refers to the most complex and integral manifestation of a person's life. It expresses the integrity of the life-world of individuals, their aspirations for the future and the ability to change their own lives in accordance with the social challenges and demands of the present and the future. In sociology, life strategies are usually related to the pursuing of conscious, rationally chosen, long-term planned goals (Crow, 1989, p. 2). As Morgan (1989, p. 26) noted, one of the main merits of studying life strategies is its capacity to assist in the analysis of “the complex dance between agency and structure”. If life strategies are developed in conditions of severe constraints, their study can reveal how social structures can influence agents’ actions as well as how social agents attempt to overcome structurally set limitations (Crow, 1989, p. 19).

The concept of life strategy in Western traditions was initially articulated within the studies of life trajectory and social change. The history of life strategy studies can be traced back to the research activities of the Chicago school of sociology in the early 20th century. Inspired by a study of Thomas and Znaniecki (1958), these researchers began to use life records to study social change and the life trajectories of individuals (Elder, 1985, p. 24). This study for many years was a ‘benchmark’, which successfully combined the analysis and synthesis of empirical data, as well as providing a single, logically consistent theory of human behavior based on social actions analysed through concepts such as ‘social values’ and ‘social attitudes’. In addition, Thomas and Znaniecki (1958) based their work on a study of autobiographies and personal documents from which they built a scale of social types. Although the term ‘life strategy’ is not used in their work their analysis underpins the exploration of life strategies within the context of adaptation and migration. This work can be considered as the foundation on which much of the subsequent research on individual life strategies in the West is based.
Before analysing the concept of life strategy within Western sociological traditions, it is important to briefly mention that the Western psychological perspective on life strategy also has a long and varied tradition that has significantly contributed to the way we conceptualise life strategy today. Of particular value is the research of classical psychological thought, such as Berne (1964), Maslow (1967), Allport (1960), Fromm (1968) and Jung (1967), who produced extensive and varied material that could be applied in the integrated and complex study of life strategies from a sociological angle. Their ideas have been further developed in the writings of scholars such as Berger and Luckmann (1966), Garfinkel (1967), Goffman (1959; 1974) and Schutz (1967). These studies examined social attitudes, the phenomenological concepts of subjectivity and intersubjectivity of individual behavior (‘life-world’), the concept of strategic action and interaction, as well as applied methods of investigation of personal life activities (ethnomethodology, etc.). Hence, the concept of life strategy as a tool for undertaking analysis is complex, especially given its origins in psychological scholarship and its relatively recent transfer to sociological research.

The debate on the use of the term ‘life strategy’ in Western sociological thought from the late 1980s to the early 1990s has been useful in explicating some of the meanings associated with this term. These meanings have informed my conceptual research framework.

The debate falls into four general areas. The first area is the idea that the concept of life strategy originated in a military context for the purpose of strategic thinking, including implications to hierarchy and military imperialism (Shaw, 1990). Its use spread into a variety of social settings and led to the ‘civilianisation of military language’ (Shaw, 1990, cited in Edward and Ribbens, 1991). Shaw criticised Crow’s (1989, p. 2) idea that strategies are usually related to conscious behaviour and rationally chosen, long-term planned goals. He also critiqued the idea that the concept of life strategy derives from game theory, or more generally rational-choice theory (Elster, 1983, 1986). Instead, Shaw (1990, p. 465) stressed the implications of the term’s military origins and its “connotations for sociology” in terms of the development of methodological tools and theories to better describe the relationship of ‘strategy’ to ‘planning’ in the strategic thinking of social actors. The debate on the military origins of the concept of life strategy has influenced further studies of life strategies, and promoted the adoption of strategic analysis in the
discipline of sociology. Drawing on these debates, the most important lesson for the current study is the theorisation of migrants’ life strategies as a part of the whole complex system of social relations and processes, taking into account micro and macro structural constraints.

The second debate focused on the interdependence of humans, with special attention given to the role of the family as the primary arena for synchronising an individual’s life; that is, seeing life strategies in relation to family member’s lives and within a set of social constraints. This debate around life strategy unfolded in the examination of individual lives in relation to wider social constraints in families and households (Morgan, 1989). Morgan’s use of the term ‘life strategy’ in the analysis of families and households derives from historical studies by Anderson (1980) about the history of the Western family. He also draws on Bourdieu’s (1976) work on marriage strategies aimed at reproducing and safeguarding patrimonies, Levine’s (1977) theories about ‘fertility strategies’ and Hareven’s (1982) discussions of ‘family working strategies’. All these scholars recognise the presence of structural constraints faced by family members, as they actively respond to these constraints as social agents. Particularly interesting for my current study of migrants’ life strategies is the focus of these researchers on the preference for “the household or collective decisions over individual choices” (Morgan, 1989, p. 25) (also described by Hareven (1982) in relation to ‘family working strategies’). In my analysis chapters I focus on the tension between individual and collective decision-making.

The fact that many of these works focus on “the complex dance between structure and agency” (Morgan, 1989, p. 26) makes them incredibly relevant for the analysis of strategic behavior of migrants from post-Soviet Ukraine since the 1990s. My intention to apply the concept of life strategy to migrants’ lives and mobility is motivated by the concerns raised by Morgan (1989) (and also discussed by Edwards and Ribbens (1991)) in relation to strategic decision making in the lives of women. The approaches of these theorists analyse the individual’s sense of agency while at the same time retaining a sense of the contextual constraints that frame their actions. This discussion of structural constraints and social action lead me to consider the role of resources, which are an important part of migrants’ life strategy formation and enactment. As Morgan (1989, p. 27) argues, “without resources there can be no strategy”.

39
The third debate that took place in the Western tradition that is important in this study is defining and understanding life strategies in relation to culture (Swidler, 1986). This alternative approach defines life strategy as a “tool kit of symbols, stories, rituals, and world-views, which people may use in varying configurations to solve different kinds of problems” (Swidler, 1986, p. 273). This relationship between culture and life strategy is not a relationship of dependence. Swidler (1986, p. 273) explains that culture’s significance lies not in defining the outcomes of actions, but in “provid[ing] components that are used to construct strategies of action”. In the frame of this study, culture is a powerful element that shapes and reproduces life strategies of Ukrainian migrants in Australia.

The last area, and debate, that engaged the concept of life strategy was scholarship that analysed the role of the emotional or unconscious level in addition to the rational, conscious level of life strategy formation. Western scholars tend to ignore the power of unconscious elements in life strategy formation and implementation. Unconscious elements play an important role in a social actor’s own understanding and interpretation of social reality. Several scholars who indirectly recognise the unconscious (emotional) component in life strategies — namely, Anderson (1980), Lacey (1977), Crow (1989) and Watson (1990) — describe the unconscious elements of life strategy in the sense of ‘subconscious strategies’. Certainly, there is a type of life strategies that is purely based on instrumental rationality. However, I would argue that the assumptions of rational choice theories underestimate the role of non-instrumental values in driving actions.

When looking into unconscious elements of individual life strategies, such as coping mechanisms, scholars still risk patronising social actors by analysing unconscious elements of strategic action through the lens of externally-imposed contexts and objectives which the individuals themselves would not recognise (Crow, 1989; Watson, 1990). It raises questions about what is or is not rational, and whether individual strategies can be analysed based on the presumption that the researcher has a superior judgment about the meanings and intentions behind individual actions. Edwards and Ribbens (1991) emphasised the importance of using the concept of life strategy to understand individual lives in conjunction “with the reasons for their choices of the particular language” (Edwards and Ribbens, 1991) with which they describe their actions. This makes visible the part played by individual interpretations in creating larger social processes such as social change or migration. The question of rationality raised by Crow (1990) influenced the perspective
used in my study. Moving away from a solely rationalistic framework, I analyse micro components of life strategies by examining emotions, class and national identity as key elements of non-strategic spheres of behaviour.

The notion of strategy in Western perspectives attributes some sense of dignity and control over individual lives, which are often governed by conflicting intentions and myriad possibilities for engaging with social and cultural contexts. In this study for example, this relates to the requirements of Australian migration policy, migrants’ desire to escape or disassociate themselves from structural constraints in the Ukraine, and the norms of behaviour required of them by Ukrainian society.

2.3.2 East European post-Soviet sociological perspective

The concept of life strategy was brought to Soviet sociology in the 1960s. It became a particularly popular field of study in the post-Soviet period, because it was a model that could explain the social factors that were important in the crisis. It was especially useful in relation to changes in social values that took place during the post-Soviet transition stage of development. It was also seen as a useful tool for assessing the population’s reaction to the ongoing transition.

In order to get a better understanding of the processes taking place, post-Soviet East European social scientists began to undertake analyses of the social influences shaping individual lives. Their attention was focused on the problem of understanding how people’s orientations, lifestyles, cultural lives and ideas of self-realisation shaped individual life trajectories. The study of life strategy emerged in a range of fields of Ukrainian and Russian scholarship in the 1990s. A key field of enquiry was the nature and characteristics of life strategies (Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1991; Reznik and Reznik, 1995, 1996; Vasilyieva and Demchenko, 2002; Smirnov, 2002; Zlobina, 2003; Bevzenko, 2008; Belyaeva, 2001). Another area of life strategy studies explored the factors influencing the formation and implementation of life strategies (Naumova, 1995; Fedorova, 2008; Zlobina and Tykhonovych, 1996). Also, Ukrainian and Russian scholars investigated the typologies of life strategies in post-Soviet societies in transition (Zaslavskaia, 1999; Babenko, 2004; Zlobina and Tykhonovych, 2001; Reznik and Reznik, 1996).
The first important work in the field of East European life strategy studies is the work of Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991), which is fundamental to understanding the theoretical concept of life strategy as it is used today. She approaches the concept of life strategy by assessing the social and psychological maturity of individual personalities, which, she argues, manifests itself in the ability of an individual to combine their status, age, capabilities and personal aspirations with the claims and requirements of society. The ability to make the connection between these variables constitutes what the author defines as an individual life strategy. More precisely, the author considers a life strategy to reflect the ability of individuals to interweave their identity with their living conditions. In a broader sense, Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991) argues that life strategy is concerned more with a long-term projection than with the numerous short-term tactics of everyday life. A strategy of life is a “principle, realised in different life conditions and circumstances, and a person's ability to compound his/her individuality with his/her living conditions, for his/her reproduction and development” (1991, p. 245). In a narrow sense, it is the development of certain life solutions to overcome life's contradictions.

Another important work by Reznik and Reznik (1995), the prominent scholars in the field of life strategy studies, suggests a slightly different interpretation to Abulkhanova-Slavskaya’s (1991) conceptualisation of life strategy. Reznik and Reznik’s (1995) concept of life strategy informs the life strategy research framework used in this study. According to these scholars, individual life strategy can be seen as “symbolically mediated and ideal formation, which is realised in human behavior, its priorities and guidelines” (Reznik and Reznik, 1995, p. 101). At the same time, Reznik in his later work (Reznik and Smirnov, 2002) presents a system-dynamic approach to life strategies, arguing that a life strategy is a “dynamic system of long-term orientation of the individual, including a change (formation) in accordance with a specific plan and given terms of socio-cultural development” (p. 99). The key idea here is the dynamic life strategy component of change. Reznik and Smirnov’s (2002) approach extends Abulkhanova-Slavskaya’s (1991) perspective.

Though Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991), Reznik and Reznik (1995) and Reznik and Smirnov (2002) made strides in developing this theory, the main limitation of the post-Soviet East European tradition in defining life strategy was the lack of logical precision and clarity. It was understood either as a system of perspective aspirations and individual orientations, or even more narrowly, as a system of aims, plans, and values. This meant
that the East European conceptual formulations of life strategy could not account for how external factors mediate the achievement of a certain goal. This explains the present misunderstanding and confusion regarding the relationship between individual goals in a life strategy and the means of achieving them.

Some authors give priority to goals, while others place importance on the resources, rules or standards of separate actions. Thus, Golovakha (2000) prefers to use the concept of ‘life prospects’ instead of life strategy, justifying this change in terminology by arguing that his concept is less reductionist and better captures the scope of the life strategy. Life prospects, Golovakha (2000, pp. 226-227) argues, “should be regarded as a complete and complex picture of the future contradictory relationship between programmed and anticipated events, with which the individual connects the social value [of an action] and an individual sense of his life”. I argue that the most theoretically substantiated point of view is that of Reznik and Smirnov (2002, pp. 67-70), who in their work relate not only aims and values to the structuring components of life strategy, but also other components of the activity that orient and guide the behaviour of the individual in a particular social space and time. To put it simply, they take into account structural or external elements as being important in shaping life strategies.

Therefore, central to this study is Reznik and Smirnov’s (2002) concept of life strategy, in which the life strategy is conceptualised as a dynamic, self-adjusting system of socio-cultural presentations of individuals about their own lives, which orient behavior during the protracted period of life determined by the socio-cultural conditions and environment (social institutions and social structures). Their ideas are especially useful when exploring migration as a key event and turning point in life strategy implementation and re-evaluation. It is particularly useful when considering the lives of those individuals who have elected to migrate as the central means of enacting their life strategies, and associated goals of employment, education or marriage. Reznik and Smirnov’s approach to life strategy extends Abulkhanova-Slavskaya’s ideas about the power of life conditions over individual lives. Their approach takes into account, on the one hand, subjective elements — the unique, inimitable, situationally contingent and personalised aspects of life — and on the other hand, objective and structural elements, including normative frameworks and cultural standards.
This discussion makes clear the importance of mapping the structuring components that make up life strategies. In the life strategy scholarship there is no shared opinion regarding the key structuring elements that shape life strategies. Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991) and Legostaeva (2011) argue that life strategy is made up of three components: (1) a value component (as an expression of spiritual-material value orientations), (2) a purpose of life component (as a way to achieve and retain a desired position in life), (3) a meaning of life component (a generalised reflection of needs). Reznik (1996), whose ideas inform this study, argued that “individual life strategy as a complex of motivated activities includes in its structure the following components: (1) life goals, (2) the meaning of life, (3) values and norms and, finally, (4) an image of the future (“dreams”).

The idea that life strategy is built up through values, goals and needs gained support from another life strategy scholar, Golovakha. According to Golovakha (2000, p. 267) “values, life goals and motivated activity plans form the core of life strategy”. Additionally Levada’s (2000) concept of ‘human material’ (which I explain below) supports the idea that when analysing life strategies we cannot omit agency, in his sense the supremacy of structures over agency. Levada (2000) was a scholar who took up Abulkhanova-Slavskaya’s (1991) model to further explore the impact of post-Soviet social transition processes on citizens. Levada was driven not only by an interest in the influence of social institutions or the actions of elite groups on other social actors, but also an interest in the qualities of social actors, which he called ‘human material’ (Levada, 2000, p. 8). Levada’s (2000, p. 8) concept of human material is important for the present study when we look at the impact of structural factors on the formation of life strategies. On the one hand, my participants form an aggregated group that feels the impact and destructive dimensions of transition in the Ukraine and ‘absorbs’ or adapts to them. On the other, it is a collective of individual people whose life worlds are disrupted by regime transition and its impacts on the wider social fabric of Ukrainian society. From this point of view, social transitions are observed as structural factors that not only affect aggregated groups but also individuals as they experience changes in the system of personality and society, which forms their life strategies. In particular, transitions impact their individual agency. A life strategy is always the result of the social experiences of individuals, existing not in isolation from each other, but in the same social and cultural milieus (structural social and cultural space).
In this study I suggest a modified approach to the composition of life strategies that both expands and refines the life strategy approach. I define four key elements based on a revision of the aforementioned insights into the component parts of life strategy: aims, needs, values and sense of agency. The interplay of the content of these elements leads to the formation of different types of life strategies. As you will have noticed following Reznik’s definition of life strategy as a phenomenon with subjective and objective dimensions, I argue that aims, needs, values and sense of agency form the micro dimension/content of life strategy, while structural factors — the conditions that constitute the social field in which personal dimensions are formed and enacted — forms the macro dimension of life strategy. These different dimensions of the life strategy research framework, and their application to the study of migrants’ life strategies, are described in more detail later in this chapter.

2.3.3 Typologies of life strategies

Life strategies vary by types. Though Reznik and Reznik (1995), Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991) and Reznik and Smirnov (2002) were important in the development of aspects of the Eastern European life strategy field, other scholars were key in the development of typologies of life strategies. Modern scholars in the post-Soviet East European academy are actively using (in modified and supplemented ways) the classification developed by Reznik and Reznik (1995). The most conspicuous life strategy typologies — those developed by Zaslavskaya (1999), Zlobina and Tykhonovych (2001) and Babenko (2004) — applied Reznik and Reznik’s ideas to the context of post-Soviet actors' responses to the transition. These four life strategy typologies are based on research into life strategies among individuals inside crisis societies in the post-Soviet period.

I address Reznik and Reznik’s (1995) typology first, as it is considered the mother typology for the other three typologies. Reznik and Reznik suggest that there are three main types that unite the range of life strategies available to individuals: (1) the welfare strategy, (2) success strategy and (3) self-realisation strategy. According to these scholars, the ‘welfare strategy’ is one of the most common types of life strategy, and is characterised by the following features: receptive (“acquisition”) activity and reference-group (correlative) consumption, prevalence of the attitude for acquiring (rather than creating) welfare, the desire for material comfort and maximum life security, the dominance of the image of a stable and peaceful life. The ‘success strategy’ is seen as a fairly common and
appealing type of life strategy, characterised by such features as achievement-driven activity and active life position, transformational activities and a focus on high performance, the ability to live and work in conditions of uncertainty and risk, originality and diversity in the selection and implementation of cultural lifestyles, a steady focus on external recognition and approval by others. The ‘self-realisation strategy’ is the third type of life strategy. Reznik and Reznik (1995, pp. 78-84) and later Smirnov (2002, pp. 35-36) describe it as characterised by a conscious and practical setting of the individual to creative change and transformation of his/her own life, for the purpose of self-improvement and self-development.

The differences between the types of life strategies clearly separate the life positions that individuals adopt throughout their lives, and in relation to other individuals. The impact of structures and institutions on the formation of life strategies emerge as an important element in the typology of life strategies that is used in this particular study. Thus, some elements of the typology suggested by Zaslavskaya (2001) are useful. Building on her theory of post-Soviet transition, Zaslavskaya (2001) defines four classes of life strategies: (1) achievement, (2) adaptation, (3) regression and (4) destruction. In adaptation strategies, the author addresses the notion of survival, which underlies the ‘survival life strategy’ type employed in this study. The survival life strategy type in this study appears as “a commitment to social survival, maintaining the same or at least a minimum acceptable social status. Such commitment is an important function to increase the adaptability of an individual to the difficult conditions of a changing world" (Zaslavskaya, 2001, p. 15). Zaslavskaya’s typology adds a structural dimension to the typology of Reznik and Reznik, who focus to a greater extent on individual and personal features of life strategy types.

The life strategy typology applied in this study consists of two types of life strategies, which appear as the opposites of one another. I argue that in this case study Ukrainian migrants’ life strategies are not productively explained by the tripartite typology that Reznik and Reznik propose, nor the four types of life strategies that Zaslavskaya identifies in her studies of Russian society. Instead, the dichotomy of life strategy types used in this study was informed by the developments of the Ukrainian scholars Zlobina and Tykhonovych (2001). In the late 1990s, they built a categorical dichotomy of life strategies, proposing a survival strategy as the opposite to the strategy of life creation and construction. They argue that these types of life strategies are based on the level of
adaptation to post-Soviet transition: from voluntary, “successful and positive” adaptation to “forced” adaptation to social change (2001, pp. 85-86). I draw on their theoretical developments to define the survival and achievement life strategy types used in this study, which are described later in this section.

Babenko (2004), a Ukrainian sociologist who studies social practices, life strategies and the mechanisms of post-communist societal transformations, supports the ideas of Reznik and Reznik (1995) and Zlobina and Tykhonovych (2001). She proposes that the level of adaptation to transition is the strongest indicator of the real social situation and direction of social development of a society in transition. Babenko has distinguished four life strategy types: (1) achievement strategy, (2) adaptation strategy, (3) exclusion strategy and (4) survival strategy. Babenko’s division is based on the following criteria, which determine the strategy content: (1) the way social status is reproduced (advanced, simple and truncated) and, therefore, the decline or increase of life chances and opportunities; (2) the degree and quality of adaptation to changing conditions of social reality (successful, uncertain (unstable), failed (inability or refusal to adapt)); (3) the degree to which new opportunities are taken up in conditions of rapid change within post-Soviet transformation processes (Babenko, 2004). Such typology frames are the elements that fill these strategies with content and inform results.

Babenko’s typology, as well as Zlobina and Tykhonovych’s, was developed as an explanatory model relevant for those Ukrainians who stayed in Ukraine and experienced the post-Soviet transition period. Given this study investigates Ukrainians who utilised international migration to enact their life strategies, the exclusion and adaptation strategies are not applicable to the investigation of migrants’ life strategies. Ukrainian migrants did exclude themselves from socio-economic life in Ukraine, to the extent that they were marginalized and forced to adapt to changes and chose to leave Ukraine.

In this study I use a two-fold typology of life strategy, which consists of two types of life strategies. The content of these two types of life strategies is informed in a modified way by all of the mentioned above life strategy typologies. However, the core of this life strategy typology mainly draws on developments of Reznik and Reznik (1995) and Babenko (2004). The two-fold modified typology used in this study, consisting of the survival and achievement life strategy types, provides a space to explore the combination
of tools and resources employed in the formation and implementation of Ukrainian migrants’ life strategies. These different forms of life experiences correspond to the two main types of life strategies: achievement and survival strategies.

The first type — the achievement life strategy — in the context of migration is presented as a life strategy type directed towards achievement, self-realisation, the use of new possibilities (extensive goals) and the extended re-creation of social and economic status (Babenko, 2004). The main pre-condition of the achievement strategy is the motivational activity ("achievement") counted on public recognition (Reznik & Reznik, 1995).

The second type — the survival life strategy — is a life strategy type directed towards limited re-creation at the level of physical survival, which also entails a decline in social and economic status, self-restraint and a decline of life chances (Reznik & Reznik, 1995). Individuals engaged in a survival life strategy aim to achieve the maximum available and possible goals, which recreates self-limitation (Reznik & Reznik, 1996). According to Reznik and Reznik (1995), within the survival life strategy individuals set themselves the most accessible aims and thus provide for their own or collective (e.g. family) survival needs.

Another important idea for this study emerging from the literature on life strategy typologies is the correlation between the type of life strategy and level of socio-economic development of the country of origin. This idea that different types of life strategies emerge in response to structural and institutional changes is important for this study. Since the early 1990s the analysis of post-Soviet social reality spawned a series of widely used terms, such as: ‘survival strategies’ and ‘adaptation strategies’, as opposed to the notion of ‘achievement strategies’. The life strategy studies, analysed above, emphasised that the latter type of strategy had dominated in the former Soviet Union. Scholarship suggests that achievement strategies, being dynamic, risk-taking, future-oriented and ‘creative’ strategies, are typical for societies where individualism, free market economics and pluralism dominate (Reznik and Reznik, 1996). In today's Westernised societies the strategy to achieve success in life can be seen as the most popular strategy. The types of life strategies I examine in the Ukrainian case — as is representative of some other post-Soviet societies — demonstrates that post-Independent Ukraine was not a purely individualistic, sovereign and wholly democratic society yet. It is still on its way to
becoming a welfare based, egalitarian state, where disadvantaged socio-economic groups are not struggling for survival but are strong enough to compete for achievement and success. It has been argued that life strategies of adaptation and survival are most prevalent in traditional and crisis societies (Reznik, 1995). The countries in crisis promote conditions such as low levels of production and services, economic crisis, a lack of democratic traditions, and authoritarian forms of government.

As life strategy studies have shown, the life strategy types that dominated in the early years of post-Soviet transition in Ukraine were based on survival, while achievement strategies started to emerge later on when Ukrainian economic and social life became more stable and thus, created the preconditions for achievement. In March 2013, O. Zlobina, the Head of the Department of Social Psychology at the Institute of Sociology (National Academy of Science of Ukraine), reported that “27 per cent of Ukrainians applied adaptation strategies; 32 per cent [engaging in] avoidance/exclusion [strategies]. Another 25 per cent have an indefinite life strategy” (Daily Lviv News, 2013).

Referring to the data from the “Ukrainian Society: Monitoring of Social Change” project, she also noted that recently the group of people using the strategy of avoidance/exclusion has steadily decreased — from 45 per cent in 1997 to 32 per cent in 2012. There was also a noticeable decline in the group of Ukrainians identified as engaging in strategies of adapting — from 36 per cent in 2003 to 27 per cent in 2012. Meanwhile, a group of those who are identified as people who engage in achievement life strategies has doubled — from 8 per cent in 2003 to 16 per cent in 2012 (Daily Lviv News, 2013) and then remained almost unchanged. This research in Ukraine fails to address how life strategies are enacted by Ukrainians outside of/leaving the country, and how life strategies are transformed through migration. What does it mean ‘to survive’ and ‘to achieve’ for Ukrainians who migrated from Ukraine since Independence? I will address this question in the following section, utilising the life strategy research framework.

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4 The "Ukrainian Society: Monitoring of Social Change" is an annual social project coordinated by the Institute of Sociology since 1992. It consists of a survey of the Ukrainian population with a sampling of about 1,800 respondents (aged over 18). It aims to be representative across such variables as gender, age, education, region and type of settlement. Center "Socis" conducts the fieldwork.
2.4 Part three: life strategy research framework

In this section, I draw on the material set out in Part One and Part Two to develop a life strategy research framework that is appropriate for the research being undertaken. This research framework was created in order to illustrate and explain the main concepts that inform the notion of life strategy as it is applied to migrants, to inform the methodological setting of this study and to guide the logic of data analysis. The research framework was developed for this particular study based on a combination of the existing research on societal transition and life strategies.

Using a structure-agency theoretical approach, this life strategy research framework relies on the mutual determination between structure and agency. The interplay between structure and agency is viewed as key to understanding the complex phenomenon of life strategy formation and implementation in the context of migration. The emphasis of this framework is not purely on agency or structure, but rather at the integrated level. The integrated level is shaped by the interrelation between micro dimensions (aims, values, needs and sense of agency) and macro dimensions (the structural context) in the formation of two different types of life strategies.

Taking as its central standpoint the differentiation between the micro and macro dimensions that shape life strategies, this life strategy approach has two scopes: agency/content and structure/context. Within the life strategy research framework these two scopes will be referred to as: ‘life strategy micro components’ and ‘life strategy macro factors’. As discussed in Part Two, the ‘micro components’ of life strategy inform the internal content of the life strategies of migrants. The content of these four micro components is analysed and revealed in the data analysis (set out in chapters five and eight) and is used to substantiate my argument that differentiates between two types of life strategies — survival and achievement — as well as across migration time periods.

Both agency and structure are critical to the life strategy perspective used in this study. The kind of aims, needs, values and sense of agency that Ukrainian migrants possess largely depends on the direction of the post-Soviet transition and migration policy regulations. I understand structure to be the field where agency is being enacted. This field is represented by economic structures, government politics, national and international events, and policy that regulates migration. This is the field in which participants build their life strategies. In
In this study, the structure is conceptualised as macro factors. These factors are observable in the ‘external’ logic of the life strategy research framework through the analysis of the events and life situations of individuals before they utilise international migration as a tool to realise the micro components of their life strategy. By events I mean the actual and organised (regulated and institutional) action carried out at the macro level. These events include political, economic or social events in post-Independent Ukraine, and migration policy regulations in Australia that impact on the behavior of individuals at the micro level and create a specific life situation in which Ukrainians conceive of their migration trajectories.

The two-fold, modified life strategy typology used to investigate the life strategies of Ukrainians in Australia is structured so that survival and achievement life strategies correspond to certain combinations of micro components and macro factors. Therefore, the research framework developed in this study is driven by the aim to explain and generate insight into the bifurcation of post-Independence Ukrainian migrants into these two opposing life strategy types: (1) dynamic, risk-taking and future-oriented achievement life strategies and (2) conservative, risk-minimising and survival-oriented survival life strategies.

The use of micro and macro factors is not sufficient to understand the nature of life strategies of the individuals who pursue migration. For this reason, I propose the two layers of the temporal and spatial. The spatial and temporal layers are the frames in which the studied phenomenon takes place. The temporal layer investigates how life strategies are shaped across two different post-Independence migration periods: 1991–2003 and 2004–2013. The spatial layer of analysis of the life strategies of Ukrainian migrants in Australia analyses across three sites: 1) Before migration: in Ukraine, 2) During migration: the actual space of migration, immigration streams and tactics, 3) After migration: in Australia.

In considering the spatial dimensions of migration, I draw on the conceptual difference between space and place that has been developed in recent debates in geography. When defining place, I rely on the definition that has been applied by several authors (Massey, 1994; Agnew, 1987; Martin, 2003), who conceptualise place as a socially constructed reality, that is constituted through individuals and their interactions with physical space, locals and environments. I leave aside the disciplines that have concentrated on only one
dimension of place such as, for instance, gender studies that mainly stress the construction of masculine spaces (Saar and Palang, 2009), which see places mainly as socially produced (Hubbard et al., 2004). The spatial layer of life strategy research framework relates to the unity of geographical space and the meanings attached to socially constructed places. In applying this understanding, I follow the logic of Entrikin (1991), who suggested the concept of the “betweenness of places” which brings together the individualistic meanings attached to place and the objective “naturalistic qualities of place” (geography). As such, I have used the notion of space as a meeting point of the subjective (socially constructed meanings migrants attach to place) and objective space (the actual physical reality of a geographic place).

By investigating the three spatial sites – Ukraine pre-migration, transit and Australia post-migration - I want to analyse how these spaces were approached by representatives of the two different types of life strategies. The two life strategy types are implemented differently across these three sites, and depending on the period of migration and on the naturalistic qualities that these sights gained across historical periods. The life strategies of post-Independence Ukrainian migrants to Australia spanning three spatial sites reveal both the macro factors (geography) and micro components (individual socially constructed meanings) of the two life strategy types.

Subsequently, the life strategy research framework builds upon a combination of life strategy macro factors and micro components across three spatial sites and two temporal fields that shape the life strategies of migrants. The research framework developed for this study integrates the analysis of life strategies of achievement and survival with other key ideas, namely, migration, social identities and emotions. These are explored in the remainder of the chapter.

2.4.1 Migration
Another important concept that serves as a basis for the life strategy research framework is migration. As noted, this study is not about migration per se, but it sits within the migration context. The analysis approaches migration only as it is associated with post-Soviet transition in Ukraine and the life strategies of those who left the country as a part of that transition. The category of ‘migrants’ is a category used to describe the group of actors whose life strategies are examined.
The vast literature on international migration in the Asia-Pacific region explores numerous aspects of cross-country mobility: migration in the global context within the development of capitalism, colonial expansion and imperialism (Castles and Miller, 2009; Castles, 2010; Massey, 1988; Massey et al., 1998; O'Reilly, 2012); skilled migration as a ‘substantial contribution’ to the workforce in the era of globalisation (Arunachalam & Healy, 2009; Hugo, 2004; Florida 2005; Kuptsch & Pang, 2006); academic mobility as ‘brain mobility’ (Bauder, 2003; Kenway & Fahey, 2006; 2009; Williams, 2006); family, social networks and migration (Vertovec, 2002; Gill & Bialska, 2011; Kennedy, 2004; Scott, 2007; Castles, 2010); migration policy (Boucher, 2013; Markus et al. 2009; Hugo, 2006a; 2006b; Arunachalam & Healy, 2009); gender-sensitive and feminist perspectives to different aspects of labour and marriage migration and transnational motherhood (Hugo, 2000; Harzig, 2001; Yeoh et al., 2001; Basok et al., 2013; Hondagneu-Stoleo & Avila, 1997; Parrenas, 2001; Constable, 1999; Morokvasic, 2004; Cohen, 2000; Stasiulis & Bakan, 2005). My direction in this study is different. I analyse how individuals organise their life strategies around the (sometimes traumatic) events of transition and migration, and what happens to their life strategy models in the face of future change after migration.

In this line, there is a number of studies of migration that have recently taken place in the context of rapid social change (Genov & Savvidis, 2011; Genov, 2008; Kutsenko, 2007). Genov & Savvidis (2011) explored recent spontaneous trans-boundary migration of the two migrant cohorts from Armenia and Georgia into Russian Federation. The study is based on the event-monitoring and qualitative data, 65 expert interviews and 1,600 interviews with migrant, at all stages of the migration cycle (before, during and after migration). Similar to my research project, Genov & Savvidis (2011) deal with a variety of political, economic and cultural issues that challenged South Caucasian republics and Moscow after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Genov (2008) presents the results of the international research project Comparing Societal Integration of Ethnic Minorities (InterEthno), conducted by number of scholars in Ukraine, Russian Federation, Moldova, Bulgaria and Germany. Genov (2008), includes the study of the present day ethnic relations in terms of the progressing assimilation of ethnic minorities in the post-independence Ukraine (Kutsenko, 2007).

The studies that overtly discuss structure and agency in relation to migration is limited. One of the attempts to link structuration and practice theories to increase our understanding of migration, is the study by Faist (2000). Faist’s (2000) main focus is on the ‘meso link’
that bridges micro and macro-level theories. However, it does not really consider the extent to which these theories are compatible in terms of their fundamental building blocks. Another study of migration and identity in Hong Kong by Findlay and Li (1999) explores the international migration as a process that is shaped both by international migration legislation (macro-structure) and by potential migrants making decisions related to their interpretations of their identities (micro-structure). Morawska’s (2001) study of Polish migration to Western Europe conceptualises migration as a structuration process, emphasising the agency of social actors to innovate and reinterpret the rules of the game. The existence of so few studies demonstrates how uncommon it still is to use the concepts structure and agency to study migration. The migration literature to date has a limited engagement with both theories despite their fundamental importance.

Because migration is the context for studying life strategies, it is worth mentioning here the perceptible lack of specialised research on post-Independence Ukrainian migration to Australia. I find it useful to briefly reflect on the historical chronology of Ukrainian migration to Australia before Ukrainian Independence. The following brief history of Ukrainian immigration maps the context of Ukrainian arrivals into Australia that precedes the wave of post-Independence migration.

### 2.4.1.1 Brief history of Ukrainian migration to Australia

Ukrainian immigration to Australia has a long history. Throughout the entire history of the Ukrainian nation there are three periods that can be identified as Ukrainian migration waves to Australia: (1) post-World War I and the Russian Civil War; (2) post-World War II (end of the 1940s–the early 1950s); (3) post-Independence (the early 1990s–present) (Chumak, 1991).

The first ethnic Ukrainians from Western Ukraine are known to have settled in Australia as early as 1860. Historians indicate that immediately after World War I, Australia settled the first wave — the first organised group — of immigrants from Ukraine, which strengthened the existing Ukrainian communities by infusing them with members from a range of political, scientific, and cultural backgrounds. However, scholarly works suggest that before World War II, the total number of Ukrainians was insignificant and many did not identify as Ukrainians.
The second wave of Ukrainian immigration to Australia traces its substance to the arrival of post-World War II refugees from war-torn Europe, which saw an increase in the Ukrainian diaspora in 1945–1950s. These refugees were termed ‘displaced persons’ and began arriving in 1948, refusing to return to the USSR (Chumak, 1991). Analysing social truncation of the post-War Ukrainian community, it should be noted that about 30–40 per cent were political refugees; the rest were workers who were taken to Germany and decided not to return to the motherland. Immigrants aged from 20 to 40 signed a two-year contract to work in a variety of industries and the service sector (Yekelchyk, 2001, p. 13). While the men worked, their women and children remained in special organised camps. After the successful completion of work contracts, immigrants were eligible for the right to permanent residence in Australia. Most of them shifted to large cities, primarily to administrative centers. According to the Federation of Ukrainian Associations in Australia, 35 per cent of Ukrainians settled in New South Wales, 32.6 per cent in Victoria, 16.7 per cent in South Australia, 7.3 per cent in Western Australia (Perth) 5.8 per cent in Queensland, 1.5 per cent in Tasmania and 1.5 per cent in the Australian Capital Territory (Shevchenko Scientific Society in Australia, 1966, p. 83).

Resettlement reached its peak between 1949 and 1953; afterwards it abruptly began to wane (Shlepakov, 1991). The initial estimates for the Ukrainian population in Australia are given in the official publication *Australian Immigration: Consolidated Statistics* (Wooden et al., 1990). As Ukrainian immigrants who arrived before 1949–1950 were credited to the migrants from the USSR and Poland, it is impossible to give a precise number of Ukrainians who came to Australia. However, this source makes it possible to calculate the number of people who identified Ukraine in the category ‘Former Country of Citizenship’ when applying for Australian citizenship. From January 1945 until the end of 1970 (when almost all post-War Ukrainian migrants in Australia had become Australian citizens) there were 20,608 Ukrainians in the country, or 10 per cent of the total number of Ukrainians who had escaped to Germany and Austria at that time (Seneta, 1993).

In subsequent years, the number of immigrants to Australia from Ukraine was insignificant due to the closure of the Soviet Union, except for streams of Jewish immigration. However, at the end of 1980s there was a slight intensification of Ukrainian immigration
that resulted in a new wave of immigration in the 1990s. This was a period of perestroyka\(^5\) within the post-Soviet space, which is related to the destruction of the Soviet Union. The total number of Ukrainians in Australia in this period was approximately 34,000 people, representing 0.2 per cent of the total Australian population (ABS, 2011).

Consequently, the 1990s saw a third wave of Ukrainian immigration to Australia. Over a period of five years, the flow of Ukrainian emigration to Australia was numbered at 4,500 people, and in 1996 the number of persons born in Ukraine was 13,500. Up until 2001, the flow of Ukrainian immigration to Australia increased by 5 per cent, with 14,100 people (Serbin, 2006, p. 307). Today, there is a vibrant, albeit small, Ukrainian community of between 30 and 50 thousand people, predominantly living in Melbourne and Sydney. The vast majority of people born in Ukraine live in the states of Victoria (5,800), New South Wales (5,000), South Australia (1,500) and Queensland (880) (ABS, 2006).

2.4.2 Social identities: national identity and class

In this section I want to link the life strategy micro components to the idea of social identity. Life strategy scholars have assumed that the choice of life strategy type depends on characteristics of social identity such as national identity and class. The concept of social identity informs the life strategy research framework used in the analysis of the micro components, which are developed further in the analytical chapters of the thesis.

The social identity approach stems from social psychology of the 1970s, as a theory of intergroup relations (Tajfel, 1974). It explains how and when social groups, understood in terms of ethnicity, nationality or an organisational affiliation, become psychologically real and how intergroup belief structures predict the intergroup behaviors of different social groups. During the 1980s–1990s, the social identity approach continued to explore the implications of social identity in myriad contexts, including the life strategy context. As suggested by East European (Ukrainian and Russian) life strategy scholars, the life strategy choice is determined by the social identities of actors (Naumova, 1995; Reznik & Reznik, 1996). In a broad sense, life strategy is determined by a variety of social phenomenon ranging from the socio-economic condition of society, the level of development of its

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\(^5\) The term literally translates as “restructuring” and refers to the change in USSR’s political and economic system triggered by its last (1985-1991) leader Mikhail Gorbachev.
culture, the method of production and system of property relations, the level and quality of life, particular social class membership and the influence of traditions, ideals and values of the dominant group in a given historical moment.

The micro components of the achievement and survival life strategies of migrants in this study are analysed through the prism of social identities, which are applied in relation to national and class identities. Exploring shifts in national and class identities after migration is important in analysing how achievement and survival life strategies are built within the migration context. National and class identities are used as an indicator of integration success in society (Zlobina & Tykhonovych, 1996).

However, it is crucial to stress that the definition and content of these forms of social identity are also dependent on their practical expression through behaviour. An identity is sustainable only to the extent that it can be expressed in practice (Klein et al., 2007) through the forms such as physical action and the manipulation of physical appearance (including displays, symbols, signs) and the verbal expression of representations and attitudes viewed as normative (e.g. stereotypes and prejudice). Identity performance in this life strategy study means the purposeful expression (or suppression) of behaviours relevant to those norms conventionally associated with a social identity. It is important to stress that identity performance pertains specifically to social identities. The key to performance is the concept of self-presentation (Baumeister, 1982; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Leary & Kowalsky, 1990; Schlenker & Weigold, 1992). In this study I examine the social identities of migrants through their self-representation, focusing in particular on the way they talk about themselves and which groups they identify as important to their lives in Australia. I am concerned with those cases where the performance of achievement and survival life strategies is governed by the different national and class identities of migrants.

Class as the second component of social identity that is used in this study to examine the life strategies of achievement and survival is complex. When considering national identity in relation to life strategy of migrants before migration it is the same, but it becomes important when they arrive in the destination country (in our case Australia). However, it is more complex for class. Reznik and Reznik (1996, p.12) argue that the “carriers of different life strategies are representatives of different social classes”. The social base of the life strategy of achievement is the class of professionals and scientific and cultural
intelligentsia, who are entrepreneurs, managers, writers, artists and politicians. According to Reznik and Reznik (1996), the survival life strategy is typical of marginalised groups and those engaged primarily in manual labor (the blue-collar class). Therefore, there is a link between social class and life strategy. This link informs the distinction between the cohorts of ‘transition migrants’ - implementing survival strategies - and ‘dividend migrants’ – implementing achievement life strategies.

2.4.3 Emotions

Another key idea in the life strategy research framework is emotions. Emotions are a crucial element of life strategies and go hand-in-hand with the analysis of motivations for migration and migration outcomes in Australia. This indissoluble union comes from the recognition that the reasons behind people’s behaviour, — even in relation to its rationality — are emotional (Lakoff, 2012). As Lakoff has argued, rationality and emotions are inseparable elements: “You can’t act rationally without emotion. Rationality requires emotion” (Lakoff, 2012, p. 12). In this study of life strategies, migration as a physical act and a tool for the realisation of life strategies is clearly linked to the emotional stance of migrants. Emotions related to migration were depicted as a highly significant and important part of the study, and were a means through which migrants reflected on their past and present lives, both ‘here’ and ‘there’, and evaluated their migration experiences as part of their life strategy.

The study of emotions became spread in social science scholarship quite recently, since late 1990s - early 2000s. For today, the contemporary works of social scientists broadly theorize emotions in the contexts of affect and shame (Probyn, 2004, 2005; Ahmed, 2004), within the personal spheres and intimacies (Berlant, 2006, 2007, 2011) and bring together the emotions and issues of gender or ethnicity or race (Ahmed, 2013; Damousi, 2012). Migration studies explore emotional stances of migrants predominantly within a context of transnational family and belonging (Skrbiš, 2008; Svašek, 2008, 2010). In these study emotions are viewed as shaping migrants and their experience of migration. Migration is approached as a disruptive event in terms of temporality and space, which means that the “migration move” assumes greater significance in the context of the larger “life journey”. Ryan (2008) defines migration as an experience that continues to be felt over time with life changes such as marriage and motherhood. Within the life strategy research framework, migration is interpreted as “an ongoing emotional journey” (Ryan, 2008, p. 301) that
involves the management of feelings of loneliness and homesickness. This is applicable for all migrants, regardless of gender.

Analysing emotions is particularly important during the post-migration period as they were intensely experienced at this time. Probing the emotional worlds of migrants, my analysis strives to understand the subjective perceptions of the new reality of the immigration space and the emotional colouring of migration experiences, which shapes life strategies after migration. Migration stories, as well as reflections on reasoning and the process of cultural and social integration, are always emotional (Christou, 2011).

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the key ideas and concepts that build up the life strategy research framework and inform the methodology and the analytical logic presented in the data analysis chapters that follow. As such, the life strategy research framework provides the underlying structure of the thesis. In the next Chapter I explain how these theoretical ideas are empirically applied in the research design and methodology.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This research examines the life strategies of two cohorts of Ukrainian migrants in Australia, who are associated with two distinct periods of immigration into Australia: (1) 1991–2003 ‘transition migrants’ and (2) 2004–2013 ‘dividend migrants’. The selection of these two groups enables a comparative case study to be made of two life strategy types—survival and achievement—that are distinctively polarised in the stories of the post-independence Ukrainian migrants in Australia according to their immigration period. This chapter explains the methodology that was developed and applied to the research.

The case study research design that is used extensively in the social sciences (Crow et al., 2011) sets the two cohorts of migrants in their real-world contexts (e.g. Bromley, 1986, p. 1). As with other case studies, this study started with an initial theoretical perspective, suggesting a simple set of relationships between structure and agency that shape two types of life strategies. Hence, the methodology of this case study is informed by the life strategy research framework presented in the previous chapter. By explaining, describing and exploring the life strategies of migrants in the contexts in which they occur (Yin, 1994), application of the case study approach helped to understand and illuminate causal links between the period of migration and the type of life strategy adopted.

Under this umbrella methodological framework of the case study were two key methods that were used to shape the project and elicit information. The first was the collection and assessment of secondary data resources on economics, politics and demography in Ukraine and migration policy in Australia. The second was conducting qualitative interviews. The interviews were analysed using a thematic coding approach and a variation of narrative analysis. The thematic coding approach was informed by the structure of the interview guide and by the theoretical life strategy research framework explained in the Chapter Two.
3.2 Two-fold methodology

As explained this research was framed in terms of the structure/agency theoretical tradition to study life strategies. This structure and agency approach in turn shaped the selection of the two methods. Simply put, the structure/agency dichotomy maps onto the two methods used. The secondary data collection method pertains to the structural issues or the context; the interview enables the capture of information on agency or the content. By bringing together these two different methods this study can present a comprehensive analysis of the two cohorts of Ukrainian migrants in Australia with their polarised life strategies.

The structure/context of the life strategies relates to the formation and background in which the post-independence Ukrainian migrations took place. It includes the economic situation, political situation, demographic situation and trends in the dynamics of emigration from Ukraine. The shifts in Australia migration policy since the 1990s are also analysed as one of the structural preconditions for the formation of the two different types of life strategies of Ukrainian migrants in Australia. The contexts of the life strategies in the two distinctive cohorts (1991–2003 and 2004–2013) were captured in a variety of ways through the analysis of secondary data sources. This helped to form an understanding of the backgrounds of these two groups.

The agency/content of the life strategies is related to aspects of the lives of migrants over which they have control. The content of the life strategies was captured through 51 interviews collected with Ukrainian migrants in Australia. The interviews revealed the micro components of the formation and implementation life strategy through insights into their lives before migration, the actual act of migration (migration streams and visa status resolution) and life after migration.

3.3 First method: secondary data collection

A key aspect of the case study approach is undertaking research that gathers a wide range of resources to help explain or support the research question (Mariano, 2000). This is why the first method applied in this study was the secondary data collection. Secondary data collection and its review and analysis involves collecting and analysing a vast array of information. Secondary data is literally demarcated as “second-hand” data. In this study secondary data is the information that was gathered by someone else (e.g. researchers, institutions, government departments, NGOs, etc.) or for some other purpose than the one
currently being considered (Cnossen, 1997). As “it is always wise to begin any research activity with a review of the secondary data” (Novak, 1996), the method of secondary data collection was applied before the interviews were collected and analysed. Resources gathered for the analysis of the two life strategy contexts for the two migrant cohorts were varied. They included:

1) Aggregated statistical data: State Statistic Service of Ukraine; The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), which was renamed in 2014 for The Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP); Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

2) Research publications/secondary data analytics/media: articles in peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, encyclopaedias, media sources (newspapers, online media portals).

3) Government/parliamentary materials: reports of migration reforms in Australia; Ukraine Parliamentary Committee reports; official records of parliamentary debates; treaties and other international agreements.

4) Reports of international organisations: International Organization for Migration (IOM); World Bank; United Nations; Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS); Centre of Sociological Research (CSR); etc. Data from the Extended Migration Profile (2011) funded by the European Union’s Thematic Programme, and data from the Migration Profile of Ukraine (2013) prepared by Ukrainian and international experts within the framework of the EU-funded ILO project “Effective Governance of Labour Migration and its Skills Dimensions”, was also used.

5) Survey data: Ukrainian nation-wide annual survey polls (with a sampling of about 1,800 respondents aged over 18) conducted by the Institute of Sociology in Ukraine since 1992, titled “Ukrainian Society: Survey of Social Change”. The results of the survey “Final Results of the Year 2010” conducted with 45 experts by the Ukrainian Foundation “Democratic Initiative” are also used.

Unlike the theoretical literature review on the topic of the post-Soviet transition presented in Chapter Two, the secondary data analysis was used to explore and provide insight into the practical economic, political, and demographic and migration context of post-independence life in Ukraine via the resources listed above (see Chapter Four). Furthermore, the comparative case study had to rely on the range of materials, statistics
and information on Ukrainian migration to Australia and Australian migration policy since the 1990s. The process of finding information on Ukrainian migration to Australia and trends related to it was complicated by the fact that there is relatively little empirical and statistical material on the issue, and absolutely no empirical studies on the current wave of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia since 1991. Therefore, to complement the collection of various migration reports, which provided only a small amount of data and statistics on Ukrainian arrivals in Australia, raw statistical information was also extracted from the State Statistic Service of Ukraine, the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) (former DIAC) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

There was no problem extracting statistical information on the economic, political, demographic and migration situation in Ukraine from the State Statistic Service of Ukraine. Over a three-year period a substantial number of economic and demographic reports about the situation in Ukraine was collected, as well as reports in English on Ukrainian migration trends prepared by the international organisations mentioned above. The situation with accessing statistics on Ukrainian migrations into Australia was completely different. The ABS and DIBP were the main sources of statistical data about Ukrainian arrivals in Australia. The DIBP does not include Ukraine as a separate country in its statistical reports on migration. Ukraine typically appears as a part of the Eastern European countries or post-Soviet bloc in these reports. Nationally, less than 0.1 per cent of Australians were born in Ukraine (ABS, 2011). Therefore, Ukrainian migrations, in comparison to the influx of Chinese, Indian and British people, are insignificant. Subsequent access to settlement data from DIBP, specific to Ukrainian arrivals, further enriched the research.

3.4 Second method: qualitative interviews

The second part of the case study approach was to get an insight into the practical life situations of Ukrainian migrants first hand. To ensure the study was as current and comprehensive as possible, and gathered the most up-to-date information on each of the case studies, it relied on qualitative interview fieldwork. Qualitative research has been described as having the focus on the meanings and interpretations of the social world’s of participants, and provides rich and meaningful data about their experiences (Liamputong, 2011). It differs from quantitative methodological approaches in the following ways.
Qualitative methods are much less structured than quantitative (Sandelowski, 2000), they provide understanding of the underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations, rather than uncover measurable data to expose facts and patterns in the research. As Asselin (2003) remarked, qualitative research uses particular approaches such as interviews to gain a better understanding of the participant’s perspective.

In this part of the case study the qualitative method provides further in-depth analysis of the content of the life strategies that are investigated through the interviews in combination with participants’ observations and field notes of their non-verbal behaviour. Such a combination has been cited as being important to the reliability, validity, and veracity of qualitative data (Seale & Silverman, 1997; Wengraf, 2001).

3.4.1 Interview data collection

The data was drawn from fieldwork conducted in Australia over eight months (October 2012–May 2013). Forty-nine interviews were conducted in Sydney and two in Wollongong (the third largest city in NSW). The interview map shows the areas where the interviews were conducted (Figure 2).

![Figure 2. Interview map (NSW, Australia)](image)

The interviews were conducted in various settings: at Ukrainian House in Sydney, at a Ukrainian school, at the participants’ residences, in offices, canteens, and sometimes even in bars and city parks. All participants were very open and willing to share their stories to assist in the research. The interviews lasted for 1½–2 hours on average. Field notes were made from the audio-recordings of the interviews, and all 51 interviews were transcribed.
Confidentiality of the data was ensured by removing all the identifying details of the participants at the stage of transcription. All respondents were assigned pseudonyms to maintain their confidentiality. Further, after checking the applicability of the data, more than half the transcripts were translated from Ukrainian and Russian into English. The database of transcribed interviews encompassed about 1,100 standard A4 pages.

Belonging to the same Ukrainian culture as the respondents, I benefited from an “insider” position. This enabled to observe Ukrainian migrants in community meetings and informal gatherings, as well as engage in individual informal conversations and employment with the Ukrainian Studies Foundation in Australia (USFA) (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. An overview of the data collection strategy

The literature on qualitative methodology in social research (see Creswell, 1994; Crotty, 1998; Etherington, 2004; Patton, 2002) suggests that it requires reflexivity. It sometimes raises the question about whether the “insider” position is a benefit or disadvantage. Breener (2007, p. 163), outlined that Bonner and Tolhurst (2002) proposed three key advantages of being a research “insider”: “a superior understanding of the group’s culture; the ability to interact naturally with the group and its members; and a previously established, and therefore greater, relational intimacy with the group”.

At the same time, research insiders typically face methodological and ethical issues, which may cause disastrous research results, while conducting research and balancing the insider
and researcher roles. The main risks are: a loss of objectivity that may cause the “illusion of sameness” (Pitman, 2002, p. 285), basing interpretations on prior knowledge and experience (DeLyser, 2001; Gerrish, 1997; Hewitt-Taylor, 2002); and the interviewing can be problematised by the assumption among participants that the researcher already knows the answers (which risks not capturing the depth of insight and leaving important interactions between the researcher and the informants unregistered in audio recordings and then transcripts) (Kanuha, 2000; DeLyser, 2001).

Other ethical dilemmas (privacy, confidentiality) may occur when researchers are engaged in applied community research (see Gerrish, 1997; O’Neill, 1989; Dadich, 2003, 2004). While in the field and engaging with the Ukrainian community in Sydney I remained mindful of these risks and was careful not to repeat the mistakes, ensuring that my position as an insider proved to be a help in the interview data collection. Although being an insider to the ethnic group, speaking the same language and being brought up in the shared traditions, as a recent migrant and relatively new to the Ukrainian community in Sydney, I was still an outsider to the community. Therefore, I did not have the advantage as many insider-researchers do of being able to rely primarily on informants with whom I was familiar and felt most comfortable (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002). Furthermore, although my young age was a potential obstacle, being a young woman and naïve researcher created a more open and trusting atmosphere while interviewing and facilitated access to the group.

On the basis of the data collected through an insider’s access to the Ukrainian community in Sydney, particularly through research observation, participation in academic events organised by the community, historical data collection and employment with USFA, I received secondary essential background information that led to a greater degree of generalisation of the research findings and which served as a reference point in the narrative analysis.

3.4.2 Recruitment and respondents’ selection

The most challenging part of the empirical fieldwork was to find and recruit the participants for the interviews. The target interview group, Ukrainian migrants who came to Australia between 1991 and 2013, turned out to be a cohort that was difficult to access. The representatives of the post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia (since 1991) appeared to be passive in community life and were hard to reach during community
gatherings, celebration events and at church. A snowball sampling technique made it possible to reach these hidden populations (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002, p. 152). As a typical and widely used practice in similar studies of migration and life strategies, it is important to note that the snowballing technique can result in relatively homogeneous sample of respondents. Keeping this risk in mind and taking into account the scope of the study and the number of respondents, the interpretative analysis of data in Part 1 and Part 2 of the thesis does not attempt to generalize the findings to all the post-independence Ukrainian migrants to Australia. In other word the results cannot be regarded as exhaustive. Migration situations are mobile and dynamic, and further research is needed on post-independence Ukrainian migrants and their life strategies in Australia. Furthermore, given the fact that snowballing may produce an homogeneous sample, this technique may have had an impact on the sharpening the differences between the two cohorts of participants, in the sense that each cohort was internally similar and therefore seemed more different in comparison.

Before explaining the particular recruitment strategy that was developed, the prerequisite for the selection of respondents will be briefly discussed. The prerequisite for the selection of respondents was the homogeneity of the range of their social characteristics. It allowed to group study participants who met specific criteria and provided a better understanding of the respondents. The main features of the homogeneity of the respondents were age, year of immigration and the status of being the main applicant for emigration to Australia (if coming with other family members). All respondents were aged over 18. Respondents were evenly recruited for the two cohorts. For more details about the respondents characteristics per the two cohorts see sections “2. Respondents’ profiles” in Part One and in Part Two.

The recruitment strategy employed in this project was driven by the concept of ‘passive snowballing’, where participants were asked to discuss the research with friends/contacts who they thought may be interested in volunteering to be participants. The potential new participants were given some information about the study and my contact details so they could independently volunteer to participate in an interview. In order to uphold the ethics principles of passive snowballing, information about the research was spread among Ukrainians with the help of a published announcement in the Ukrainian newspaper “The Free Thought” (also known as “Vilna Dumka”), a weekly Ukrainian newspaper published
in Australia since 1949. The editor of the newspaper, Mark Shumsky, approved the research and agreed to publish the announcement on a weekly basis from August 2012. In addition to this strategy, a chain-referral method (Erickson, 1979, p. 279) of recruitment was used, which is suitable in situations where members of the target population know one another and are densely interconnected (Heckathorn, 2002, p. 12).

3.4.3 Interview script

A semi-structured interview was used because it was less inhibiting than a formal and strictly formatted interview and more open to the natural way in which participants tended to express their experiences. This type of interview is based on a semi-structured conversation designed from the outset to encourage participants to narrate their story and to be reflexive, to animate and revitalise memories and experiences (Denscombe, 2007). The interviews provided an effective means of examining the personal background and motivations behind the decision to migrate, as well as the processes of migration and adaptation patterns. The depth of meaning this reveals is particularly important to facilitating insight and understanding (Gillman, 2000, p. 11; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 138).

An interview script was developed, consisting of a set of questions (Cohen et al., 2007; Patton, 1980), which provided a starting point to guide the interaction. The interview questions were based on the research aims and served as a framework for thematic analysis of the transcribed interview texts. Both prospective and retrospective approaches were used to guide the conversation and capture respondents’ reflections on the past and their visions for the future. The interview script was guided by a set of five themes, each containing a series of questions that fit into the two approaches. The first four themes were classified as retrospective themes and were aimed at finding out about the formation and genesis of the existing events or event-structures of the participants in relation to their lives in Ukraine and upon their arrival in Australia. The fifth theme was classified as a prospective theme. The aim of the questions in this theme was to elicit descriptions from the participants of possible and desirable prospects for their lives.

The first theme titled “Personal background” aimed to explore the background environment of the participant, general features of their primary socialisation, their social origin (economic and social status), level of education and their profession. The second
theme “Reasons, motivations and migration decision-making” was designed to find out the motivation behind their migration and to understand participants’ lives at the moment of making the decision to migrate. The third theme was called “Arrival in Australia”. Theme four, “Adaptation”, was intended to explore the mechanisms used by the Ukrainians to integrate and adapt to their new life. As already mentioned, the fifth theme called for some prospective reflection. For more details see Appendix One: Interview Script.

As noted earlier, interview data collection was supplemented by participants’ observations and field notes, which together helped ensure the reliability, validity, and veracity of the data.

3.5 Analytical framework of the interviews

As already noted, the study relied on a narrative analytical framework to analyse migrants’ life stories woven from the strands of interviews and observations. Using narrative analysis as an analytical strategy helped to reveal the cultural story of Ukrainian migration through the exploration of two types of life strategy construction and implementation. The logic of the analysis is deductive, or, informally, “top-down” logic. Logical deduction is based on the solid theoretical research framework that informs the methodological logic, drives such process of reasoning that leads to the logically certain conclusions.

Narrative is the one of the most widespread ways to interpret and systemise personal experiences. At its simplest, a narrative is viewed as the way to make sense out of personal experiences. Grounded in phenomenological assumptions, narrative analysis is used today in much qualitative research to discover the meaning attached to phenomena experienced by people. We can only develop some understanding of that meaning when people discuss their experiences (Shutz, 1972).

The narrative research tradition is very popular among social scientists today. For many years they have produced a vast summary and outline of texts about narrative research techniques (Riesmann, 1993a, 1993b, 2002, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 2004; Elliot, 2005; Freeman, 1993; Holstein & Gubrium, 1999; Langellier & Peterson, 2004; Ochs & Capps, 2001; Plummer, 2001; Polkinghorne, 1988; Roberts, 2001).
Narrative analysis is applied in many different specific domains. It is widely used in the study of identity within the exploration of personal transitions. For example, Rießman (1993b) used it to analyse post-divorce experiences. Mishler (1999) used it in relation to the trajectories of identity development among a group of artist-craftsmen. Another set of works on narrative analysis used this technique to explore the impact of culture on the construction of narratives (Lee et al., 2004; Nelson, 2004; Daiute, 2004; Chandler et al., 2004). Furthermore, narrative analysis was applied in a set of studies of the traumatic experiences of refugees, especially in relation to forced migration (Eastmond, 2007). A narrative analytical framework was also used to analyse interviews aimed at understanding and explaining the disruptive effect of illness on people’s lives (Bell, 1999). Narrative analysis in its different forms was also applied in the studies of newlyweds and their relationship experiences after marriage (Chadiha, 1989; Planalp et al., 1988; Planalp & Surra, 1992).

This study draws on the examples of narrative analysis in the aforementioned studies of disruptive events, such as chronic illness and marriage/divorce, to understand the disruptive effects of migration. These studies offer analytic solutions for working with narrative accounts of disrupted lives. I purposely bounded the field of disruptive events and pointed out on peculiarities of migration narratives in life strategy context. Similar to illness and marriage/divorce, migration disrupts life, fundamentally changing meanings of the past, while reflecting on the present and forming the future. Migration has undoubtedly influenced the performance (continuity/shift/rupture) of each participant’s life strategy, starting from its formation in Ukraine, continuing during the actual act of migration, and then after migration into Australia.

3.5.1 Narratives within context

Personal experiences become real through the sharing of a story. It is how we express our experiences and live our lives. Interviews collected for this study were approached as narratives or personal stories. The story itself is the object of the narrative analysis. Narrative is “the primary scheme by which human existence is rendered meaning” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 11). It describes and connects events in a temporal, coherent and meaningful order (Bruner, 1990; Labov & Waletsky, 1967; Ochs & Capps, 2001; Souto-Manning, 2014). It imposes on reality a unity that it does not inherently possess (Bruner, 1986; Eastmond, 2007). Therefore, as narratives, interviews are not simply reflections of
lived experiences, but rather a creative construction of interpretations of the past emerging in a specific context of the present.

The study of personal narratives can be a form of analysis in the context of case-centered research (Mishler, 1999). The narratives of Ukrainian migrants reveal the deeply historicised and socially contextualised nature of post-Soviet people’s hardship and the motives for migration. These aspects of their narratives explain why they shaped their life strategies in specific ways in order to survive or to achieve. As addressed by Riessman (1990) in representing narratives of divorce, and in Skultans’ (1999) illness narrative insights, the narrative approach illuminates the intersection of biography, history, and society, building on the tradition of sociology articulated by Mills (1959).

The narrative analysis of the migrants’ interviews captures the historical conditionality of life strategies. For instance, the historic setting of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990s produced somewhat different renditions of the same events. ‘Transition migrants’ talked in the interview about the economic crisis and political turbulence as a push factor for their migration, and framed their emigration to Australia as being “more forced than voluntary”. The cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ talked about the first years after the collapse of the Soviet Union as a historical turn in building independence and making them who they are now—strong agents of their lives.

The “personal dilemmas” that participants present in their narratives of migration tell us about the peculiarities of the social and historical processes—general social and economic disorientation in the post-USSR collapse period and contemporary pressures to migrate in post-independence Ukraine. According to Riessman (2000) these “personal dilemmas” are “located in particular times and places, and individuals’ narratives about their troubles are works of history, as much as they are about individuals, the social spaces they inhabit, and the societies they live in”. The analysis of personal narratives can enlighten “the social processes by which social life and human relationships are made and changed” (Laslett 1999, p. 392).

In the migration interviews, for instance, in response to a question about the “main reasons” for migration, one participant took a moment and then provided a list of economic, political and personal reasons. Then he started to present a long story with
examples. The length of his story and his negative judgements about Ukrainian political leaders and the unfairness of the economic system indicated the role of the social and historical context in his decision to migrate. He ended the story many minutes later saying that “if someone steps on your toes, then you have to free your feet; I freed my feet and went to Australia to survive”. It is obvious that personal migration narratives need to be considered within contexts in which the life strategy was formed and implemented. Also, narrative is a personal story that reveals the agency of the narrator and the narrative. In this research, the personal story of each interviewed migrant shares one specific context.

The justification for using narrative analysis becomes apparent with the other interviews. The participants’ stories included extended accounts of their lives that developed over the course of each interview. All the collected migrants’ stories revolved around a series of events and stages in life. They talked about their background (family, school, university, first job), then they moved into life immediately before migration, describing their personal circumstances and a broad reflection on what was happening economically, politically and socially in Ukraine. They then talked about the process of migration (visa application, choosing Australia), before moving on to a description of their adaptation period in Australia, and concluding with plans for the future. Given the fact that the study is based on the stories of two cohorts of migrants, participants in each cohort tended to paint the context and the picture of their lives in Australia in different colours. For example, the group of migrants who arrived in Australia after 2004 tended to reflect on Australian life in an idealized way. This optimistic re-telling is taken into account in the narrative analysis of their migration stories (more details see in Part 2).

Therefore, to understand life stories through the dynamics of experience and expressions demands a well-developed analytical framework, which places narratives in context and enables different and sometimes contradictory layers of meaning to be seen. This brings the layers into useful dialogue with each other, and helps one to understand individual and social change. The dialogue between meanings and interpretations is built and discovered with the help of the amalgamation of migrants’ stories across the case studies to find shared themes and differences in the content of the narratives.

This dialogue between meanings is done through the narrative flowing from one series of story into another encouraged to fragment participants’ lived experience into thematic
(codeable) categories. It reveals the need to systematise the meanings as a basis for further comparison across themes (codes). This then enables migrants’ life strategies to be compared across migration cohorts. The application of the narrative analysis method involves taking relatively spontaneous and guided stories about the migration experience and developing a thematic approach, based on theory-driven codes, for use in empirical investigation. The term “relatively spontaneous” refers to the fact that the interviews were guided by a set of open-ended questions, which imposed some constraints on the story flow.

3.5.2 Thematic analysis

A thematic approach, that is a theory-driven code approach, was found to be the most effective strategy to analyse interview data. The way thematic analysis (a variation of the narrative analysis) is employed in this study to Ukrainian migrants’ narratives is similar to the logic applied in the study of newlyweds by Chadiha (1989), Planalp et al. (1988) and Planalp and Surra (1992). Just as these studies and the marriage/divorce and illness narrative genre generally (Langellier and Peterson, 2003) are “another genre of personal narratives that enquires into human responses to dramatic and life-turning events” (Eastmond, 2007, p. 254), thematic analysis here serves as a vehicle for understanding the meaning that migrants make of their lives.

This framework was considered to be useful for assessing the “meaning” of migration stories, and as the basis of the coding schemes for the stories. Thematic approach given the study of migrants’ life strategies is based on the theory-driven codes. The logic of deciding which coded segments and themes to analyse is strongly influenced by the theoretical life strategy research framework and interview questions. Therefore, the approach involved a detailed transcription of all interview texts to enable a much bigger picture to be seen. Text transcription was followed by the development of primary codes (nodes), key words and ideas.

The analytical point of entry of a thematic approach involves organising narratives in terms of themes that then reveal the meanings of the narrators. The overall narrative was divided into five substories, which were preconditioned by the five blocks of questions in the semi-structured interview script (for more detail, see the Interview Script section above): (1) personal background story; (2) life before migration story (migration motives and life
stance at the moment of migration decision-making); (3) *arrival in Australia* (the story of the actual act of migration); (4) *adaptation story*; (5) *future story*. For each sub-story, a variety of themes conceptually related to the life strategies research framework which investigated the structure/agency dichotomy, were applied, including: (1) *values*; (2) *needs*; (3) *aims* and (4) *sense of agency* (life strategy micro-structuring elements). Other themes that emerged as a part of the life strategy research framework were used to assist analysis: (5) *emotions*; (6) *national identity* and (7) *economic status and class*. Content coding varied for each sub-plot to try to understand the mentality of participants whose experiences were expressed in terms of survival and/or achievement.

The thematic approach was utilised to accommodate both spatial and temporal thematic content revealed in the narratives. During their interviews participants kept positioning themselves in different contexts that were organised spatially and temporally. Spatially, narratives were coded into three main themes that helped to follow the process and context of the life strategy formation, enfold, and future orientation. These two main spatial themes are “*In Ukraine*” and “*In Australia*”, within which the themes and codes informing the content of life strategies were compared across two migration periods 1991–2003 and 2004–2013. Temporal thematic content reflects the way migrants share and make meaning out of the flow of their life history across time. They position themselves in time and talk about their lives “*before migration*”, “*during the actual act of migration* (meaning the time between getting the temporary visa and receiving the permanent residency status) and “*after migration*”, whether it was about positive or negative events.

The thematic analysis of interviews was conducted with the help of Nvivo10, which allowed for deep analysis of the data using powerful search, query and visualisation tools. This was achieved using the following methodology: (1) creating the project in Nvivo; (2) uploading transcribed interview texts to Nvivo; (3) initial reading of the transcribed interview text (to formulate a common vision of the text); (4) second reading of the text and coding. Two primary strategies were used: coding and memo writing. Analysis began with initial coding in which the actions or events within each line of the transcripts were defined (e.g. fear of poverty, fear about the future). A large number of initial codes were sorted into categories based on differences or similarities in the content (Charmaz, 2006). Throughout the process of creating codes, a database of memos was created. This enabled
the documenting of the process of defining analytical categories and “the hypothetical relationship between categories generated” (Mrozowicki, 2011, p. 89; Glaser, 1978, p. 83).

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter defined the two-fold methodological case study research design. The case study approach drew on two methods of collecting data about the context (structure) and content (agency) of the life strategies of Ukrainian migrants in Australia. It used the combination of secondary data analysis and qualitative empirical fieldwork, which comprised semi-structured interviews and the observation of participants. This Chapter has set out the methodological embodiment of the theoretical life strategy research framework of this study and mapped out the analytical framework used in the forthcoming data analysis chapters.
CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEXT: MACRO FACTORS SHAPING LIFE STRATEGIES OF MIGRANTS

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter explores the structural component of the life strategy research framework and elucidates the context across the two case studies on the Ukrainian side (1991–2003 and 2004–2013). It will focus on the macro factors or the context in which the participants shaped their life strategies and made their decisions to migrate. These structural/macro factors are critical to understanding the dramatic swelling of the Ukrainian community in Australia since the early 1990s. These factors refer to the context created by economic, political, demographic and migration events in Ukraine and Australian migration policy regulations from the 1990s.

4.2 The structural context of Ukrainian migrants’ life strategies from 1991–2013

This section first sketches the economic situation and second describes the political turbulence that took place from 1991, and it brings to the fore the important issues in Ukrainian politics from 1991–2003 and then from 2004–2013. Third, it explores the demographic situation in Ukraine and, lastly, it portrays the migration dynamics. The migration dynamics section also scrutinises the structural power of Australian migration policy in shaping the flow and characteristics of Ukrainian arrivals into Australia since 1991.

4.2.1 Economic situation

1991–2003 context

The context of economic post-Soviet transition in Ukraine started with the modernisation of Soviet society, which was guided by two main sets of goals: the market economy (abandonment of the Soviet planned economy, and the introduction of private property) and democracy (political pluralism, political freedoms, the development of civil society). Since Ukrainian independence in 1991, the transition to a market economy in Ukraine went through two different challenging phases. From 1991–1994, which was the initial stage of the reforms, the structure of the economy and attitudes to employment kept the features of the Soviet model. Enterprises tried to keep workers despite the enterprises’ low economic
efficiency. Though latent unemployment was growing, the official unemployment rate was very low (0.1–0.3 per cent) and the number of vacant places was 1.5–2 times higher than the number of registered unemployed (Migration Profile, 2013).

The second half of the first decade (1995–2001) was characterised by severe restrictive monetary and fiscal policies aimed at fighting inflation and stabilising the financial system. However, these actions were not accompanied by structural reforms, and, thus, they had a significant impact on the Ukrainian labour market: the number of unemployed exceeded the number of vacancies with an increased load factor for each vacancy of over 30 by late 1998 (Migration Profile, 2013, p. 9). Therefore, the unemployment rate rapidly increased from 126,900 in late 1995 to 1,174,500 in 1999 (Migration Profile, 2013, p. 9). Given the economic instability, thousands of businesses either closed or reduced their production to a minimum. Many workers lost their jobs. The production of enterprises sharply decreased, the dynamics of industrial production declined. In 1991, industrial production decreased by 5 per cent, and by 6 per cent in 1992, 8 per cent in 1993, 27 per cent in 1994, and by 12 per cent in 1995 (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 1999). In 1999 production comprised only 48 per cent of the rate in 1990. In 1999, the unemployment rate in Ukraine peaked (11.9 per cent) but decreased gradually in the following years. The majority of unemployment was long-term.

Subsequently, from the beginning to the mid-1990s the Ukrainian economy suffered a collapse, from which it is only now slowly recovering. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) decreased by 40.8 per cent; however only 74.1 per cent of its 1990 value had been recovered by 2003. In this period (1990–1999) real income decreased by 32.9 per cent (Åslund, 2002; Heyts et al. 2009). The income gap between the richest 10 per cent and the poorest 10 per cent of families increased, by the end of the 1990s, by 15–20 times, compared to a 2.5–3 times difference at the beginning of the 1990s (Grinberg, 1999). The income gap also had a negative impact on the development of the national economy.

2004–2013 context

Following severe economic problems during the first 12 years of transition, starting from the early 2000s the Ukrainian economy grew steadily for almost a decade. During 2004–2008, annual growth rates averaged 7.5 per cent, placing them among the highest in Europe (Ukraine extended migration profile, 2011). Therefore, the phase, which started in
2004, was characterised by positive change. However, even during this period of growth well before the economic crisis of 2008, labour force demand did not increase and living standards did not improve. The 2008 global economic crisis hit Ukraine hard, especially against the background of pre-existing macroeconomic imbalances, structural weaknesses and policy shortcomings. The economic situation of the late 2000s can be characterised by three economically and socially destabilising factors: (1) the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), (2) a deepening of the industrial decline of the 1990s and (3) an increase in unemployment rates.

**Global financial crisis**

The global financial and economic crisis further exposed the deformity and asymmetry of the Ukrainian economy. During pre-crisis times only a few industries—metallurgy, chemistry, and agriculture—produced globally competitive products (Shulga, 2011). When demand for these products declined, many existing economic problems became clearer. In the 2000s one of the factors limiting economic development was the high incidence of informal economic activities. Informal economic activities are those activities primarily linked to markets where small-scale enterprises are engaged, as well as to the service sector, where state control is difficult to enforce. According to estimations of the Ukrainian Ministry of Economic Affairs, in the first half of 2009 the informal sector began to rise and reached 36 per cent of GDP. In September 2009, the shadow economy exceeded 40 per cent, while the World Bank declared that 50 per cent of the Ukrainian economy was "in shadow" (Davidenko, 2009).

Eighteen per cent of the Ukrainian population reported that the crisis affected their households dramatically, while 62 per cent felt its influence strongly, but not catastrophically (Shulga, 2011, p. 25). More significantly, the crisis affected the centre and east of the country—respectively, 22 per cent and 20 per cent of the inhabitants of these regions related that the crisis affected them catastrophically (Shulga, 2011). Within the centre region of the country the crisis affected the "office proletariat" (employees of different offices, think tanks, etc.). In the east, where the metallurgical and chemical industries are centred, employees suffered due to the sharp decline in global market demand for domestic products. There was a noticeable increase in unemployment. Furthermore, the population felt the crisis through a collapse of the banks, where people
kept their savings. Their deposits were frozen and the national currency (Hryvnia) fell against the US dollar—from 4.9 hrn. in summer 2008 to 9.5 hrn. in March 2009.

**Deepening of the industrial decline**

From the second half of 2008 to the beginning of 2009 there was a significant drop in production in all sectors. The industrial production index in January 2009 was 65.9 per cent (Lebeda, 2009). In 2010, this figure fell again to 63 per cent. In economic terms, Ukraine dropped to the lowest place among post-Soviet states. Ukraine’s trade balance has remained negative during recent years, although in 2009 the difference between exports and imports slightly decreased, meaning that international ties with Ukraine increased (Shulga, 2011).

**Unemployment increase**

Industrial decline caused serious deterioration of the labour market, as indicated by the increasing number of unemployed (Figure 4) and the decreasing need for workers. These rates directly affected the migration situation: on the one hand producing a potential army of migrant workers, and on the other, making employment difficult or impossible for migrants who returned or would like to return to Ukraine.

![Figure 4. Number of unemployed in 2008–2009 (thousands of people)](source)

The significant increase in the number of unemployed and the sharp decline in the demand for labour increased pressure on vacancies and resulted in an increase in unpaid salaries. These labour market trends led to social destabilisation that provoked people to attempt to
resolve their financial and social problems abroad, while making it harder for migrants to return to their homeland.

By the end of 2009, the economy had gradually stabilised; industrial production had increased and inflation was on the decrease (World Bank, 2010). In 2010–2011 economic development restarted; however, the GDP (in fixed prices) in 2012 remained unchanged in comparison with 2011 and was at 1993 levels (Migration Profile, 2013). Employment opportunities remained limited, with the average wage in 2013 at 3,265 hrn. (equivalent of $408), despite its growth in the preceding years (National Bank of Ukraine, 2013, p. 16). Despite slight economic growth by the end of 2013, the living standards of the population remained poor. The growth in wages did not improve people’s lives. As of 2013 most of the socio-economic development indicators lag behind those of both economically developed countries and the neighbouring countries. A difference of between two to seven times the purchasing power parity (PPP) per capita according to GNI emerged between Ukraine and the main destination countries for Ukrainian migrants (Migration Profile, 2013).

Experts from the “Democratic Initiative” Foundation identified the following main trends in the economic life of Ukraine in 2010: (1) a general decline in living standards; (2) a deteriorating economic situation and a decreasing number of small business employees; (3) continuous price growth for products and services; (4) improving conditions for big business. Among other trends, experts highlighted the economic crisis, rising budget deficits and debt, the widening gap between rich and poor, and government efforts to implement economic reforms. Furthermore, experts gave an extremely negative assessment of the main development indicators in 2010. On a 10-point scale, the rule of law in Ukraine received the lowest grade (1.6). Equally unsatisfactory was entrepreneurship (2.8), the level of democracy (2.9), economic conditions (3.0) and freedom of expression (3.1). At the same time, experts noted a very high level of corruption (8.4) (Democratic Initiitives, 2011).

The economic situation since 1991 was not stable in post-independence Ukraine. It went through a sharp decline in the early 1990s. By 2000 the economy had stabilized and the

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6 In December 2010 The Foundation “Democratic initiative” has conducted an expert study “2010 RESULTS: EXPERTS’ OPINION”. The purpose of the survey was to find out opinions of 45 experts about the main results of 2010 for Ukrainian economics and politics and give forecasts for the next year.
situation was positive until 2004. This improvement was followed by a second crisis in 2008. Such downturns have significantly shaped the life strategies of Ukrainians both in Ukraine and those who migrated overseas. The detailed description of personal economic stories of migrants follows in Part 1 and Part 2 of the thesis.

4.2.2 Political situation

1991–2003 context

The second important sphere that affected the life strategies of Ukrainians during 1991 and 2003 was the political situation in Ukraine. On 24 August 1991 Ukraine gained its independence. The world community accepted the results of Ukraine’s nation-wide referendum in December 1991. Between then and 2003, Ukraine lived through two significant political events: the presidential elections of 1994 and the adoption of the Constitution in 1996.

After independence was acquired in 1991, the beginning of the public reforms led to the creation of a new system of public power based on the principles of a prevalent law. There was a strict division in the branches of power, and a gradual reduction of direct state regulation in the economy and in other spheres of life. Such principles as the development of voluntary social institutions, the development of human rights and freedoms and the strengthening of the juridical and material guarantee towards the development of democracy in the Ukraine were, on the one hand, ceremonially declared but, on the other hand, their realisation was effective only in part. Consequently, the period 1991–1994 was characterised by an unstable parliamentary-presidential regime combined with remnants of the Soviet system. The instability of the political regime was conditioned by the under-development of a party system and by the hegemony of a broadly based national political movement (Ruch of Ukraine).

Over the course of four years, five governments took leadership and disagreement between the president and the parliament deepened, along with disagreements between state authorities, and between executive authorities and boards of representatives. There was no continuity in policy as the leadership was never in power long enough to implement their developments. The results of these chaotic years of political activity by the State can be characterised by the lack of a well-considered, coherent, systematic policy in all spheres of
This is one of the causes of Ukraine’s economic crisis as well as the crises in education, health, culture, and social services. It also contributed to the demographic decline.

**2004–2013 context**

The last years of Leonid Kuchma’s presidency were marked by a succession of major political scandals. The most resonant were the murder of journalist Georgiy Gongadze and the “cassette scandal”. Georgiy Gongadze, who criticised Kuchma in the media, disappeared on the night of 16 September 2000. Gongadze had previously appealed to the prosecutor's office for protection because he believed unidentified people were spying on him. The scandals intensified the activity of the political parties and NGOs of various political orientation. They launched a protest campaign under the slogan “Ukraine without Kuchma”. Their main requirement, which was put forward at rallies, marches and demonstrations, was the resignation of President Leonid Kuchma.

Therefore, political scandals became catalysts for the ever-increasing public dissatisfaction with the economic conditions, clan-oligarchic power, the pressure of the bureaucratic system and massive violation of the law. All this reduced the popularity of the Kuchma Government among the people. Meanwhile, the new 2004 presidential elections were approaching. Closer to the election date the two main candidates became clearly visible—Victor Yushchenko as a pro-Western candidate, and pro-Russian Victor Yanukovych. Behind this identification the split of votes on a territorial basis became more clearly manifested: Western Ukraine was supporting Yushchenko; Eastern Ukraine stood for Yanukovych. Preliminary results of the voting announced by the Central Election Commission of Ukraine suggested a victory for Yanukovych. Without waiting for the final results, Yushchenko’s supporters began a protest in “Maidan”, the Independence Square. This protest later became known as the “Orange Revolution” (the colour of Yushchenko’s election campaign was orange). To satisfy protesters’ demands the Central Election Commission held new elections, which brought Yushchenko and his political party to power. The Cabinet of Ministers, formed after the dramatic “orange” events, tried to position itself in public opinion not just as a regular composition of the government, but as a fundamentally new political-administrative team able to reconstruct the whole executive power according to the European model and restore order in all spheres of social life. The European integration path was proclaimed as a backbone.
The election promises of the “orange” government to strengthen the legislative and executive systems, in practice turned into mass dismissals of civil servants of the lower and middle echelon—workers in the educational, cultural and health spheres. A total of 18,000 people lost their jobs. It was the first time that such a large-scale dismissal of civil servants and personnel with university and secondary education had occurred. The consequences of this action immediately became apparent with a sharp increase in the managerial incompetence of the executive power (Shulga, 2011).

Political crisis overwhelmed Ukraine. Hopes for the broader coalition failed. Scandals became an integral feature of the life of the ruling Ukrainian elite. By the summer of 2008, the President’s trust rating dropped to 4–5 per cent (Shulga, 2011, p. 54). Extraordinary elections for the metropolitan council demonstrated the political bankruptcy of the pro-presidential party “Our Ukraine”, which did not even reach the 3 per cent threshold. State administration waned, and lost credibility and capacity. It was not just that control over the country was lost, but there was also a serious degradation of society. Social ties weakened which hold it as an independent social organism. With social relations deformed and public institutions weakened, “social order” became dysfunctional. The Global financial crisis associated with global trends, intensified the internal political crisis: the loss of control over State institutions; disregard for the laws by all—government, businesses, citizens; widespread and deeply-rooted corruption; and underdevelopment of the institutions of civil society.

Under such political conditions, Ukraine was on the eve of its next presidential elections scheduled for 17 January 2010. During the 2010 presidential elections, the Central Election Commission of Ukraine registered 18 candidates. As in the 2004 presidential election, the electoral preferences were distributed on a regional basis: Victor Yanukovych won the most votes in the south-eastern regions, and Yulia Tymoshenko, central and western Ukraine. This distribution of votes once again demonstrated the value of the geopolitical differences of the population, which the "orange" political forces not only failed to mitigate, but further deepened. In the second round of elections on 7 February 2010, Yanukovych won by scoring 48.95 per cent, while Tymoshenko was supported by 45.47 per cent of voters.
The presidential election itself did not solve many of the problems that had accumulated in all branches of the government institutions. A particularly difficult and even absurd situation remained in the parliament because the previously proclaimed ruling coalition did not actually have the majority in the parliament. Despite this, due to the nature of the Ukrainian legislation to dissolve the coalition without its own wish was impossible. Therefore, the country was in parliamentary deadlock for quite a long time. This not only undermined the foundations of the nation State, but also discredited the very idea of democracy.

After the presidential election the State foreign policy began to change. In the first weeks of taking office, Yanukovych visited the centres of global political power—Brussels, Moscow and Washington. Ukrainian-Russian relations began to improve. Ukraine took a more definite stance regarding NATO. By mid-2010 Ukraine had removed the question of its accession to the North Atlantic Alliance from the agenda.

Local elections held on 31 October 2010 strengthened the position of the Party of Regions and its parliamentary allies. This gave President Viktor Yanukovych an opportunity to strengthen the power vertical. The second important political event during 2010–2013 was the decision of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine (as of 1 October 2010) to return to the Constitution adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on 28 June 1996. With this act, the State returned to a presidential-parliamentary republic from a parliamentary-presidential model.

By the summer of 2010 the political and economic situation in Ukraine was aggravated by the fact that many countries had not overcome the GFC, and also faced unprecedented challenges associated with huge debts, budget deficits, and rising unemployment. Many Western politicians and experts predicted a second wave of the crisis. At that time Ukraine did not have enough funds to keep the internal situation under control and prevent further economic decline. Therefore, the government appealed for new external loans. The Russian Federation granted Ukraine a loan of US$2 billion. The IMF also agreed to negotiate with Ukraine the possible provision of a large amount of credit. However, the IMF loan stipulated a number of conditions. In particular, the IMF required Ukraine to increase the retirement age, raise utility prices, and reduce the budget deficit. However, the
loans did not save Ukraine from potential economic collapse, postponing it only for a couple of years.

The most important trends that determined the development of Ukraine in 2010–2013 were: (1) the monopolisation of power by Viktor Yanukovych and the Party of Regions; (2) democratic limitations on the rights and freedoms of citizens; (3) Ukrainian political leadership’s focus on Russia combined with attempts to implement a multi-vector foreign policy; (4) the increased isolation of Ukraine from Europe, the rejection of Euro-Atlantic integration and inhibition of EU integration.

Such inclinations signposted the general trends of Ukraine’s future political path: a further concentration of power; a growing appetite amongst the population for protest; harassment of opposition figures; the restriction of fundamental rights and freedoms. Macro indicators and the micro social climate asserted a possible intensification of the political struggle inside and outside the ruling elite, and the use of manual power control, particularly in relation to parliamentary elections and the weakening of the opposition.

Overall the political situation in Ukraine since independence has been characterized by constant turbulence, changes in the ruling elites and shifts in domestic and international policies. The lack of political stability on top of economic unrest shaped the life strategies of the two different cohorts of Ukrainians who left Ukraine in the period of 1991-2003 and 2004-2013. More details are explored in Part 1 and Part 2 of the thesis.

4.2.3 Demographic situation

1991–2003 context

An insight into the demographic situation in Ukraine during 1991–2003 helps one to understand in more depth the economic, political and emigration processes that impacted on the formation of a particular type of life strategy. The demographic situation of 1991–2003 was defined by depopulation, low birth rates and high death rates; the ageing of the population, and an increased demographic load on the population of active working age people. Firstly, the demographic situation in Ukraine in the first 12 years of independence was characterised by population decline. The total population of Ukraine was estimated to be 51,838,500 in 1990 (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2007), but had dropped to
48,003,500 in 2003. As of 1 January 2013 the total population of Ukraine had dropped to 45,553,000 (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2007). This decrease was attributed to economically motivated emigration and a low birth rate (see Table 1).

Secondly, a high mortality rate among the Ukrainian population, including high death rates among males of working age, significantly affected the decrease in life expectancy during 1991 and 2003. Untimely high death rates among males caused the difference in life expectancy between men and women (Libanova et al., 2008). By the end of the first decade of independence, life expectancy was higher for women, and the difference in average life expectancy between men and women was 11.11 years (Libanova et al., 2008).

Table 1. Life expectancy at birth (1991–2004)

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<th>Period of birth to which data relates</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth (years)</th>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>1991–1992</td>
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<td>68.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002–2003</td>
<td>68.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003–2004</td>
<td>68.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine (www.ukrstat.gov.ua)
Furthermore, the 1991–2003 period is characterised by increasing urbanisation. As at 1 January 1990, Ukraine numbered 436 cities inhabited by more than 68 per cent of the country's population (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2007).

The proportion of inhabitants living in urban, as distinct from rural, areas is 84 per cent in the five most easterly regions and 49 per cent in the ten most westerly regions (Ukraine Extended Migration Profile, 2011). Subsequently, the decrease in the rural population became a continuous phenomenon, and in the mid-1990s resulted in a deep demographic crisis in Ukraine’s rural areas (Libanova et al., 2007) (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Decline of the rural population in Ukraine (1990–2000)

![Figure 5. Decline of the rural population in Ukraine (1990–2000)](chart)

Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine ([www.ukrstat.gov.ua](http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua))

2004–2013 context
Demographic processes in Ukraine during 2004–2013 are a remarkable example of how vibrant population movements respond to political and economic transformations, including population decline, urbanisation and large-scale emigration. Demographic transitions during 2004–2013 were characterised by increased mortality rates, particularly among infants and young children, a reduction in fertility and high emigration dynamics.

A steady decline in the birth rate emerged in Ukraine in the 20th century. Since 2001, when the aggregated birth rate was at its lowest (see Figure 6), it has been steadily increasing in 2012 (Migration profile, 2013).
Despite an emerging positive trend in the birth rate in Ukraine it was one of the lowest in Europe and does not provide for replacement of the population.

Ukrainian emigration for employment and permanent residency purposes plays a pivotal role in the population decline. In 2050 the population of Ukraine will decline from its current level of 46 million to 36 million (Institute of Demography and Social Studies of NAS of Ukraine, 2010), while the United Nations presents an even more pessimistic figure of 26 million (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2010).

4.2.4 Emigration dynamics from Ukraine and Australia's migration policy since the 1990s

1991–2003 context

The analysis of emigration dynamics during 1991–2003 explains the unstable and negative conditions in Ukrainian economic, political and demographic situations during the first 12 years of independence. Due to the deep economic crisis, and consequently, increases in the price of basic consumer goods, transportation costs, and the commercialisation of education, social benefits such as a guaranteed job, free health care, and State housing did not exist anymore. These factors made migration more difficult, but at the same time the economic difficulties forced people to look for opportunities to survive, which included
migration. Russia appeared to be the most attractive country in the post-Soviet area for those looking for a source of income. However, the huge differences in living standards between post-Soviet Ukraine and the countries of the West significantly contributed to Ukrainian migration to the West for permanent residency.

Estimates and other calculations provided in this section are mainly based on assessments made by academics and various organisations. According to various estimates, about 3–5 million people left Ukraine between 1990–2006 to live and work in other countries. The Centre for Migration Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford provides the same number—5 million emigrants (Migration Profile, 2011). In its report on Ukraine COMPAS estimated an average of 5 million emigrants from Ukraine living and working abroad at any time—more in summer, fewer in winter. This means that 4–15 per cent of the entire population (or 20 per cent of the population of working age) are at least temporarily engaged in emigration (Migration Profile, 2011). Post-Soviet migration flows in the first decade of independence were mainly directed to the US, the EU, the Russian Federation and Israel.

Diversification of migration became a significant feature of migration for the first 12 years of independence. Before Ukraine got its independence, Ukrainians migrated to the East (within the USSR borders). Afterwards, with the opening of the borders, Ukrainians began migrating to many other countries. The main non-post-Soviet destinations for migration in the first decade of independence were Israel, the US and Germany. However, the former Soviet Union republics, and most of all Russia, remain the main partner of Ukraine for population exchange, comprising mainly labour migration and economic emigration. In mid-1990s Ukraine, a record wave of labour and economic emigrants gave rise to a special term to describe such groups of migrants—zarobitchany (in English "bread-winners"). This was a particularly popular term in the 1990s–2000s to describe many Russian-speaking, and especially Ukrainian-speaking, economic migrants from Ukraine, working in Russia, the West and in the capital of Ukraine, Kiev.

The rapidly changing migration balance was also a significant feature of the migration processes of the 1990s. Despite the negative birth rate, as of the beginning of 1990, there was population growth due to repatriation processes. However, from 1994 (the most difficult year during the transition period) until the beginning of the 2000s (revival of the
economy) the population of Ukraine decreased due to a negative migration balance (Migration Profile, 2013). Every year after independence, approximately 200,000–300,000 emigrants were leaving Ukraine. The peak of the emigration was registered in 1994 (328,000 emigrants), after which the emigration outflow gradually reduced (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Net migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>151.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>287.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>-142.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>-131.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>-169.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>-136.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>-152.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>-138.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>-133.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>-152.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>-33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>-24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>-7.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine (www.ukrstat.gov.ua)

Consequently, over 1991–2003, many countries experienced an inflow of Ukrainian immigrants. Many Ukrainians preferred to leave the country for permanent residence overseas. According to official statistics, between 1991 and 2004, 2,537,400 individuals left Ukraine; 1,897,500 moved to other post-Soviet States and 639,900 moved to other, mainly Western, States.

Some multicultural countries such as Australia have been added to emigration destinations for Ukrainian migrants relatively recently, in the second half of the 1990s to the beginning of the 2000s. Most of the research on post-Soviet emigration has been limited to countries
that have accepted immigrants from former Soviet countries over a longer period of time, such as America and Canada. Australia had fallen out of the general research focus for many years, before it started to receive Ukrainian immigrants in larger numbers after the collapse of the Soviet regime. Between 1991 and 2003, a total of 3,519 Ukrainians arrived in Australia with permanent residency status, which corresponds to 59 per cent of the total number of post-independence Ukrainian permanent arrivals (DIAC, 2013). The biggest influx of Ukrainians to Australia was recorded in the 1990s. Figure 7 shows the number of arrivals of Ukrainian-born people in Australia.

Figure 7. Ukrainian-born arrivals in Australia


Some 75.3 per cent of the Ukrainian-born people in Australia, compared to 62 per cent of the total overseas-born population, arrived in Australia prior to 2001 (ABS, 2001). Among the total number of Ukrainian-born people in Australia, around 22 per cent arrived between 1991 and 1995. The first five years of independence was the period of the most intensive flow of Ukrainians to Australia. Later on, the flow of immigration decreased slightly; with 11 per cent arriving between 2001 and 2006, and 9.6 per cent arriving during 2007–2011 (DIAC, 2013).

Since the 1990s there have been some key changes in Australia’s migration policies that shaped the character of Ukrainian migration to Australia. These changes are key to this
study. Since the 1970s and until 1996 the Australian Government had made it increasingly difficult for unskilled migrants to migrate to Australia outside of humanitarian and family reunion programs (Larsen, 2013). The Australian Government encouraged family migration because it saw family migrants as bonding agents for the next migration wave, thereby assisting their cultural and economic integration (Larsen, 2013). Only after 1996 were the first reforms to family migration introduced and there was a shift in favour of skilled migration perceived to have earning potential (Boucher, 2013; Hawthorne, 2005; Markus et al., 2009).

Therefore, at the beginning of the 1990s Australia’s migration policy created more barriers than it did encouragement for Ukrainian migration. In this context, it is worth highlighting the key limitations in Australia’s migration policy: (1) the onset of recession and a reduction in migration targets from the high rates of previous years; and (2) the rapid growth of temporary migration, which had no significant impact on the Ukrainian migration of the 1990s. Ukrainians had never before been offered a wide range of temporary working holiday visas, despite being able to access student visas. The number of Ukrainian arrivals during the 1990s for study reasons was minimal. This is easily explained by the economic hardship and growing poverty in Ukraine during the 1990s. Therefore, an increase in quotas for temporary entries had no implications for Ukrainians.

Given this migration policy, the majority of Ukrainians in the 1990s arrived as family and humanitarian (refugee) migrants. The UNHCR Statistical Online Population Database indicates that during 1991–2003, particularly at the beginning of the 2000s, the number of Ukrainians seeking asylum in Australia significantly increased, which made the humanitarian migration stream the most popular migration stream for Ukrainians (see Table 3 and Appendix Four).

Table 3. Ukrainian citizens granted refugee status in Australia and asylum applications submitted by Ukrainian citizens 1999–2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugees</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Full information on citizens of Ukraine granted refugee status and number of asylum seeking applications is provided in Appendix Four
Asylum seekers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>88</th>
<th>203</th>
<th>259</th>
<th>125</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


Even with the lower number, most applications was successful. However, it should be noted that the figures above do not reflect the number of successful applications each year. On average it takes three to four years to process an application for asylum. Therefore, the statistics above do not indicate that in 1999, thirteen applications out of 88 submitted were successful (successful refugees could have submitted their applications three to four years ago). However, the figures do indicate the scale of asylum-seeking by Ukrainians and the numbers of Ukrainian refugees in Australia.

Amongst the influx of new arrivals in the post-Soviet era, the Ukrainian diaspora in Australia was, and remains, quite small compared to other non-European countries. The Ukrainian diaspora is most prominently represented in Canada (more than 1 million people), the US, UK and Germany.

**2004–2013 context**

During this period, many Ukrainian citizens tried to find a legal opportunity to leave their country under any pretext—either for work and/or for permanent residence. Against the background of Yushchenko's historical myth-making and demagoguery about patriotism, more and more ordinary citizens lost any hope for their own and their children’s future in Ukraine. They were looking for a better life for themselves abroad. To implement this plan, they came up with the most unexpected scenarios for their resettlement abroad. For example, more than a thousand Ukrainian citizens—the descendants of the people of Northern Bukovina and Northern Bessarabia—benefited from changes in Romanian legislation and obtained Romanian passports that facilitated their way into the EU.

The directions of migration flows from Ukraine were always quite specific, with migration mainly to the nearest countries, or those more distant countries with a more attractive economic situation. The main destinations for Ukrainian labour migrants as at 2009 were, firstly, Russia (48.1 per cent) and then European Union countries (41.2 per cent)—mainly Italy (13.4 per cent), the Czech Republic (12.8 per cent), Poland (7.4 per cent), Spain (3.9 per cent) and Portugal (3.0 per cent) (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2009, p. 33).
Among the EU countries, Italy emerged as a dominant migration destination. This trend was reflected in an international comparative study (2005–2007) in which Italy was found to be the most attractive place for labour migration by 24.4 per cent of Ukrainians; 17.8 per cent chose Russia and 17.2 per cent preferred the US (Zhakevych, 2008, p. 92).

Between 2010–2013, migration research and statistics showed a shift in the migration choices of Ukrainians. During the first nine months of 2013, a total of 18,700 Ukrainians emigrated from Ukraine for permanent residence abroad (changed their nationality or had a residence permit), which was 157 per cent more than it was in 2012 (Balaeva, 2014). But it is still a lot less than the number of people who received Ukrainian citizenship (41,600), and less than the number of people who emigrated from the country ten years ago. The State Statistics Service of Ukraine does not provide a breakdown of popular emigration countries among Ukrainian citizens in 2013. The latest available statistical information is for 2012. Traditionally, Russia, Germany and Israel are among the most popular destinations. But it is interesting that Italy, Poland and Canada no longer appeared in the ten most popular countries for emigration as they did from 2000 onwards.

According to Irina Pribytkova, Professor of Institute of Sociology National Academy of Science of Ukraine, the main reason behind the change in emigrants’ preferences was the European economic crisis, which had a particularly negative impact on Italy, Poland and other developed Western European States. “Even those people who moved to these countries a long time ago are losing their jobs”, - says Professor Pribytkova, an expert on migration (Balaeva, 2014). The number of Ukrainian migrants who left Ukraine for Canada in 2012 has significantly dropped. Experts believe that the wave of emigration to Canada has already passed. It seems that all those who wanted to leave, did. Nowadays the trend of moving to Canada will gradually decline, assuming Canada does not introduce any new programs to attract professionals, which Ukrainians could access.

In recent years Ukrainian professionals have become increasingly interested in Eastern countries—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan (Balaeva, 2014). In these countries Ukrainians tend to find employment in the IT sector, the gas industry (especially in Uzbekistan), management and in the media and creative professions. In 2013, a total of 100,000 Ukrainians worked in Kazakhstan (Balaeva, 2014). The country's
economy is growing and it has a constant shortage of staff. Kazakh employers value Ukrainian experience and attract professionals from Ukraine with high salaries.

Today, more than 30,000 people of Ukrainian origin live in Australia, half of whom were born in Ukraine. More specifically, according to the SBS Census Explorer (2012), most Ukrainian speakers were born in Ukraine (43.2 per cent), followed by Australia (34.0 per cent). The number of Ukrainian arrivals into Australia during 2004–2013 decreased. The main feature of Ukrainian migration to Australia during 2004–2013 was the change in the profile of migrants since 2004.

In 2004, for the first time in the history of Ukrainian migration to Australia, the number of Ukrainians who arrived in Australia through the skilled migration stream with permanent status outnumbered humanitarian and family migrants (see Figure 8). For numbers on Ukrainian-born settlers by Migration Stream (1991–2014) see Appendix Five.

![Figure 8. Ukrainian permanent arrivals by migration stream (from 1 January 1991 to 1 January 2014)](image)

Source: DIAC Settlement Reporting Facility

This shift towards skilled arrivals from Ukraine has been shaped by a significant change to Australia’s more recent migration history. In 2008 the Rudd Labor Government announced plans to increase the numbers of skilled migrants to Australia by 30 per cent from the previous year, and this trend for preferring skilled migrants seems to be continuing (Boucher, 2013; Markus et al., 2009). This growing demand for highly-skilled migrants
attracted IT professionals and engineers from Ukraine. In this way Australia’s migration policies have evolved from focusing on attracting migrants for the purposes of increasing Australia’s population, to attracting workers as temporary and permanent (skilled) migrants in order to meet the needs of the economy. Another important change in migration policy that created more favourable conditions for Ukrainian migration to Australia was the decrease in the country’s assessment level for Ukraine. For many years Ukraine was on the list of countries with an excessive risk of illegal immigration. According to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) review of visa risk assessment levels, which took effect on 24 March 2012, Ukraine’s assessment level decreased to Level Two, making the procedure of obtaining a visa for Australia easier (DIAC, 2012). Specifically, the following visa categories now require less paper work for Ukrainians: (1) Subclass 570–ELICOS; (2) Subclass 571–Schools; (3) Subclass 573–Higher Ed; (4) Subclass 574–Post Grad Research; (5) Subclass 575–Non–Award. Such shifts in Australia migration policy shaped Ukrainian migration to Australia from 1991 until 2013 and contributed to the change in the migration patterns of two cohorts of migrants— ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’.

The robust migration policy of Australia and shifts in the Ukrainian citizen’s migration destination choices have impacted the formation of particular life strategies in two different periods – 1991-2003 and 2004-2013. These two life strategy models are described further in Part1 and Part2 of the thesis.

4.3 Conclusion

To conclude, the structural contexts of the two case studies have much in common, but show different preconditions for migration and the formation of different life strategy types across the two cohorts. In the first 12 years of independence (1991–2003) Ukrainians experienced numerous political, economic and demographic downturns leading to societal disruptions and record-high emigration rates. The combined effects of a reduction in the birth rate, an increase in the death rate, the lack of access to the health care system, and a negative rate of net-migration resulted in a substantial decrease in the Ukrainian population in the following years, due to emigration. Using 51 Ukrainian migrants’ narratives, the following six chapters explore in two parts the agency component of the life strategy research framework that investigates the content beyond the context (structure).
PART ONE


1. Introduction

The main aim of Part One is three-fold, matching three chapters (Chapter Five, Chapter Six and Chapter Seven). With the intention of exploring the journeys of migrants who left in the first 12 years (1991–2003) of Ukrainian independence and seeking to discover the multifaceted nature of the post-Independence Ukrainian migration to Australia the analysis presented in the Part One spans pre-migration, the actual act of migration and post-migration stages aiming to deconstruct the survival life strategy typical for ‘transition migrants’.

Chapter Five sets the scene for the study as a whole, and looks into the lives of ‘transition migrants’ before their migration. It seeks to question and understand the ways in which post-independence Ukrainians construct and experience post-Soviet transition and how it influenced their life strategies formation and implementation during and after actual act of migration. The chapter achieves this through the in-depth analysis of 26 narratives and the application of the life strategy research framework, set out in Chapter Two. Focusing on the analysis of micro components and also illuminating structuring effects on the life strategies implementation of Ukrainian migrants in Australia the chapter considers those elements that are shaped by and attached to emotions, class and identity of the ‘transition migrants’.

Chapter Six outlines the process how ‘transition migrants’ got into Australia, focusing on humanitarian and family migration streams and tactics utilized by these Ukrainians to extend their short-term visas and stay in Australia permanently. Chapter Six adds more to our understanding of the ways the actual act of migration was implemented by survival migrants and explains in details its influences and the constraints attached to survival.

The last chapter of Part One (Chapter Seven) looks into life of migrants after migration. It explores the ways migration as well as the life strategy micro components that were formed before migration, interact with aspects of migrants’ core life strategies after
migration. The Chapter provides insights into post-migration experiences linked to emotions, occupational pathways, class mobility, identity shifts, emotional and professional transformations, as well as their future plans.

2. Respondents’ profiles

The group of 26 interviewees who left Ukraine between 1991 and 2003, the ‘transition migrants’, consisted of 14 women and 12 men. The dominance of migrants with university education (14 participants) and a smaller number with secondary education (12 participants) clearly reflected the composition of the first post-Independent wave of migration. Most of the ‘transition migrants’ received permanent residence in Australia through family reunion (13 participants), skilled (6 participants) and humanitarian (refugee) streams (5 participants), and 2 other participants came on Sport visa. With regard to their social origins, the great majority of interviewees (24) were born into working-class families, while only 2 interviewees came from the class of cultural and scientific intelligentsia. In terms of the Ukrainian sending region, the majority (15) came from Western Ukraine, followed by those from the Central (5), Southern (4) and Eastern (2) regions.

The migration experience of 21 of the respondents was identified as migration for survival, while the migration experience of 5 respondents was identified as part of a life strategy based on achievement. The profiles of participants included in the cohort of ‘transition migrants’ of the first post-Independence migration wave follow below.

Natalya

In 1991 at the age of 24, Natalya came to Australia to join her fiancé, with whom she studied at medical university in Ukraine. It was her first travel abroad. Despite the fact that she completed her medical internship in Ukraine, she had to re-start her medical career in Australia because her qualification was not recognized. She successfully passed all necessary medical exams in Australia and now works as a General Practitioner. After this period of hard study and re-starting her career, she wants to concentrate more on her personal life, children, and have more time for herself.
**Tetyana**
Tetyana is approaching her 50th birthday. In 1991, at the age of 27, she arrived in Australia in search of a new and exciting life. A skilled immigrant with a university education and work experience as a director of a public catering at a restaurant, she struggled to find a job in the Australian food sector, and was forced to take a job as a waitress. However, it did not last long. She enrolled at a university in Sydney where she completed her PhD, while simultaneously completing her MA degree at another university. This was how her academic career began, although she is now unemployed.

**Hanna**
Hanna is 42 years old. With a secondary education in culinary arts, she worked for a food factory in Ukraine. In 1991 she went to Australia to visit her boyfriend. During her holiday, the USSR collapsed and the couple decided to stay in Australia. They applied for permanent residency onshore in order to take care of her boyfriend’s grandfather, whom her boyfriend initially came to visit. Hanna is a housewife and an active member of the parents’ committee at the Ukrainian school in Sydney. She is happy to have a big, healthy family and to live in Australia, because she thinks it is much easier to achieve economic and social mobility in Australia than in Ukraine.

**Leonid**
Leonid is approaching his 50th birthday. He immigrated to Australia with his family through the family reunion stream in 1992. He studied at the construction college in Ukraine and was employed in various positions in Ukraine from a theater lighting technician, technician at a dairy and meat factory, to a boilermaker in the Caucasus. After immigrating to Australia, he worked as a painter. Now he has his own construction business with three people working for him. He said that he feels lucky being in Australia, because his heightened sense of justice and human rights made his life difficult while living in Ukraine.

**Yulia**
Yulia is 50 years old. She holds a Master’s degree in mathematics and worked for close to three years in a research institution in Ukraine. She was then employed by the National Department of Education to teach computer programming. In 1993 she came to Australia with her American husband through the skilled migration stream. After several years their
marriage ended due to financial hardship. In Australia she could not find employment consistent with her qualifications. For her children’s sake and to support her new Ukrainian husband, she had to retrain and work as a nurse at a Russian nursing home in Sydney. She says it is a “terrible job” involving very heavy and dirty work.

Oleksiy
Oleksiy is in his mid-50s. Raised in a family of academics, he decided to pursue an academic and research career. He received his PhD in Medicine from the Ukrainian University. He came to Australia in 1994. He is now an Associate Professor at Sydney Medical School and Supervising Pathologist at the Centre for Infectious Diseases and Microbiology Laboratory Services at Westmead Hospital. He has a set of plans for new professional achievements.

Myroslava
Myroslava is in her mid-40s. Following the migration pathway of several friends, she came to Australia with her husband and daughter in 1994 on a skilled migration visa. Upon arrival she found a good job in the IT sector and built up a successful IT career. After achieving financial stability, she decided to pursue a new career that she was passionate about. She studied for diplomas in counselling and energetic healing and is now successfully working as a holistic counsellor. She is very happy in her new career, which motivates and stimulates her spiritual development.

Kostyantyn
Kostyantyn came to Australia in 1995. He is in his mid-50s. Skilled migration to Australia was not an easy choice, despite the fact that he had a guaranteed position in Australia in the same engineering company he worked for in Ukraine. Over 18 years of employment in the same company, he worked his way up from Service Engineer to Head of the Service Department, Head of Sales, Sales Director, and now Director of Representative Office in Australia. He wants to return to Ukraine for his retirement.

Snizhana
Snizhana is a musician by training, and holds a diploma from the Kiev Conservatory (Ukraine) and a MA in Teaching (Australia). She has performed in Poland, France and Germany. She is in her mid-40s. During one of her concerts in Ukraine she met her future
husband and, in 1995 and at the age of 25, she came to Australia for love. Today she runs private bandura (Ukrainian national instrument) classes and works as a music teacher in the Australian Institute of Music. She is an active member of the Ukrainian community in Sydney and a patriot of Ukraine.

Olha
Olha is in her mid-50s. She is an outstanding Ukrainian-Australian academic with a strong international reputation. Currently she holds the position of Professor in Physics at an Australian university. Before moving permanently to Australia in 1995, she spent two years in Canada on academic appointments.

Svyatoslava
Svyatoslava is in her early 70s. She has a secondary education in teaching and worked as the head of a kindergarten in Western Ukraine. In 1995, after her husband’s death, she came to Australia as a tourist. According to Svyatoslava, her first visit turned her world upside down. A year later, she came to Australia on a Spouse visa (family reunion) to take care of an old Ukrainian Australian, who was 20 years older than her. She took care of him for two years before he died. Forced by financial circumstances, she has worked in different types of low-skilled cleaning jobs in Australia. Now she works as a cleaner in a mental health facility. In her free time she writes poetry and plans to publish a book.

Lyubov
Lyubov came to Australia in 1997 to join her husband through the family reunion migration stream. From a working-class family, Lyubov built up a successful medical career in Ukraine. For 7 years she worked as a medical scientist at a university and as a doctor in a tuberculosis dispensary. In Australia she works as a salesperson in a private accessory shop, while trying to pass her medical exams and finish her medical education to allow her to work in Australia as a doctor. She says that she is one of those women for whom family is more important than a career.

Sofiya
Sofiya is in her 50s. She holds a MA in linguistics from Ukraine. She takes an active part in community events and teaches at mainstream and Ukrainian schools in Sydney. Driven by her adventurous spirit, in 1994 Sofiya came to Australia to visit her aunt. During this
visit, she met her future husband. In 1998, after they got married in Ukraine, she returned to Australia. She is very happy in her family life.

**Taras**
Taras is in his mid-40s. He is a world-class boxer, and was a member of the USSR national team and later a member of the national team of Ukraine. In 1995 he took part in the World Championship in Berlin, where he broke his arm. After he retired from the sport, he became the Vice-President of Boxing and Kickboxing Federation in the Lviv region. He moved to Australia in 1999 on a Sport visa to perform in amateur boxing. The low income Taras receives as a foreign trainer in Australia forced him to work in the construction sector.

**Serhiy**
Serhiy is in his late-40s and came to Australia 15 years ago. He has secondary education from a technical college and came to Australia from Holland, where he was irregularly employed. In search of a better life for his family abroad, he arrived on a Tourist visa. After his Tourist visa expired, Serhiy stayed irregularly in Australia for 7 years. He was unofficially employed in the construction sector before he married a Ukrainian Australian and legalised his status. In his own words, Serhiy does not like Australia much and he never planned to stay in Australia permanently. He says that he would have been happier if he had stayed in Ukraine.

**Ivan**
Ivan arrived as a tourist in 1999. He is 33 years old and has a secondary education in culinary arts. He had a strong desire to stay in Australia, and he prolonged his Tourist visa several times until he met and married an Australian woman. He first worked as a painter, before later setting up his own painting company. He is now divorced. Ivan is very satisfied with his financial situation. His dream to become a citizen of "the country where there is no winter" – as Ivan describes Australia – has been realised.

**Yehor**
Yehor came to Australia as a professional boxer in 1999. He works as a painter and says that he could never have imagined himself working so hard. He is very nostalgic for
Ukraine. I conducted an informal interview with Yehor and took notes based on our conversation because he preferred that the interview was not recorded.

**Oleh**

Oleh is in his early-40s. When the Soviet Union collapsed he decided to withdraw from university and started an amateur buy-sell business that became a popular survival strategy for all social classes in the early 1990s. After a while, he realised he was not particularly skilled in the area of buying and selling merchandise, and switched to managing a currency exchange business. The currency business made him a lot of money, and together with friends, he started to invest in a chain of official exchange offices. By the end of 1990s, Oleh was forced by local officials to give up his business. In search of a stable life and self-realisation, Oleh came to Australia in 2000 as a tourist to support Ukrainian athletes in the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. Oleh was impressed with the country and decided to stay. Through friends, he immediately found a job in the construction sector as a painter. Based on the advice of a Russian migration agent, he claimed political asylum and received a Bridging Visa to live and work in Australia while his application was being processed. According to Oleh, “applying for asylum is a lottery” and he felt lucky to finally receive permanent residency. He has not seen his family in Ukraine for 4 years. He now lives in Sydney with his wife and daughter.

**Viktor**

Viktor is a retired academic. He is in his 80s. He arrived in Australia 13 years ago in 2000 through the family reunion migration stream. His daughter married an Australian and encouraged Viktor and his wife to move to Sydney. Before moving to Sydney, he worked for a Ukrainian medical institute. Viktor is not completely satisfied with his experience of immigration; he says it is hard to find a place in Australian society if you do not know English and you are retired. He receives a good pension from the Australian government that allows him to live a decent life.

**Oleksandra**

Oleksandra comes from a working-class family in Western Ukraine. She finished her studies at Ukrainian institute of physical culture. She is in her early 40s. She already had family in Sydney before migrating. She came to Australia first on a Tourist visa in 2000 and then received family reunion visa. According to Oleksandra, she did not initially think
of staying in Australia long-term, because her husband had a good job in Poland. However, she did not like Poland and Polish attitudes to immigrants, so she decided to stay in Australia. Now she has completed a university degree and is looking for an accounting job. Her husband works in construction and they have two children.

Artem
Artem arrived in Australia in 2000 for the Sydney Olympics as a tourist. Initially, he planned to stay in Australia because he did not see a future in Ukraine. Before arriving, he served in the Soviet Army, Ukrainian Army, and then Moldavian Army, before he resigned from these posts. Due to economic hardship, his wife with his daughter went to Italy as labour migrants. Artem’s family collapsed when his visa application was rejected by the Italian Immigration Department, and he was unable to join his family there. At that time a tourist agency in the Ukraine was guaranteeing Australian Tourist visas to visit the Sydney Olympic Games. Artem’s separation from his family and his economic situation pushed him to sell his apartment and move to Sydney. After a month in Australia, he applied for asylum and received legal refugee status. His first workplace was a chocolate factory. He then switched to work in the construction industry. He is now remarried and has a child.

Solomia
Solomia originally comes from Western Ukraine from working-class family. Trained as a teacher, all her life she worked by profession. She came to Australia in 2001 on a Tourist visa to join her husband who arrived in Australia two years before. Her husband was forced to go abroad by a local culture of corruption and racketeering. He could not cover his mortgages due to wage arrears, and was forced to give up his property. Therefore, he decided to come to Australia in search of a better life for himself and his family. Solomia claimed asylum onshore after arrival and received refugee status. Currently she works as a teacher at the Ukrainian School in Sydney.

Vasyl
Vasyl is in his early 50s. He has a secondary education from a technical college, and worked in Ukraine and all over Europe before coming to Australia in 2001. Originally, he wanted to emigrate to Canada or America. He heard about opportunities to come to Australia from a Ukrainian newspaper. He came on a business visa together with two other Ukrainians. After his visa expired, he claimed asylum and stayed in Australia after
receiving refugee status. He is now working in the construction industry as a builder, and regularly visits family in Ukraine to cope with nostalgia and light depression.

**Nadiya**

Born into a blue-collar, working-class family in a village in Western Ukraine, Nadiya finished banking college and worked for one year as an accountant before she gave birth to her first son. She arrived in Australia in 2001 to join her husband who had arrived one year earlier on a work visa after finding manual labouring work in the construction industry. He had work experience in the construction industry in the Czech Republic, Poland and USA. Now they have their own flooring business and Nadiya helps her husband with the accounting. She liked Australia only after some time in the country, and she now thinks that life in Australia is much better than life in the Ukraine, and there is more freedom.

**Pavlo**

Pavlo comes from a blue-collar, working-class family from a small village in Western Ukraine. According to Pavlo, he came to Australia for the same reason as many other migrants: “to make money”. He did not care which country he migrated to. The choice of Australia as an immigration destination was a coincidence. Pavlo considered going to the United States, and the option of illegally crossing Mexico’s border to get into the US, but decided that it was too risky and preferred a safer way to emigrate. Being driven by the wish to earn money on a new car and to gather initial capital for a new business in Ukraine, he accepted his friend’s suggestion to go to Australia together. In 2000 Pavlo arrived in Sydney on a Tourist visa and claimed asylum on the grounds of discrimination. His wife and children joined him shortly afterwards in Australia. He now works as a builder in the construction sector.

**Vasylyna**

The main push factor motivating Vasylyna’s immigration to Australia was the poor living standards in Ukraine and the health risks associated with the effects of the Chernobyl disaster. Migration was not an easy decision for Vasylyna, as she held a professorship in one of the best universities in Ukraine and had a happy family life. After her husband died she decided to visit her daughter, who immigrated to Australia in 1994. While travelling, she met her future husband in Melbourne. Several years later they got married and Vasylyna permanently moved to Australia. She is deeply in love with Australia, despite the
fact that she was unable to continue teaching at Australian universities due to the language barrier.
CHAPTER FIVE

BEFORE MIGRATION: LEAVING UKRAINE

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the focus was on the structure or context in which the participants made their decisions to migrate. The main focus here is the application of the modified life strategy research framework to explore the survival life strategies that tended to be implemented by the ‘transition migrants’. This chapter will show through the lens of people’s memory of their lives before migration and their recollections of the period when they decided to migrate, how ‘transition migrants’ narrated their responses to the changes that emerged in post-Soviet Ukraine and the effects it had on their aims, values, needs and sense of agency in terms of imagining their lives. Exploring the narratives for these four micro elements enables a mapping of their different responses to changes in post-independence Ukraine from 1991–2003. The narratives demonstrate that ‘transition migrants’ had similar strategies for survival, but different emotional responses. They also differed in two key aspects of social identity—class and national identity—which meant they did not experience survival in exactly the same ways.

Firstly, the four key building components of the content/agency aspect of the life strategy framework will be discussed in detail (this was briefly set out in Chapter Two pp. 41–43). Secondly, while discussing the four micro components, the emotional sphere, class and identity that form the prism and enable one to see how the survival life strategy expanded or shrank in the post-migration stage will be addressed. Next, the chapter will illustrate how the decision to migrate and the choice of destination country by the ‘transition migrants’ is part of their life strategy (re-)formation.

5.2 Micro components of the survival life strategy

5.2.1 Aims

The first micro component of this framework is aims. Aims refers to individuals life goals and motivated activity plans that form the core of life strategy. A key aim for this cohort of ‘transition migrants’ was, of course, to migrate. However, this needs to be explored in a more nuanced way and so my analysis explores which other aims the participants realised with the help of migration. This analysis is based on two indicators that help to distinguish
and describe the details of a survival life strategy: (1) motivations behind migration and (2) scope of aims (Reznik, 1995).

As explained in Chapter Four, Ukrainians from a range of different classes or statuses suffered unemployment, low wages and arrears. These economic hardships affected those from the class of professionals and scientific and cultural intelligentsia in a completely different way compared to their impact on participants from the class of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs. Therefore, depending on the class, the economic motivation formed different aims that guided the survival life strategies of ‘transition migrants’. The structural factors appeared in the narratives and shaped the subjective worlds of participants before they migrated.

**Professionals and scientific and cultural intelligentsia**

The aims that shape the life strategies of the participants from the class of scientific and cultural intelligentsia, and the class of professionals, will be analysed first. The Ukrainians who were hit hardest by the wave of unemployment in the 1990s were those in their 30s and late 40s with professional experience in scientific and academic research, particularly in the engineering and healthcare fields.

The first economic motivation that shaped the aims of the participants was unemployment. Kostyantyn’s narrative is an emblematic example. Kostyantyn, an engineer by training from a family of professionals (his mother was an academic and his father an architect), left Ukraine in his late 30s. As a result of the the shift in the country’s economic priorities after the collapse of the USSR, from a planned economy (with a focus on the defence industry) to a market economy, many engineers and representatives of scientific and cultural intelligentsia lost their jobs. Konstytantyn was not an exception. Kostyantyn remembers strong disappointment with the State and the devaluation of his skills and work, when his defence industry research became irrelevant:

> At that time I worked in systems services for scientific equipment. In the late 80s–early 90s, basically all scientific research was conducted under the roof of the defence industry. Therefore, after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, of course, there was no such research and no defence industry. I lost my
job. My skills and work as a specialist in this area was no longer needed. This economic situation prompted me to search for ways to leave.

This interview extract shows that Kostyantyn’s unsatisfactory economic situation was caused by sudden unemployment when he was unable to earn enough money to simply feed his family. The loss of his ability to earn a living was accompanied by the loss of social status that went with his profession. Konstyantyn says that his professional skills were no longer needed.

The loss of income and job status was accompanied by emotional and psychological trauma. Emotions attached to the aims typical of the class of professionals significantly influenced their behavioural patterns and life strategy. Kostyantyn’s economic hardship and the related emotions of being unwanted, undervalued and “no longer needed” created a depressed emotional condition to the extent that the impossibility of finding a job and making a decent living at his desired social and economic level in Ukraine pushed him out of the country — “The new life which took away my economic and social position was intolerable; I had no other choice than to leave. My migration was forced by circumstances”.

Further, the aim exhibited by the migrants’ narratives of regaining economic and social status (analysed in more detail further in the chapter) is connected to the second economic motivation for migration—the impossibility of finding a new position within their specialist area/profession. Given the closure of vast enterprises, manufacturing lines and research divisions in the initial stage of post-Soviet transition in the early 1990s, a significant group of professionals found themselves on the street, “if not begging for money, then being forced to work elsewhere unqualified” (Solomia); that is, undertaking manual jobs, not in their profession, and for which they were overqualified. For Konystantyn, Myroslava, Tetyana, Natalya, Oleksiy, Olha, Yulia, Viktor, Vasylyna, and Lyubov such a social downgrade of their job status was unacceptable, meaning that the economic hardship was less of a motivational factor than it was for the blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs Vasyl, Oleh, Pavlo, Taras, Yehor, Serhiy, and Ivan (which will be discussed later in this chapter).
A vivid example is the story of Myroslava. From a young age she was interested in computers and started to build up her professional skills and career early in life. Being a high achiever at school, she entered Odessa Technical University and successfully completed a combined degree in finance, economics and technology. After graduation she easily found a well-paid job in the IT industry. At the age of 25 when the Soviet Union collapsed, she already had over four years of professional experience in IT. She never thought that her positive life attitude and professional aspirations would be hit by such a wave of economic disruption. Along with many other educated and young professionals in Ukraine, Myroslava lost her job and struggled to find another in the same sphere with the same economic and social status. Here is how she tells it:

There were no jobs in IT because, simply, there was no electricity and all the plants had closed down. Despite the fact that the whole industrial infrastructure was there, it was impossible to find a job in the profession; the only income opportunity was in a very primitive business—buying and selling. We did not have the ability and desire to earn money in such a way, but we had to. I felt I wanted to escape and have the freedom to choose what to do with my life.

Other key words that define the life attitudes and aims of professionals are choice, freedom and desire. Myroslava’s narrative starts with her explaining the socio-economic circumstances for migration intertwined with her love for freedom of movement and of job/occupation choices. In the situation when no jobs in the IT sector were available, she did not want to even consider starting in a low-skilled job as “a primitive entrepreneur” to meet her economic needs (she uses this expression to emphasise that she felt she was over-qualified for the jobs that were available on the market back in the early 1990s). In the early 1990s such a situation was typical for a number of the educated and professional people with high-level education, good qualifications and a broad general outlook, who found themselves in the position of beggars. Some of them tried chovnykarstvo⁸ (as mentioned by Myroslava “a primitive buy-sell business”)—where they bought foreign products abroad and sold these goods in domestic markets. This class of people, who were

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⁸ The phenomenon got its name from the entrepreneurs who emerged in the 1990s in the post-Soviet region, who transported goods (mostly clothing, housewares, appliances, etc.) from abroad and had dozens of shops in the markets, often wholesale. The goods were usually purchased in the large wholesale markets in the country where they were produced (mostly China, Poland, Turkey).
overqualified for such primitive retail work, started to search for ways out of such miserable conditions. Many saw migration as the way to escape from this “non-occupational degrading and deskilling work” (Oleksiy). Migration meant they could aim for financial well-being, leaving their cultural and educational needs for better times. Thus, the lack of work in their profession shaped the cohort’s aim of migrating to regain job status and related economic and social statuses associated with their class. As Oleksiy said about the impact of migration on his career development in Australia:

To put it mildly, I was disgusted at the system and the people who ran science and education and local governments in Ukraine in the 1990s. I wanted my career back. It took several years before I found a job in Australia that I was completely satisfied with. Today I feel social respect and economic reward for who I am and what I do.

The third economic motivation behind the aims of the Ukrainian professionals and scientific and cultural intelligentsia to regain their economic and social status, was low wages and wage arrears. The loss of economic status was accompanied by a loss of social status. Being of high education and having exceptional professional skills this group could not cope with their social downgrade let alone the new need to secure economic survival. They typically said that their aim was to regain their previous economic and social status. The narratives of Myroslava, Snizhana, Leonid, Yulia, Oleksandra, Konstytyn, Viktor, Artem and Vasylyna were threaded through with such expressions as “my job was no longer prestigious and well-paid”, “economic survival was unbearable”, “I didn’t feel social appreciation receiving the backdated payments”, “it was morally and economically hard; I wanted my life back”. Even in “positive” cases when participants were able to keep their jobs, their incomes dropped and for Yulia, Leonid, Lubov they were not sufficient to make a living.

Yulia is another highly-skilled IT professional from Ukraine whose life strategy, implemented with the help of migration, was driven by the aim to escape poor economic conditions and regain her social and economic status. She explained that her life had degraded to the level of starvation. Yulia’s narrative is filled with horror and fear when she remembered her last year (1993) in Ukraine before migration:
It was collapse, famine, literally hunger! You did not need a fridge, just switch it off. All I had to eat was a piece of bacon, a slice of bread and a piece of cheese. It is not that I did not have a job and wasn’t paid. I had a salary, but I could not buy anything. Everyone was subject to such conditions—we had nothing to eat. It was incomparable to what it was like before independence, we could go to the market and we had enough money to buy goat's milk, which was quite expensive. Then no meat, no food, no milk; it all seemed to have disappeared. I remember the day, the moment, when I had the impression that my neighbours would just “make their feet forward” [die] one after the other. They were old retired people, they had no money. I was simply praying to God to survive.

Yulia’s survival story illustrates the starvation and economic hardship caused by the system’s collapse and wage arrears that led to an economic and social catastrophe. The systemic collapse of social and class structures impacted the emotional sphere of participants. Yulia talks about her fear of death while observing other people’s struggle for physical survival—her neighbours and even pets. She had the impression that everyone would die as there was no way out of this catastrophic economic dead-end. Being reduced to a survival lifestyle struck some professionals extremely hard. The majority of those who chose to emigrate did so with the aim of regaining both their economic and social statuses, but also sometimes to simply physically survive the calamity. Yulia’s experiences of struggling just for physical survival are rare among the group of professionals and scientific and cultural intelligentsia, while for participants from lower classes, the basic aim of escaping starvation and poverty was the one that defined their survival life strategy.

**Blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs**

Participants from the blue-collar and entrepreneurial classes in the majority suffered from low incomes that were insufficient to provide for their basic physical survival. Blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs did not consider a lack of work in their professions to be a strong motivation for migration, because their social status did not suffer as a result of the economic downgrade and so was the least factor of concern. As Pavlo, who worked as a builder, said: “I was never concerned with my status and the type of work I do, the first-priority has always been to have a roof over my head and food on the table.”
The interviews show that their decision to migrate to Australia was driven predominantly by the aim of escaping poverty and starvation, which they found themselves experiencing after the collapse of the Soviet system. Participants Vasyl, Oleh, Pavlo, Taras, Yehor, Serhiy, and Ivan related how many factories stopped paying their workers in cash and moved to barter payments. They referred to their own examples and the examples of friends and relatives who worked in factories and from the early 1990s, began receiving wages in the form of manufactured products; alcohol factories paid their workers with bottles of spirits. Serhiy, who was originally from Western Ukraine from a family of manual workers and worked for a meat-processing factory before his departure for Australia, remembers: “For 1998 New Year I was paid for my work with vodka, meat and buckwheat. This is how they thought I should feed my family. It was a disaster!”

Another motivation of an economic nature behind the departure of participants from the class of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs was the suppression of entrepreneurial activity. Given the high unemployment rate among blue-collar workers, many of them had switched in despair to being entrepreneurs. They started small and primitive buy-sell businesses in order to maintain at least some income stream. Small businesses in the form of ‘buy-sell’ (i.e. chovnykarstvo) became a widespread reaction/solution to economic hardship in the 1990s. Vasyl, Pavlo, Oleh, and Taras who were energetic, active or self-motivated started to find and create their own sources of income by creating small businesses.

However, from the first years of Ukrainian independence, ordinary citizens became quite vulnerable to the bureaucratic arbitrariness of local and central government officials. Heads of regional and local administrations turned into local warlords, who put pressure on the internal affairs bodies, courts and successful small businesses. As Oleh explained “when these ‘warlords’ in government administration saw that somebody’s up-and-coming business was achieving good profits, local officials immediately wanted to ‘share’ in the profit”. The sharing of profits was realised by sending taxation officers, firemen and sanitary inspection services to try and find any kind of infraction. This was then used to demand bribes in the form of a small percentage of the profits.

This corruption was explained in the narratives of four participants who ran small enterprises in Ukraine before their migration. As Vasyl noted, if they were paid the
officials would “let the business stay and continue working”. Vasyl further told that many successful small businesses from the 1990s to the early 2000s were forced to close down or share profits with these “powerful groups of local governors or criminals who had links to the local administration”. Such economic and political conditions were extremely unfavourable for small businesses, which was “the only source of income for warlords in the local governments” (Oleh). Moreover, the four interviewed entrepreneurs reported that capital market and consumer loans were almost non-existent at that time in Ukraine. Under such circumstances, a person who switched to entrepreneurship out of desperation and needed start-up capital could not save it or get it as a loan.

The migration narrative of Vasyl, a blue-collar worker with a college education, is an example of those numerous entrepreneurs whose small businesses were born from desperation and who were pushed out of their small business niches in Ukraine and had no option but to go abroad in search of a safer and fairer life and working conditions. Many such economically active but low-skilled and poorly educated individuals ended up as labour migrants working in low-skilled jobs in Europe (Malynovska, 2005). When perestroyka started, Vasyl’s friend invited him to work for his private business. Vasyl left his jewellery job, which was very profitable work at that time and started a new job as a director of a repair work company:

All repair works in the city that required industrial climbing, high-altitude work—my company covered it. In fact, it was repair work of nine-storey apartment buildings—roofs, towers... well, everything that required industrial alpinism. I had a monopoly because no one was doing the same business. I was just in the right flow, I discovered the right theme. But the time came when someone from the city administration did not like how well we were doing. Once, several people came and said: “You are a very good company, but you need to share with others”. And they were not bandits. It was the city administration. All the bandits were my friends. And so, I sent the city administration nicely away. Then the pressure began—actually, a very strong pressure; government pressure. The tax inspector came, took away all the licenses and so on and so forth. It is a long story to tell, but quite simply I had to close my company.
After Vasyl was forced to quit his business, he still continued to make money by delivering private services on a smaller scale. As he explained later in the interview, he had no other choice, nor the skills to ensure his economic survival other than to do business in his small city in Western Ukraine. Between 1995–1997 Vasyl and his family led a miserable existence. Vasyl said that after 1997 he “stupidly got a job as a handler” in order to live on small salary and maintain his psychological health. His wife was trading in the markets to make a living. They spent between 1.5–2 years in such conditions until Vasyl started to think about how to escape the poverty and emotional pressure:

*I did not feel well and relaxed, that is, I could not keep working. I knew that I would be pressured again. It was very hard. After we had everything—one car, then a second, then a third. The life we lived was incomparable to the life I lived before they closed my business; the difference was like between “heaven and earth” [Ukrainian saying meaning a big difference between two opposite things]. Of course, we were not dying of hunger... but we felt such pressure ... so we just decided that it would be the right decision to emigrate.*

Vasyl’s economic and social slide into poverty led to him feeling miserable. His narrative begins with the statement that he could not keep working for emotional or psychological reasons—“I did not feel well and relaxed”. He uses the word “pressure” twice in this extract to express how he felt. He used the family cars to demonstrate the improvement that took place across his earlier adult life—“one car, then a second, then a third”. Then “they” closed his business. By “them” he means government bodies and the local administrative “warlords”.  

His life story is typical of the voices of Oleh, Taras, Pavlo, also entrepreneurs interviewed for this research who struggled with feelings of strong emotional deprivation in the form of psychological pressure, fear and alienation as a result of the political and economic system that forced them to give up their entrepreneurial spirit. The permissiveness of local governance, which created impossible working conditions for groups of people who had initiative and skills to contribute to the stabilisation of the Ukrainian economy, and created jobs for others, produced not only poverty but also a psychological pressure on those who were reduced from wealth to poverty not by their own mistakes or inability.
Through the migration narratives of participants, it was also possible to capture the scope of the aims that determined the type of survival life strategy common to the ‘transition migrants’. The determining feature of the aims that guided this cohort was targeting for maximum available and possible aims. A typical experience of the ‘transition migrants’ (Hanna, Tetyana, Yulia, Svyatoslava, Lyubov, Oleksandra, Solomia, Pavlo, Oleh, Vasylyna, Myroslava, Vasyl, Sofia, Taras, Yehor, Serhiy, Viktor, Artem, Nadiya) was to come to Australia ‘by chance’, following an opportunity, which unexpectedly opened through friends or relatives (see more in Chapter Six). Taking up the first available option to achieve their aims, either to regain social and economic status or to escape poverty and starvation, is typical of ‘transition migrants’. For participants from all four classes—professionals; scientific and cultural intelligentsia; blue-collar workers; and entrepreneurs—migration was the best possible and most easily available option to escape their life situations in Ukraine.

5.2.2 Values

The second component of the life strategy framework is values. Values are described as general evaluative standards that serve to influence an individual’s behaviour so as to reach a desired end state (Rokeach, 1979). Colic-Peisker (2008) argues that there is a value shift that takes place in late socialism that involves the ‘intersection of traditional, modern and ‘socialist’ values’ (p. 37). In her study on Croatia she draws on Ronald Inglehart's theory of the ‘culture shift’ in advanced industrial societies to describe the differences in values of the two cohorts she examined, the first a generation brought up in material security of 1950s and 1960s and those who migrated during the 1980s and 1990s. Given that unlike Colic-Peisker’s important work my study relates to the post-socialist era and is driven by data collected about the post-1990s migrations, her specific findings cannot be used to explain my informants’ values. However, the general idea of shifts and intersections of different types of values is important. In order to avoid bias and dragging the data to a pre-given set of values and instead to seek to understand the values typical for the cohort of the Ukrainian ‘transition migrants’, I have relied on the data from my 26 informants. The data from ‘transition migrants’ stories suggested the following set of values as important for my analysis (1) material values, (2) values of traditionalism, (3) family welfare, and (4) conformity.
First, the factors that formed such a set of values found in the participants’ stories will be examined. As a result of social change in post-Soviet Ukraine, culture shock had a significant impact on the formation of a new material oriented system of values among participants. The concept of cultural trauma formulated by Sztompka (2000) is utilised to explain the new emotional conditions that emerged from cultural disorientation, a value vacuum, and a feeling of having no future; as well as the crisis of identity revealed by the impossibility of finding a place for oneself in the newly emerging system.

Moreover, emotional trauma and national identity shifts produced a particular set of material, traditional and conformist values that guided the survival life strategy. Narratives have shown that the condition of cultural trauma, and the emotions attached to it, were formed when the collapse of the system caused disorganisation, displacement, or incoherence in the culture. Social actions lost their homogeneity, stability and meaning. Thus, from an actor’s perspective we can speak of cultural disorientation (Sztompka, 2000, p. 453). Cultural disorientation resulted from a clash of the past (Soviet, communist culture) and the present (post-Soviet, capitalist culture), and when the participants found themselves in the grip of a new culture, in which they hastily developed and situationally induced new patterns of actions and values.

Talking about emotions, the majority of interviewees - Kostyantyn, Vasyl, Serhiy, Yulia, Myroslava, Vasylyna, Oleh, Taras, Pavlo, Leonid, Sofia, Oleksiy, Olha, Lyubov, Natalya, Tetyana, Artem, Oleksandra, and Ivan - emphasised the role of psychological discomfort and the depression that was induced by their lack of acceptance of the systemic changes in Ukraine, and which was reflected in their values. According to Weber (1978), each system of values has a double ground: in an individual as a subject itself, and in the society as a socio-cultural system. An inconsistency between society and the individual emerged due to the system transition that significantly shaped and directed changes in the national identity and emotional states of Ukrainians. Participants pointed out that these changes shaped by the newly formed socio-economic and political environment were seen and felt as changes for the worse. In this context Kostyantyn said:

*It was psychologically hard. My outlook, perceptions, values just did not work together with that which came out as a result of the turbulence: this primitive...*
“buy-sell” and some fraudulent things that, unfortunately, still continue to remain in Ukraine.

Kostyantyn, an engineer, noted his “outlook, perceptions, values” did not “work together” with the new situation. Later in the narrative he explains that he “was forced to accept” the material values that dominated Ukrainians of all social classes in the first years of transition. Giving up his orientation to collective benefits, equality, justice and his valuing of skills and education Konstyantyn felt “the new system demanded from me a shift into pragmatically oriented values of quick money”, which he sees as “fraudulent”; as getting something for nothing (meaning without investment of skills and education), cynicism “a frank defiantly, dismissive and contemptuous attitude towards social norms”. Those value-normative principles “by which I was brought up, just stopped working in new Ukraine”, he adds towards the end of the discussion of his motives for emigration.

Many participants like Kostyantyn, did not know how to organise their lives in the new environment. For example, Tetyana devoted the biggest part of her narrative to the value system and not finding a place for herself within it:

The situation was steadily deteriorating, and there were no prospects. I did not see myself in the system of values that emerged, when suddenly the whole dam broke and carried the foam, carried the dirt. The flood broke the system of existing values and the worst things floated to the surface. It was very difficult to see myself in the system that developed; I did not suit that life.

Tetyana used the vivid metaphor of a broken dam when she talked about the post-Soviet change in value systems. Her emotional and value “shock” stems from the rapidity and unexpectedness of such change. She talks about the new force of “the worst values” that washed away the system of values she grew up with. She used such expressions as “not suit” and “difficult to see myself” to explain her feeling of exclusion in that newly emerged value system. Later in the narrative she returns to a detailed description of what the values were that she could not accept: “After long years of Soviet deficit, everyone got obsessed with buying. Even though the majority had no money, they had this thirst for material wealth and money”.

118
Unsurprisingly, the longing for material wealth, which is the first commonly expressed by participants value, was expressed primarily in the wish for secure life. Behind possessing material goods (house, flat, car) participants saw stability and protection. As Yulia shared, “at that time I felt money was the only thing that could get me a proper life and stability”. The lives of the majority of participants were limited to producing money to buy new material goods. In this sense, participants were victims of the epoch in which they lived, who for some reason were experiencing abusive or impoverished conditions. An unsettled life, scarcity and poverty often appear to be the main motive for wasting their strength on consumption, to find a mainstay of life in material well-being.

The second most widespread value among participants that determined the life strategies of the ‘transition migrants’ was traditionalism. Adherence to tradition, the desire to preserve the old proven forms of relationship that are time-honoured by customs and religious canons, may interfere with the perception of the necessity of personal and social change (Zlobina and Tykhonovych, 2001). National identity here plays a significant role in the formation of the value of tradition (Bevzenko, 2008). Lyubov, Viktor, Olha, Konstyantyn, Yulia, Tetyana, Myroslava, Vasylyna, and Oleksiy all expressed a strong identification with the Soviet system, and all had a strong nostalgia for the communist system. This group who were more keen on tradition and collectivism, were less accepting of the new set of individualistic values which they saw as exploitative and self-driven. By way of contrast Oleksandra, Ivan, Nadiya, and Oleh who had a strong Ukrainian national identity were less into traditionalism in the sense of collectivism, and more open to the new system of “Western” individualistic values.9

It is worth mentioning that the level of traditionalism was significantly lower among the most active group of migrants—youth (Ivan, Nadiya, Oleh)—as there is a clear trend in traditionalism increasing with age (Bevzenko, 2008). Given that the average age in the group of ‘transition migrants’ is 50, traditionalism is a significant value that defines the survival life strategy of this group. The value of traditionalism is strongly linked to the value of religion (Zlobina, 2003), which is also expressed in migrants’ life stories. Two thirds described themselves as religious people, predominantly those who were older.

9 This raises the question of whether traditionalism is an obstacle to the development and successful implementation of life strategy and, thus, the realisation of values. Is it tightly linked to conservatism and are participants with traditional values fated at constant survival? These topics are worth deeper investigation, but are not the main concern of this thesis.
From the group of participants who had Ukrainian identity, many mentioned they were religious, but the majority did not practice religion on a regular basis. “I call myself religious, but I attend church only on religious holidays and celebrations”, says Oleksandra.

However, some emphasis is needed here not only on the interrelation between traditionalism and religiosity, but on the level of religiosity. Those participants who mentioned their active religious practice oriented themselves to a larger extent on values of traditionalism, which is typical of the group of participants of an older age who identify as Ukrainian. Therefore, the value of religious tradition for participants with Ukrainian identity in their late 40s to mid 50s is more in harmony than the value of innovation and constant change, which is more typical of younger Ukrainians (who consider themselves religious, but do not practise their faith on a regular basis). In other words, under the conditions of transition this group of participants aimed for the stability they saw in tradition.

The third value widely mentioned among ‘transition migrants’ is family welfare. Indeed, this value is often manifested as the key reason for departure to Australia. Serhiy, a blue-collar worker who identified strongly as Ukrainian said:

> If there is one person in the family who can go abroad, he goes. It was the typical situation in the West when I left. I thought I should do something better for my family. Someone has to sacrifice himself, so I went abroad and sacrificed myself.

Serhiy talked about migration as a “sacrifice” he makes for his family’s sake. In other words poverty and unemployment pushed him to emigrate in search of income. He begins his narrative with a general statement—“if there is one person in the family who can go”—which suggests this is a social wide solution used to solve the financial problems of the whole family. Moreover, it indicates the value of the family and the importance and power of collective (family) aims over individual aims. Serhiy realised that he should prioritise family interests over his own life. He did not complain about this state of affairs, as he claimed he was, and is still, willing to do anything for his family. Such unconditional love and readiness to support family at a personal cost and not asking for anything back is what
defines the value of family and its well-being. Participants declared that to have a family and children, and to educate them, is "by far the largest fortune" (Oleksandra).

The fourth value discussed is conformity. It appears in the migrants’ narratives as a way of valuing correct behaviour and avoiding condemnation. The desire to conform, cultivated in Soviet times, comes from the desire of participants for emotional stability and security (Panina, 2003). As is evident from the narratives, negative social judgement resulted in the worst emotional stress and at the same time, the strongest tool of control over participants’ behaviour during the first years after collapse. “In Soviet times all people had to conform, from the desire not to distinguish themselves from the group and attract the attention of the controlling State bodies”, said Viktor, “which strictly watched everyone” and tried to control any type of individual thinking at the group level. Oleksiy characterised the conformist behaviour in Soviet times as “uncritical submissiveness of the minority to the majority”.

Interviews have indicated that in the first decade after the USSR collapse conformity has undergone a transformation, but it still remains strongly rooted in the participants’ behaviour and values. As Oleksiy, Kostyantyn and Tetyana said, the new post-Soviet conformity of the 1990s pushed the majority to accept the position of the minority. The minority position was a political one, as Oleksiy said. The minority was represented by Ukrainian nationalists who started actively to build up the independent Ukraine. The necessity of conforming to the new type of social and political group (minority) was unacceptable for Oleksiy, a highly educated professional academic and doctor from Western Ukraine.

From my personal perspective the Soviet collapse was a clash, a kind of revision of my values and quite optimistic attitudes. I had to make a decision. I could "repaint" and simply change my mind and become a bright Ukrainian nationalist, a believer in God, and so on, or I could pack my bags and leave.

In Oleksiy’s case, the individualisation and desire to conform to the majority (as a habit from Soviet times) stimulated his migration activity. The values that the new group started to dictate after the collapse were unacceptable and unclear for Oleksiy. The strong
nationalism, even radical forms of it—religion, nepotism, criminal gangs—in some ways controlled social spheres of life in Ukraine and demanded conformism.

Another participant, Taras, also expressed his lack of desire to conform to this new system of values and talked about his wish “for an honest and wealthy life”. Taras, a world-class sportsman who came to Australia through the distinguished sport talents migration stream, was involved in criminal groups because, as he explained, he needed to make money and the only way to run his own restaurant was to keep criminals as friends. After attempts to conform to the new system of corruption and lawlessness, he decided he could not live his whole life this way. He remembered:

I had two choices, either to be honest and poor, or a racketeer and rich, and go into politics. Even if you are honest by nature, after you join them you become like them. If you do not, they will “eat you”. I could not stand it.

Taras explained that his life choices were forced by the emotional and financial pressure to conform. He considered himself to be an honest person. Thus, he did not want to accept the new system of values and live by them, so instead he escaped this emotional pressure and social judgement. “I did not want to be seen as a criminal, but wanted to earn money. Being rich and honest were two exclusive things at that time”, he adds at the end of his story.

Overall, ‘transition migrants’ built their survival life strategy based on the values of material wealth, traditionalism, family well-being and (non-) conformity. This set of values is drawn from the personal stories of migrants. Colic-Peisker’s (2008) study of Croatian migrants found that the two different migrant cohorts (those who migrated during 1950s-1960s and those – during 1980s-1990s) differentiate by different sets of values. I apply this conclusion to my study and hypothesise that Ukrainian migrants - ‘transition migrants’- brought up in socialist times of collective mentality and affected by the material insecurity of Ukraine’s economically unsuccessful 1990s, are likely to develop material values that they associate with a sense of security and stability. The narratives show that values were visibly linked to identity and emotions. In particular, the values of ‘transition migrants’ were shaped by emotional trauma that emerged because participants could not accept the systemic changes after the collapse of the USSR. Their identityies also underwent a
transformation from Soviet identity to Ukrainian identity affixed a stamp of traditionalism and conformity.

5.2.3 Needs

The third micro-component of the ‘transition migrants’ life strategy is needs. Needs, which are many and varied, are defined according to a simplified version of Maslow’s hierarchical model of necessities. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is often portrayed in the shape of a pyramid with the most fundamental level of needs at the bottom and the need for self-actualisation at the top. This pyramid will be used to describe the needs of participants. Among the most common and, therefore, essential needs which guide the life strategies of ‘transition migrants’ are those which fall into the first three levels of the pyramid—physiological needs, needs of safety and love/belonging. Physiological needs for food and housing were not determining ones for the participants, but in some stories are articulated as needs that were occasionally on the agenda for a period of time before migration. Food and housing were negotiated as especially prominent in the first years of Ukrainian independence in the early 1990s. Falling into the group of needs in safety and in love/belonging, the subset of the needs found in the life stories of participants before migration were: (1) security needs (order and stability, life in a safe environment, avoid threats); (2) environmental needs (healthy environment); (3) social needs (integrity of social and individual values). Again depending on the class to which the participants belong, the importance of the three types of needs vary. Also, emotions expressed by participants can lead them to prioritise one need over the other.

Firstly, to the group of needs described by ‘transition migrants’ as security needs, which include the need for order and stability, a safe environment and the avoidance of threats. All participants directly or indirectly mentioned that their need for order and stability was one of the most indicative and prominent motivators of their behaviour. “My choice to migrate was driven by one main wish for order and stability. I was tired from all that chaos”, shared Oleksandra. The prevalence of this need suggests that the need for order and stability is a socially and psychologically regulated response to the prolonged period of anomie that characterised all ‘transition migrants’ regardless of their class origin. Participants from the four classes (professionals; cultural and scientific intelligentsia; blue-collar workers; and entrepreneurs) all broadly mentioned that their life strategies were guided by the need for order and stability.
However, they interpreted the need for order and stability differently. For professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia, stability and order meant “the need for solidarity with society” (Oleksiy), and consistency between society and the individual. Specifically, these two classes of participants saw a friendly psychological atmosphere and mutual social solidarity, where people trust each other and are ready to help, as the element crucial to a feeling of order and stability. Here, emotional comfort defines this need. The narratives of Myroslava, Snizhana, Leonid, Yulia, Oleksandra, Konstyantyn, Viktor, Artem, Solomia and Vasylyna used the following expressions to define emotional comfort: “stability comes from trusting each other”; “a healthy social atmosphere is what makes me feel emotionally comfortable”; “it feels right when people are friendly and care about one another”.

At the same time, participants from the classes of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs used different expressions to define the meaning of order and stability. They interpreted it quite broadly. Pavlo said it meant “the possibility to walk the streets with no fear”; Serhiy suggested it was “when workers showed discipline” (when no one is late for work, everyone obeys the rules); Oleh said it was when “everyone shares formal rules and regulations equally”. The experiences of the ‘transition migrants’ demonstrate that social insecurity, widespread anomie and general dissatisfaction with life in independent Ukraine greatly influenced the formation of their need for security. This need shaped the lives of all participants, whatever class they belonged to before leaving Ukraine.

Secondly, environmental needs played an important role in the formation of the life strategies of ‘transition migrants’. It played a particularly important role in the lives of the professional class and the class of cultural and scientific intelligentsia (Konstyantyn, Oleksiy, Olha, Natalya, Viktor). By ‘environmental needs’ they meant the necessity of an ecologically healthy environment. They emphasised the negative impact of the Chernobyl explosion on people’s health in Ukraine and the government’s disregard for the terrifying consequences.

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10 The accident of 26 April 1986 at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, located in Ukraine about 20 km south of the border with Belarus, was at the time the most serious ever to have occurred in the nuclear industry. It caused the deaths of 30 power plant employees and firemen (including 28 with acute radiation syndrome) and brought about the evacuation of about 116,000 people from areas surrounding the reactor. A vast area of Ukraine was contaminated. To this day the number of deaths resulting from the accident is unclear and the subject of considerable controversy. According to the 2006 report of the UN Chernobyl Forum’s Health Expert Group: "The actual number of deaths caused by this accident is unlikely ever to be precisely known".
Three professionals (Kostyantyn, Vasylyna, Natalya) and one representative of the scientific intelligentsia (Oleksiy), all of whom came to Australia in 1994–1995, were extremely concerned with the health situation in Ukraine and highlighted the careless attitude of “the Ukrainian Government which still hides the actual number of Chernobyl victims and does not invest money to support research and the health of Ukrainians who struggle with Chernobyl’s consequences” (Vasylyna). The life strategy of Oleksiy was to migrate with all his family “in order to live in an ecologically healthy environment”. He said he was escaping the unsafe ecological situation in Ukraine and its increasing instability. He explained that he “had been involved with the study of environmental emergencies while in Ukraine, and even in the first days of the explosion it was clear what the implications for the industry and the population of Ukraine would be”. The environmental situation worsened and the authorities’ attitude was “somewhat inadequate. I had several sufficiently strong conversations with the Ministry of Health, but they had no result”, said Oleksiy.

Thirdly, the need for integrity was widely mentioned by the ‘transition migrants’. By integrity, participants meant a state when commonly accepted social values correspond with their individual values. As in the values section where this issue was explored, many participants mentioned the cultural and emotional shock that overwhelmed Ukrainian society during the transition and caused anomie and a mismatch between social and individual values. The mismatch described by interviewees is the dysfunction of the value-regulatory mechanisms of social control which arise in circumstances where legitimate and even religious social values and standards fully or partially lose their regulatory capacity. In fact, they were no longer perceived or understood as generally accepted; and thus not only did immoral actions spread, but also behavioural strategies emerged which were based on the denial of the importance of social (and to an extent universal) values and needs.

One of the most distinctive features of participants’ consciousness, revealed by the interviews with the majority of the ‘transition migrants’, is the dynamic variability and kaleidoscopic changes in their priorities and needs, along with an inconsistency in the criteria they nominated as necessary for success in life. Also noteworthy was the changeability of the moral regulators of their behaviour. Hanna, Leonid, Yulia, Tetyana, Myroslava, Svyatoslava, Ivan, Serhiy, and Pavlo used words to describe what guided their
lives before migration such as “uncertainty”; “loss of orientation”; and “no longer any rules and standards”. Under these circumstances, when the socially recognised conventional values and meanings from the previous (Soviet) system ceased to operate the life strategies, stereotypes and patterns based on the earlier system appeared dysfunctional, the extent of the permissible and ‘permitted’ actions had significantly increased. Participants indicated that the moral standards became looser and the conjunction between the values of society and the individual became weaker. Therefore, the majority of ‘transition migrants’ suffered from an imbalance between their individual values developed during Soviet time, which they still lived by, and a new system of values guided by “self-interest, material success at any price, unabashed cynicism”, as described by Natalya. As with many other professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia, Natalya noted that the difference between social and individual value systems and the “loss of solidarity between different social groups” caused her emotional discomfort. The need for such integrity was crucial for the functioning of the life strategy formed by all the participants from the professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia. For blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs this need was secondary to the need for security. The need for the integrity of social and individual values guided the life strategies of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs to a lesser extent.

The ‘transition migrants’ did not mention the need for love/belonging very frequently. It was predominantly family reunion and marriage migrants who talked about their trips to Australia to visit loved ones and family members. As Hanna said: “I would never go so far—to Australia—if my husband didn’t move there for his parents. I moved to Australia because I needed him and his love”. However, this need appears to be less significant and secondary in determining the life strategies of ‘transition migrants’.

Such needs as cultural, spiritual and recreational satisfaction were saved for the future. The cases where these needs were important were few (Ivan and Sofia). As the basic needs are achieved the next level of Maslow’s pyramid becomes more important. Where these needs were mentioned by participants they wanted to see the world, to try their lives in different places, to search for adventure. Sofia, a school teacher from Western Ukraine, explained: “The first time I came to Australia was for my aunt’s wedding. I fell in love with Australia. I returned for good because I like to travel and Australia has incredible nature. I wanted to see the world”. 
5.2.4 Sense of agency

The fourth element that shapes a life strategy is agency. During the 1991–2003 period the sense of agency felt by participants had started to gradually form. However, the circumstances that would enable more than a weak sense of agency were missing. This combination of behavioural passivity (for example, the impossibility of making any decisions and acting) and the limiting structural factors that they faced before departure meant that a rather weak sense of agency formed. It was this weak sense that defines and reinforces the survival life strategies both in pre- and post-migration stages and is typical of ‘transition migrants’. The passive survival life strategies with their focus on control, which significantly limited participants’ agency and independent capability to act on their own will, dominated.

According to the narratives and the secondary data analysis explored in Chapter Four, the period from “1992–1998 [especially from 1992–1996] were the toughest years” (Leonid) of radical structural transformation and were characterised by anomie, deinstitutionalisation, macro involution, and uncertainty in the formation of a new social order (Khutka, 2009). Natalya, Viktor, Artem, and Vasylyna remembered that the sense of existential insecurity and fear for the future was what determined their actions in the first years of transition. Viktor mentioned that “the crisis that overtook Ukrainian society in the first decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union created a horrible emotional and psychological atmosphere. And it was paralysing. I felt I could not do anything about my life and situation in general”. “Paralysing” suggests Viktor felt helpless to overcome obstacles in the face of external circumstances. The narrative shows that this situation made Viktor, and other participants, believe that life was more dependent on external circumstances than on personal effort. These circumstances are described as structural factors in Chapter Four. The collected narratives reinforce the impression that there was a noticeable increase in the role of externality and structural unrest that guided individual lives.

Drawing from interview materials, the main reasons behind the formation/feeling of weak agency and behavioural passivity as articulated by participants were: (1) the lack of alternatives solving the problem of economic self-sufficiency; (2) paternalism; and (3) destabilisation of identity/belonging due to the rapid collapse of the old and formation of new social groups and new class interests.
(1) Lack of alternatives solving the problem of economic self-sufficiency

Narratives showed the main reasons for weak agency were economic: poverty and absence of resources. The illustration of this is the story of Taras, a boxer who was able to start his own restaurant only because he had protection from criminals with whom he was friends:

*I lost my job and I could no longer earn money by boxing. I had to search for alternative ways of making money to survive. I was invited to go around small businesses and huge factories and extort a percentage of their revenue. I said no and decided to start my small café. I felt secure because I had friends in criminal circles who would protect my business. Many of my friends where involved in shadow businesses… Horrible times…*

Taras’ narrative describes the personal outcome of shifts in the system, which were no longer socialist, but not yet capitalist. These shifts required adherence to one main condition for individuals — economic survival, conservation and, if possible, improvement of social and economic status through personal economic initiative. As with many other participants, Taras lost his job and the new conditions did not create any alternative methods for resolving actual problems of self-sufficiency and economic survival. For Taras and many others who were not included in state-government relations, but who preferred and aimed to recover from a permanent focus only on survival, there was only one way — entrepreneurial initiative, which should be understood not only as legal practices, but also as “illegal businesses”. According to Taras, more than half of his friends were either involved in “shadow” economic structures, started their own small businesses (often illegal), or got involved with criminal groups to earn a living.

Those participants (Vasyl, Pavlo, Oleh) who chose a legal way to start their businesses, suffered suppression by administrative and criminal structures, which caused business to wind down, bankruptcy and even emotional breakdown, as well as a fear of starting a new business. Oleh, who ran a currency exchange office in Kyiv remembers:

*As always, circumstances are such that there are small fish in the ocean and there are sharks that eat little fish, because it’s their work and nature. And at one point, one man came to our office. He introduced himself as the nephew of a very famous politician and said: “I have 25 ‘exchange offices’, and I want*
one more. I’ll give you one month to ensure you’ve moved out. You will run into big problems if you don’t”. I had to give up my business. I felt depressed, but I have no regrets, as there was no future for me in Ukraine.

Oleh’s story reflects a time of hardship when those people who wanted to earn a living separate from the State ran into obstacles imposed by powerful State and local government officials. He calls them “sharks” and portrays himself as a “fish”, that is with no power or resistance to the shark. It is interesting that all the businesses created by the interviewed Ukrainian entrepreneurs were closed down. In other words, even those people who tried to be economically active and earn their living independently from the State were doomed to economic failure and frustration. Thus, economic survival strategies which created a weak sense of agency, and which were formed in response to structural circumstances, dominated the stories of ‘transition migrants’.

(2) Paternalism

Another attitude that informed the weak sense of agency felt by participants was paternalism. Interviews have shown that paternalism is attached to and shaped by a particular set of emotions. Two thirds of participants said that before departure they felt that society was breaking down: “lacked stability” (Oleh); no social order; “there was little compliance with laws” (Viktor); and they “had no confidence in their future” (Yulia). Most participants were fearful about the economic situation: (“increased prices, backdated wages and pensions” (Tetyana)), instability of the labour market (unemployment), and personal safety (“rising crime” (Taras, Natalya, Artem)). However, the potential threat of a dictatorship, and “a return to the Soviet days” (Snizhana) that could turn society towards authoritarianism was never much of a concern and was expressed only by Snizhana and Sofia.

Given such emotional stance that shaped weak agency, the Soviet system remained far more attractive and caused nostalgia for the Soviet welfare state among the interviewed ‘transition migrants’. This nostalgia initiated the spread of ‘welfare mentality’ and social inactivity among participants. As a matter of fact, in the process of institutional reforms and structural transformations caused by a departure from the socialist model of the State, the post-independence “Ukrainian society lost the basic social guarantees the Soviet State had been providing” (Tetyana) for several decades. As mentioned by Tetyana, Yulia and
Serhiy there were: “guarantees of full employment” (Serhiy); “subsidised prices for consumer goods and services” (Tetyana); “free or low cost health care and education” (Serhiy); developed social infrastructure and a “social welfare system at factories and other government-provided workplaces” (Yulia). Irrespective of the class to which they belonged, participants felt they had suffered from the loss of guarantees mentioned above.

Although the relation between class and paternalism is absent, the connection between emotions, identity and paternalism is strong. Participants who were aged over 40 with a Soviet identity expressed particularly strong paternalism and an emotional connection to the Soviet State. They constantly compared the situation in the independent Ukraine with that of the Soviet Ukraine. A vivid example is the narrative of Olha, who with sorrow remembered those times when she used to rely on the State to help her cope with everyday social risk:

*I felt secure in the Soviet Union. I had a permanent workplace; I didn’t have to worry about losing my job. I felt happy because I was treated for free in the best hospitals and received good financial support [pension] as a victim of the Chernobyl disaster. Then I lost half of the social payments and felt as though I didn’t fit in the new reality. It was a tragedy. I felt helpless and had to change my lifestyle. Then my daughter invited me to reunite with her in Australia and I happily agreed. If the Soviet Union had not collapsed, I would have lived in Ukraine ‘til my last days.*

Vasylyna perceived the collapse of the Soviet Union as a personal tragedy. She referred to the loss of social and economic guarantees provided by the Soviet State. Her narrative was filled with the necessity of relying on the State. Her lifestyle changed, and as a result she expressed helplessness. Emotions reflecting passivity, disappointment and precariousness, in addition to the miserable level of well-being, formed weak agency and allowed nostalgia and paternalism to dominate. Furthermore, she expressed a strong Soviet self-identification while telling her story. As with some of the other participants with Soviet identities, Vasylyna blamed the collapse of the socialist welfare system for her current situation as a migrant in Australia. It is worth mentioning that Vasylyna, similar to the other participants, did not experience any emotional regret about her decision to emigrate from Ukraine, as she believed that post-independence life in Ukraine was much worse than life under Soviet
rule. Therefore, participants revealed that the dramatic transition in the model of State responsibility provoked widespread emotional trauma. Participants were convinced that the changes were not able to quickly eradicate the values of etatism and paternalism (Popova, 1998, p. 146), which dominated the narratives of those who arrived in Australia in 1991–2003.

(3) Destabilisation of identity

The destabilisation of the previous Soviet national identity, and consequently, the awareness of new social group and class interests that emerged in independent Ukraine also contributed to the formation of weak agency. It should be noted that the social identification process in conditions of social transition often takes the form of an individual identity crisis (Zlobina, 2003). First and foremost, the crisis was caused by the awareness that general rules guided by self-interested behaviour were necessary and socially desirable, but which now seemed to the participants to be false and an individual and collective error. The phenomena as negative identity when people refer to themselves as deceived, disadvantaged has emerged. When asked to remember his life back in Ukraine, Leonid, like so many other participants, said: “I was depressed waiting till the economic and political chaos somehow resolved itself. I felt deceived, I expected that my life in post-independence Ukraine would be different”. As Leonid’s example shows, the consequences of such crises included the loss of behaviour predictability and the growth of behavioural passivity. The responses of the participants were similar to what Hesley (1994) defined as a natural consequence of the disorientation, which results from a state of maladaptation and the destabilisation of the population.

The participants’ experiences of identity shifts after the USSR collapsed can be described by the phenomenon of “lost identities” (Ionin, 1998). Identities were “lost” when the Soviet identity no longer dominated and was substituted with identification with an independent Ukrainian State and newly formed social groups. In the Soviet era the majority of people had stable identities (Nagaychuk, 1994), which created a certain social comfort and did not encourage strong agency. Participants who talked about this period noted a certain level of State control over their individual lives: “one was instructed who to hate, who to love, who to be friends with”, related Tetyana. Rather than strengthening internal self-identity, this structural control undermined it, as well as the sense of responsibility participants had for their own life and the lives of their family (Bevzenko,
2008). In the first years after the collapse participants were still conforming to a normative identity that the State had encouraged them to adopt over the past 50 years. These identities became blurred, at the same time experiencing a change in their identification. This destabilisation of identity shaped weak agency in the ‘transition migrants’.

Along with the destruction of the State, participants faced acute and emotionally charged concerns in relation to the formation of new national identities and social interests. As noted earlier, participants were forced to change occupations and professions in order to become members of new social communities that were involved in the creation of new social and political identities.

All the social and emotional upheavals “passed through the mind and soul” (Myroslava) of participants. For many participants the loss of their former identities caused emotional trauma, confusion, distrust of social groups and institutions, and even a rejection of the new identities that had become part of their new social status. In terms of emotional responses to the experiences of lost identity, the ‘transition migrants’ can be divided into two groups: (1) those who desired to distance themselves from the destabilisation of their identities and expressed a feeling of dissatisfaction with themselves and with life as a whole, and (2) those who had no possibility of self-realisation, or whose self-realisation significantly slowed down and even stopped due to social turbulence. Participants expressed their internal negativity and reconsidered their moralities and priorities, and formed their life strategies by avoiding structural obstacles, rather than trying to change the situation. As Myroslava said, “I kept myself out of it and planned my life parallel to the life of the country. I relied only on myself and tried to avoid dealing with State institutions”.

The moral aspects related to agency and the destabilisation of identity played, a major, if not crucial, role in life strategy formation during the first 12 years of transition. While some participants were held back by “moral degradation” (Kostyantyn) and widespread anomie, others were inspired to take on new activities. In conditions that blur moral views on standards of conduct, including in the political sphere, some participants (e.g. Kostyantyn, Myroslava, Yulia, Artem) noted that they now see they were mistaken in the way they assessed their actions. In some cases, they even took a cynical attitude to justifying their flexibility and passivity by social circumstances. Artem remembered:
When I look back and analyse how I behaved straight after the collapse of the Soviet Union, I can say it was not me. I used to strongly believe that I led my life the way I wanted. At that time I remember myself being suppressed by circumstances and getting involved with criminals and odd businesses, which I would never have done in my previous days.

At the same time, several participants said that they solved their contradictory social positions and intrapersonal conflict interests differently, by simplifying the problem. For example, Pavlo, an entrepreneur back in Ukraine, thought: “If favour or benefit can be obtained now—even though in the distant future this step will be fraught with negative consequences for me—it is better to get the blessing now”. Pavlo, whose agency in the realisation of his aims, values and needs was weak but reactionary, expressed a slightly different approach to the destabilisation of morality and identity that overwhelmed Ukraine between 1991 and 2003: “It was not clear what the circumstances would be in the distant future, but the real opportunity could be lost now”. By opportunity, Pavlo meant migration.

One can argue, that all migrants, by definition, are proactive and have demonstrated strong agency by migrating. However, if we look deeper into the reasons for migration and migration plans, it can be seen that many participants migrated without a clear strategy and picture of their life in the new country—they did it hastily. While the ‘transition migrants’ demonstrated some agency, it is arguably a weak form of agency that cannot be explained by a single factor such as destabilisation of identity, or an urgent desire to obtain a clear social position and find the most beneficial way out of uncertainty. Individual choice and social behaviour is influenced by the various elements that make up a life strategy.

5.3 Decision to migrate

Commonly, in the migration literature, “migration choice depends on the wealth difference between the country of origin and the host country” (Vergalli, 2006, p. 2). This is mainly because “people migrate in order to increase their welfare” (Khwaja, 2002). Economic theories of migration obviously stress the role of economic factors in migration decision-making. However, the decision to migrate appears to be not simply a rational choice based on economic conditions and aims to improve one’s welfare. It is a process that is strongly linked to emotions and three other types of factors that emerged from the narratives of
‘transition migrants’ related to (1) family, (2) successful migration stories of friends and (3) earlier biographical circumstances. Following this idea, this section explores the emotions behind the decisions of participants to migrate and the three groups of factors that also informed this decision.

All participants were asked to remember the time when they made the decision to leave Ukraine and recall their feelings and emotions that accompanied their decision. In a broader sense, the majority of participants perceived themselves as having no control over their lives in Ukraine and thus, saw migration as an opportunity to regain such control and power. More specifically, participants said that they were driven by an awareness of the impossibility of implementing their life strategies in Ukraine. As Olha said, “I clearly understood I would never be able to realise myself as an academic in physics if I stayed in Ukraine; there was simply no financial and solid modern base to conduct research. It was a dead-end”. Participants found themselves in an emotional “dead-end” where they were not able to achieve their aims, satisfy their needs and live according to their values. As Vasyl believed: “I just wanted to have a business, be successful and happy; even such simple things seemed to be impossible in my town”. Participants felt that migration was the only possible and effective tool to implement their desires and hopes—“The only way out was migration”, stated Kostyantyn.

Analysis of the emotions behind the decision of participants to migrate showed that the decision was made hastily, was based on emotions and perhaps seems irrational, rather than being methodical, planned and rational. Participants were not well informed about Australia. Typically, ‘transition migrants’ did not gather information about the destination country in advance; in some cases they never thought about Australia before actual boarding their flight. Their decisions were more panicked than considered. As Kostyantyn said:

*When we applied for a visa we hadn’t yet fully realised what was happening, the decision had not been finally made yet. Thus, after we applied, we were still trying to determine the possibility of withdrawing from the situation into which we had rolled. We had no clue about what awaited us there over the border. Our poor economic condition is what we wanted to escape.*
The type of attitude voiced by Kostyantyn, when his family looked for other options other than migration to solve their poor situation suggests that the migration decisions made by the ‘transition migrants’ were a push to the unknown.

This finding supports the assumption that better-off households and individuals “are able to make choices and plan strategies” (Anderson et al., 1994; McCrone, 1994) while poorer households act hastily, without a clear plan, often with a sense of panic and despair. The ‘transition migrants’ were struggling with economic hardship, slipping into poverty. As Svyatoslava said “we were so poor”. This sentiment was echoed by Snizhana who said “it was hopeless and it was miserable to ask for help”. Other participants used words such as “unbearable” (Lyubov), “survival” (Serhiy) and to express what it felt like, Yulia stated, “we hardly kept a stream of life and we felt destroyed”. The majority of households were poor and negotiated their migration decision-making in circumstances out of their control and with few resources. This is confirmed by answers to the question “Did you move voluntarily or did circumstances force you to move?” The majority of the respondents said that their migration choice was made voluntarily, but under strong pressure shaped by external conditions. Ivan’s reply to this question was the following:

Of course the decision was made voluntarily, but under the pressure of circumstances. If you were to rephrase your question—would I make the same decision in other circumstances in another country?—I doubt it, as in the history there is no conjunctive mood. If it was a different situation, for sure, the decision would have been different.

Ivan admits that his decision might have been different in other circumstances. Thus, the role of external factors in migration decision-making should not be overlooked.

The decision to migrate and the choice of destination country were found to be also affected by factors that can be divided into three groups. The first factor is related to family and relatives. The majority of ‘transition migrants’ justified their migration choice in light of the opportunities they felt they needed to find in order to best protect and provide for their family, especially their children. Under conditions of declining real incomes that were typical during the early stages of social and market transition, some households decided to invest in migration by sending family members abroad to earn money and try to stay
permanently abroad in the hope of adding to sources of household income through remittances (or other benefits) (Okólski, 2004; Stark, 1991). Thus, participants and their families, often “based on a general council” (Taras), took a migration decision collectively. For example, Taras, a world-class boxer and later entrepreneur, decided to move to Australia to bring his family to a safer and more stable environment where he could economically provide for the entire household: “I hastily decided to migrate because we all agreed to. I planned to come first, my wife with our daughter second. We planned that after I earned some money and had settled down, I would bring them here”. Taras’s migration plan was a family project that was guided by an intention to reunite with the family after he “settled down” and earned some money.

The second factor was the ‘transition migrants’ observing others leaving Ukraine and hearing the successful stories of Ukrainian migrants already in Australia. In these cases the decision to migrate was made by participants after they witnessed the massive outflow abroad of other Ukrainians. In particular, their observations of the positive outcome of their migration (the expansion of socio-economic opportunities) was important. The pertinent illustration is the life story of Myroslava, an IT specialist from the class of professionals who came to Australia in 1995. Myroslava made her final decision to migrate based on the fact that many of her close friends were leaving Ukraine and migrating to Australia with their families and relatives. Her case supports Hugo’s thesis that social networks facilitate the migration of family and friends, help new migrants establish themselves upon arrival, and thus produce more migration (Hugo, 2006, p. 109) Myroslava said:

*We came here in a big company of friends, 10 families. We came third. The guys had already successfully worked in Australia by the time we decided to apply for immigration. And we thought, well, why not, why should we not develop our career? When the first of our friends left, they left the application form for those who wanted to go next. So we applied.*

Myroslava’s life was significantly impacted not only by successful stories of her friends who already had good salaries and a well-established life in Australia, but also by the invitation and persuasions of her friends who received their permanent residency visas in Australia. By assisting Myroslava with migration paperwork, they gave her the tools to
implement migration. For example, they gave her the application form and instructed her on how to fill it out, and where to lodge it. As a result of these collective efforts, Myroslava received a permanent residency visa and moved to Australia. In turn, she also encouraged several families to leave Ukraine for Australia. “I passed several application forms that were left to my other friends and gave some advice”, said Myroslava.

The third factor, found in the stories of the participants, is the earlier biographical circumstances of participants which includes: (1) ethnic ties with Australia; (2) communication and social networks and (3) previous tourist visits to Australia. Together these factors make Australia more attractive in comparison to other destination countries. In the first instance, ethnic ties with the country and the presence of relatives in Australia played the main role. Participants, whose biographies included such experience, might mention that they did not know the language, or did not relate to the culture, but that they used their ‘blood’ connection to help them decide to migrate and settle in the country. In addition, communication with relatives in Australia allowed them in some way to adjust their life plans. For example, some participants (Sofia, Oleksandra, Hanna, Leonid) travelled to Australia for a short-term visit with relatives, or they had the right to permanent residence in Australia on the basis of ethnic/family ties. Kinship and especially ethnic ties in Australia were mentioned in six of the interviews with participants. Leonid, a blue-collar worker and entrepreneur who came to Australia to join his parents said that:

My dad had a brother who moved to Australia after World War II. My uncle was telling him: “Leonid, come here. What are you doing there? You have no perspective there. You have children”. So he persuaded my dad somehow. It didn’t really matter to us where we lived outside of Ukraine and so our father made this decision. Some years later I applied for a family reunion visa and got it.

In Leonid’s case the presence of relatives in Australia did not precipitate the decision to migrate, but it affected the choice of destination. The presence of relatives in Australia provided these participants with a number of advantages. These advantages included the ability to survive with a minor knowledge of the English language. Leonid said: “it was a little bit easier for me because my grandmother had practically forgotten Ukrainian and Australian (English) was her native language.” Leonid could not speak English at the time.
the decision to emigrate was made. He said that he was not worried about it as he had relatives in Australia who promised to help him learn English and integrate. Six other participants, Hanna, Sofia, Oleksandra, Solomia, Viktor also believed that having relatives in Australia was a major factor that helped them to cope with language and other problems associated with migrating. As Oleksandra said: “My mother found me my first job in Australia, at a chocolate factory”.

Interview data showed that along with ethnic ties with relatives in Australia, the communication and social networks played an important role in making the decision to migrate. Migration scholarship stresses the importance of community networks in the migrant’s choice of destination (Bauer & Zimmermann, 1997; Winters et al., 2001; Bauer et al., 2002; Coniglio, 2003). The reliance on social networks that were established long before migration was founded through participants’ earlier travels, family visits, and especially former labour migration experiences in EU countries. It is worth mentioning that one third of the participants had had experience working as labour migrants in the EU or the US (Serhiy, Pavlo, Taras, Maryana, Oleksandra, Yehor, Vasyl). While working in the EU or the US, participants built their network to look for further income-generating opportunities in other countries with better incomes. As Serhiy said, the decision to migrate to Australia “was born during a dinner with friends in Holland; they helped to get visa to Australia”. Information about Australia in many cases was received through community networks. The information about wages in Australia was transmitted during personal visits to Ukraine of countrymen who had migrated to Sydney in the mid to late 1990s, and were engaged in construction or ancillary work in the industrial sector. The life in Australia was characterised as positive and advanced. Furthermore, social contacts gained through previous visits to Australia by participants helped, for example Sofia, to “get emotionally connected to the country” and perceive it “as more accessible and a less distant country in terms of geographical and time distance”.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has scrutinised the life strategy research framework and it was found that the combination of the sets of (1) aims to escape poverty, starvation and regain job status; (2) values of material well-being, traditionalism, family and conformity; (3) needs for security (order and stability, life in a safe environment, avoiding threats), environmental needs (healthy environment) and social needs (integrity of social and individual values); and (4)
weak agency and behavioural passivity; all shaped in Ukraine before departure is what defines and reinforces the survival life strategy in pre-migration stage. Furthermore, the particular style and process of migration decision-making, being reactionary rather than strategic, panicked rather than considered, hastily rather than methodically made, was found to define the survival life strategy typical of the interviewed ‘transition migrants’.
CHAPTER SIX

SURVIVAL MIGRATION PATHWAYS: VISAS, STREAMS AND TACTICS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the ways in which the ‘transition migrants’ came to Australia. In particular, it investigates the two key migration streams utilised by the participants to get a visa to Australia, to extend their stay and to get permanent residency so they could stay in Australia for good. The earlier chapters have argued that the ‘transition migrants’ designed or took on migration plans in order to support their survival life strategy. This chapter looks into the actual act of migration, from getting an Australian short-term visa or family reunion visa until the time when permanent residency in Australia was granted. These ‘transition migrants’ had to negotiate with political and migration structures in both countries. As portrayed in Chapter Four, the dominance and popularity of migration generally among blue-collar working class and entrepreneurial Ukrainians between 1991 and 2003 was the result of structural changes in politics and economics in their country. Their migration patterns were opportunistic and aimed to maximise any means available in order to survive the structural unrest in Ukraine. In Australia the key policies that shaped their options were those around migration laws. Two other key factors in Ukraine and Australia that contributed to or affected the arrival of significant numbers of ‘transition migrants’ were the serious health consequences of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster and the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Adopting a survival life strategy suggests limited choice and this was true for the ‘transition migrants’ who saw migration to Australia using the humanitarian and family reunion migration streams as the two best available options to implement their life strategy. This chapter captures and describes the details of the survival life strategy carried out through: short-term visas associated with opportunism, manoeuvring, conspiracy, social networks, precarity and emotional insecurity; and family reunion visas associated with opportunism, emotional and financial security and continuation of survival life strategy in Australia.

The first section explores how the participants used short-term visas to come to Australia and then managed to receive permanent residency through the humanitarian stream by
extending their stay and claiming asylum. It starts with an examination of the procedure for getting a visa by regular and irregular Ukrainian short-term migrants. Then, it scrutinises the opportunistic attitudes of these short-term arrivals, followed by an investigation of the life of these migrants, focusing on the manoeuvring and conspiracy tactics they used to extend their stay in Australia. The section finishes with an exploration and discussion of the different types of precarity experienced by the ‘transition migrants’ and how they managed it using social networks.

The second section of this chapter examines the family reunion migration stream. This section examines the mechanisms used by some of the participants and their rationale for getting a family reunion visa, followed by an investigation of their lives upon arrival in Australia. Furthermore, the section explores: (1) financial and emotional security covered by State welfare and family network support; (2) quick integration into the primary group through family assistance and the existence of a cultural oasis; and (3) the continuation of a survival life strategy in Australia.

6.2 Short-term visas

6.2.1 Getting a visa: regular/irregular migrants

The analysis of the aims and needs, presented in Chapter Five, suggests that the main incentive for the majority of ‘transition migrants’ was of an economic nature. It was unemployment and poverty—the impossibility of securing a proper means of survival at home—that motivated them. These participants secured their entry into Australia by applying for short-term visas (business or tourist) and then extended their stay in Australia. The participants, who came to Australia on short-term visas with a view to staying permanently through the humanitarian migration stream, emphasised that they knew their choice was different. It is vividly voiced by Solomia, who said that she “had to find [her] ‘special’ way to come to the country and become legally employed”. Other participants referred to structural circumstances that made them “not choose a straightforward and well-known way of emigration” (Pavlo), or come for “some other fake purpose” (Oleh).

The participants explained their decision to get short-term Australian visas and then aim to stay in Australia permanently as being about the remoteness of Ukraine, the lack of any migration arrangement between Ukraine and Australia, as well as limited visa options for
those who wanted to come to Australia for work. Oleh, who used the idea of a “fake purpose”, gave more detail:

At that time I had no opportunities to come to Australia apart from travelling here as a tourist or for some other fake purpose. I wanted to try to live and work in another country with stable economic conditions. Unfortunately, as simple as that was, it wasn’t possible. If you didn’t have relatives or you weren’t a high-skilled professional, it was practically impossible to migrate to Australia. I even tried to find a job in construction through Ukrainian acquaintances in Australia. It was hopeless. I had no other way but to come as a tourist and then claim asylum onshore.

Oleh’s narrative explained that in the 1990s it was extremely hard for Ukrainians to migrate to Australia except by getting a short-term visa and trying to stay permanently. His use of words such as “no opportunities”, “practically impossible”, “hopeless”, and “had no other way”, signposts the lack of a simple and transparent gateway for Ukrainians who wanted to move to Australia in the 1990s.

In the 1990s the number of Ukrainians coming to Australia on working visas was relatively small (Boiko, 2007). When Oleh said that he “had no opportunities to come to Australia”, he meant, as he clarified later in the narrative, that there were no visas available for Ukrainians with low skills to come just for work. The Working Holiday and Work and Holiday visas (DIAC, 2015), which allow young people to have an extended holiday supplemented by short-term employment, has never been available to Ukrainians. Unlike countries in Europe the proximity of which make it possible to “move back and forth”, Australia was characterised by one participant, Artem, as “a geographically distant country which makes it costly, in terms of time and money, to move back and forth”. This meant for Artem that it was “cheaper to get a short-term tourist visa to enter the country and then try and stay permanently”.

The process of getting short-term visas was interwoven with opportunism. ‘Transition migrants’ described their migration experience as one which was driven by occasional opportunities, either when they were planning to emigrate or after they arrived in Australia and were aiming to change their short-term visa to permanent residency. Solomia, Oleh,
Serhiy, Pavlo, and Artem used words such as an “opportunity turned up” (Oleh), or “Australia was a random choice” (Pavlo), “I had no idea where I was going” (Artem), and “it was an adventure” (Serhiy). In the most general terms, opportunism concerns the relationship between what people do, and their basic principles when faced with opportunities and challenges (Braithwaite, 2010). Generally, the opportunist seeks to gain personal advantage when an opportunity presents itself.

In this context, ‘transition migrants’ who used the “right time” (Solomia) to apply for short-term visas to Australia can be considered opportunistic migrants. When talking about a “favourable time”, as Solomia did, participants noted the favourable conditions formed during the 2000 Sydney Olympics (analysed later in the section). Here, participants directly faced, rather than avoided, the limitations and restrictions of the system both in Ukraine and Australia. For these migrants, an important context for opportunistic migration was border control and loopholes in the Australian legislation that could assist in the realisation of their survival strategy. Migrants used any gap or deficiency in Australian migration policy. In this way, a group of irregular Ukrainian ‘transition migrants’ got their short-term visas and entered the country.

The migrants’ narratives indicated they received their short-term visas to Australia in two different ways. The first was regular and based on legal documents, the second was irregular and sometimes based on illegal documents.\footnote{Irregular entry by migrants may consist of crossing the border with forged or invalid travel documents (i.e. with expired documents or documents belonging to others, forged or invalid visas, forged invitations, etc.), either independently or with the help of locals or professional smugglers (Figure 9). Both the regular/irregular ways of getting a visa and entry into the country have together been identified as one of the main gateway categories shaping the survival life strategies of ‘transition migrants’. Their integration patterns are analysed in Chapter Seven.}

The terms ‘regular migrants’ refers to those ‘transition migrants’ who got their short-term visas and entered the country with valid legal documents. “Irregular migrants” refers to those “transition migrants” who got a valid short-term visa, but entered the country with forged or invalid travel documents.
The majority of regular/irregular ‘transition migrants’ entered Australia with short-term visas, mainly for tourism or business, issued on the basis of: an invitation from friends to visit, or to support the Ukrainian team at the 2000 Sydney Olympics (either as an athlete or as a team sponsor), or a business invitation from some people they knew in Australia who ran businesses usually related to Ukraine. Solomia, similar to many other participants, said she was “assisted by tourist agencies”; Vasyl noted that his “business visa application was prepared by a State entity agent in Ukraine”. The main resources and channels for regular/irregular migration on short-term visas for ‘transition migrants’ were provided by networks of friends, relatives, travel agencies in Ukraine and State agents (lawyers and migration agents).

The narrative of Solomia, a regular migrant from Western Ukraine, is a case of a regular migrant who, with the help of a private travel agency in Ukraine, received a short-term tourist visa with legal documents and legal purpose. The character of Solomia’s migration was opportunistic. Solomia, as with several other ‘transition migrants’ (Artem, Pavlo, Serhiy, Oleh, Taras, Yehor and Vasyl), used the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games to get a tourist visa to Australia. Participants described the 2000 Sydney Olympics as one of those “favourable times” (Solomia, Pavlo, Oleh), which had loosened immigration restrictions. “Private travel agencies helped access the loosened migration system at the time of the Sydney Olympics and advertised their services more often”, said Solomia.
The 2000 Sydney Olympics created a visible gateway for many participants who wanted to emigrate to Australia. In her narrative, Solomia mentioned that she had heard of private travel agencies that “used their administrative connections to help people get to Australia by creating a migration story and connecting other Ukrainians in Australia with their clients”. These agents and tourist agencies played a crucial role in the life of participants who were short-term visa holders but who planned to seek asylum onshore. Solomia, who arrived in Australia in 2000 and asked for asylum, explained that although she had not done so herself, she knew several other Ukrainians in Sydney who used travel agencies in T---- and agencies suggested they could offer “easy visas” to Australia. She said it was a massive business. They organised people into groups (of 10 or more) and sent them together on the same flight to Australia.

I know that many groups entered Australia through this scheme. These agencies asked for huge sums of money for their services. From the start Australia was not a popular destination; some time after, more and more people came here. And when the 2000 Sydney Olympics started, the flow of emigrants got even bigger.

In the beginning of the 2000s the immigration control system became vulnerable, when the need to open it up for the Olympics created the possibility of illegitimate as well as legitimate entry. The combination of the deficiency and vulnerability of the immigration control systems and participants cooperation with agents who violated the tourist systems in Ukraine created this wave of Ukrainian opportunists coming to Australia. Solomia concluded that she used the “right time” to a get short-term tourist visa, but “all my documents were real and I didn’t break any law; everything was legal in my case”.

Solomia’s story suggests many ‘transition migrants’ from the blue-collar working and entrepreneurial class frequently cooperated with insiders and violators in the tourist organisations. These insiders “had access to and knowledge of the immigration situation in Australia and had opportunities and ways to easily obtain an Australian visa in Ukraine”, Vasyl claimed. A kind of information market had emerged which created tempting conditions for insiders who possessed the information and would trade it. Such trade took place through tourist agencies in the late 1990s and early 2000s. As Solomia said, “through tourist agencies you could solve all your problems and get all the information
you needed for money”. However, the legal migration of ‘transition migrants’ on tourist visas was typical for regular migrants (holders of legal documents).

Narratives of the irregular ‘transition migrants’ in the cohort showed that these migrants typically applied for short-term business visas. One of the most identifiable cases is the story of Vasyl, the entrepreneur who entered Australia on a business visa, even though he had nothing to do with any business in Australia. In response to Australian immigration restrictions that meant he could not come to Australia through official migration streams based on his own ability, Vasyl resorted to using irregular means to get a visa. Vasyl’s migration story started with an advertisement in a local newspaper which said that anyone who wanted to work in Australia should contact a lawyer and migration agent in K--- who guaranteed entry into Australia and would help prepare all the paperwork. Vasyl stated “I still keep as a memory the newspaper that changed my life”. The agent claimed to have been a lawyer in the past, and although his parents were born in Ukraine, he was born and had lived for many years in Australia. The agent told Vasyl he would need to pay upfront, bring his documents and discuss his opportunities. When Vasyl arrived in K---, it was a simple apartment. Vasyl remembered:

A black man, who claimed that his parents were Ukrainian and that he was a lawyer from Australia, told me that there was a real opportunity to leave for Australia during the next 2 months. I thought it was a fraud. I was very suspicious, but gave it a try.

Vasyl went back to Western Ukraine to collect his papers. A couple of days later, he received a call from K--- telling him that there was an option to come to Australia on a business visa, but there was one condition—“I had to find a second and third person who would be part of an imaginary business team. Three people: it was the director, chief accountant and economist”, said Vasyl. As Vasyl shared later in the narrative:

Two of my friends and I got business visas to Australia as representatives of a Ukrainian company that in fact existed in K--- and M---. It supplied Australian products to Ukraine. We pretended to be a team consisting of the director, accountant, and economist. Such was the story behind my fraudulent documents.
Vasyl was a real entrepreneur but he had no relationship with the company that organised his trip. Upon arrival, Vasyl lodged an asylum application on the basis of his health condition, which he said was “a non-reversible consequence of the Chernobyl explosion”.

Such inventiveness is typical of irregular migrants according to the stories of “transition migrants”. The irregularity as told in Vasyl’s narrative involved hiding his identity and real motives, including his work persona, his reasons for migration and the basis of his arrival. Vasyl’s individual response (which is similar to the other irregular migrants in the cohort) to the economic hardship he experienced in Ukraine and the restrictiveness of the Australian migration system was to search for alternative ways and resources.

The narratives suggest the majority of the ‘transition migrants’ arrived in Australia by regular means, holding a one-month short-term tourist visa (Solomia, Oleh Pavlo, and Serhiy). The way ‘transition migrants’ lived on their short-term visas in Australia and the tactics they used to extend their stay and get permanent residency is explored further in the following section.

6.2.2 Life on the visa: extending the stay

This section is devoted to an analysis of the actions and tactics of regular and irregular ‘transition migrants’ to extend their short-term visas. At the time of the interviews, the participants all held permanent residency visas or had Australian citizenship. What is different about the cohort is the way each of them chose to extend their stay. Participants roughly divide into two main clusters, and again these are marked by the regular/irregular dualism: (1) irregular migrants who stayed in Australia without a valid visa and thus violated the rules by overstaying and working without a permit, and (2) the regular migrants who stayed in Australia by arranging another visa (see Figure 10). The tactics used by the regular/irregular migrants are the means by which their survival life strategy is carried out.
As outlined in Chapter Five, material values, including the desire to gain a substantial set of material goods, guides the survival life strategy of ‘transition migrants’. Given such a materialistic values system, for ‘transition migrants’ an acceptable (but less typical) tactic was to prolong the short-term visa by simply overstaying a tourist/business visa and staying in Australia irregularly—that is, without a valid visa and work permit. This type of shift into an irregular stay was rather rare and an intentional move to stay for employment opportunities. The administrative and court decisions taken in EU countries against Ukrainians recognised as irregular migrants, show that the tactics of the irregular migration of Ukrainians is not to use false documents, but to enter a foreign country legally and to stay for work without any proper permits (Frontex, 2013). Australia is not an exception.

Among the 26 participants, Serhiy was the only migrant who remained in Australia irregularly after his short-term tourist visa expired. Serhiy’s situation as he described it was, “my wife divorced me, so I had no family, no house, no job to return to in Ukraine”. He chose to go underground and work cash-in-hand in black markets and on worksites. He existed in the marginal social layer in Australia. He said, “I felt I was somewhere outside of society, on its outskirts and it was hard to change such a situation”. He originated from a blue-collar, working class family and had worked in the United States and Netherlands before coming to Australia. He lived in Australia without regular documents for seven years, despite the fact that initially he thought of migration as a short-term money-driven project:
I came on a one year tourist visa. Unlike America, here [in Australia] you have to have permission to work; you have to have permission for everything. I had nothing. I stayed in Australia for a year and then did not return home. I continued to live and work this way without documents ... For quite a long time, for seven years.

While telling his story and referring to his work experience in the US, Serhiy claimed that the Australian system created conditions in which he was “forced to break the law to survive”. It was his working style in the US, where he had no complications from working and living there irregularly. Hence, he felt the need to regularise his stay in Australia. As he explained, “in Australia the system is more restrictive and it’s challenging to stay for many years underground”. After seven years of surviving regular Immigration and Border protection officers’ raids in the industry where he worked, he married a Ukrainian-Australian woman and received permanent residency status in Australia through marriage. Now he is an Australian citizen.

Serhiy’s case is an example of the significant numbers of Ukrainian migrant workers, driven by material values, working without any permits all over the world. However, these numbers gradually reduced between 2008–2012 (Labour Migration Survey, 2012) in almost all destination countries (Ukraine Migration Profile, 2013). It suggests that members of this diaspora, like Serhiy, managed to legalise their status due to various migration amnesties, or by seeking asylum or through marriage. The strategy of just staying irregularly in Australia to get more time to earn money before being asked to leave did not arise in the stories of the participants. However, several respondents (Pavlo, Taras, and Serhiy) mentioned that a couple of their friends were eventually sent out of the country after being captured without valid visas and working permits.

The second group is made up of ‘transition migrants’ who entered Australia regularly and remained in a regular situation by prolonging their short-term visas. They used the following tactics: (1) extension of temporary visa (enrolment in an educational institution or work); (2) change of legal status (marriage) and (3) seeking asylum. The most popular tactic used by ‘transition migrants’ to extend their stay in Australia was to lodge an asylum application. This group formed the backbone of the Ukrainian humanitarian migration stream between 1991 and 2003 and, thus, is of significant interest for this study.
The main event that created favourable preconditions for coming to Australia and claiming asylum onshore was the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. As Solomia explained: “Everyone I know who travelled from Ukraine for the Sydney Olympics tried to stay in Australia by asking for a protection visa. Only several managed to get successful outcomes”. Solomia suggests that while it was a popular tactic to extend their stay, it was not successful for the majority of Ukrainians. This is described later in the section.

In 2000 and 2001 Australia recorded rapid growth in the number of applications from Ukrainian citizens seeking asylum (see Table 3 in Chapter Four and Appendix Four). The narratives, along with this statistical data, demonstrates that in the post-2000 Sydney Olympics period, seeking asylum or applying for protection visas became an extremely popular tactic among the ‘transition migrants’ with low skills wishing to stay permanently in Australia. About 110,000 overseas visitors travelled to Australia for the Olympic Games in September 2000 (Migration News, 2000). Sydney, as is the case with most host cities, experienced the problem of tourists overstaying in the lead-up to and the aftermath of the Games. Two hundred and thirty competitors from Ukraine—139 men and 91 women—took part in 185 events in 23 sports.

The Olympic Games was a strong pull factor not only for visitors and participants, but also for those who wanted and planned to migrate to Australia. As Pavlo mentioned: “I came to Australia for the Sydney Olympics not because I was that interested; my purpose was for emigration”. Participants who shared Pavlo’s mentality were those who were low-skilled, blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs. For example, amongst the participants were former or present-day boxers (Taras, Yehor, Oleh, and Ivan). Being famous for attracting sportsmen from all over the world, Australia was an excellent migration choice for participants who were former sportsmen. Interestingly, those participants who successfully stayed in Australia did not continue teaching or practicing boxing. Taras, Yehor, Oleh, and Ivan are now employed in the construction sector as builders or painters. Taras explained: “Boxing in Australia is popular at the amateur level. When I arrived, I thought of becoming a coach. But my knowledge of English and lack of students didn’t make it happen. I work now in construction”.

Some of the former boxers, and later asylum seekers, had a criminal past. Yehor stated (but would not allow it to be audio-recorded) that in Ukraine he was involved in “criminal
gang”. Oleh said he got to have “criminals for friends through his boxing activities”. Taras said he had “criminals for friends and used their support in running his restaurant in L---”. In their search for a better life and more opportunities, they all overstayed their tourist visas and applied for asylum and protection visas though the Australian humanitarian migration stream.

The group of regular migrants who sought asylum had different motivations for wishing to stay in Australia. These corresponded with the aims described in Chapter Five relating to unemployment, lack of occupational work, low wages and arrears and the suppression of entrepreneurial activity. Out of the five participants who claimed asylum, four confessed that their applications were not genuine. The thematic analysis of the narratives of this group comprising two types of Ukrainian migrants, revealed different rationales and that survival life strategies were implemented with different tactics.

The first type of asylum seekers are economic migrants, united by the motive to simply earn money. The most identifiable tactic used by these migrants can be called “conspiracy tactics”. Scott (1985) argues that the poor and powerless often use individual responses to fight their lack of power and control over their lives. These conspiracy tactics emerged from the combination of materialistic values, aims of escaping poverty and unemployment through the best available and accessible means. They were driven by the need to satisfy the first three levels of Maslow’s pyramid—physiological needs, needs of safety and the need for love/belonging (see Chapter Five for more details). In Pavlo’s case, “conspiracy tactics” emerged as a short-term survival migration plan to try to stay in Australia with the aim of earning as much as he could to provide for the basic physiological survival of his family in Ukraine. Furthermore, Pavlo’s “conspiracy tactics” developed in response to the Australia migration restrictions which reduced his ability to come to Australia for work on an official working visa. Pavlo conspired to hide his real motives for coming to Australia when claiming asylum and asking for protection, which were “solely for the purpose of making money; nothing else was on my mind when leaving Ukraine”. Coming from a blue-collar working class family from a small village in Western Ukraine, Pavlo came to Australia “for the same reason as the others—to make money”. He remembers that he did not want to come specifically to Australia. He just used the first opportunity to come to any country to earn money, which again indicates the importance of material values for
‘transition migrants’. He emphasised many times during the interview: “I basically did not care much where I went. I didn’t plan to emigrate, I just wanted to make money”.

Upon arrival on short-term tourist visas, these participants typically claimed asylum in order to use the bridging visa they received to gain time and temporary employment. The fact that the bridging visa was given to everyone who was waiting for a decision on their refugee status enabled participants to work officially until their application was processed. Initially, these participants were not interested in staying in Australia long-term and did not consider themselves to be genuine refugees. They used their bridging visas solely for the purpose of legal employment with a plan to return to Ukraine after 3–4 years (the usual refugee application processing time).

Some participants said that when applying for asylum they were aware that their “chances of getting permanent residency were very low” (Vasyl). Pavlo, who came to Australia as a tourist for the 2000 Sydney Olympics and successfully received his permanent residency status through a protection visa, stated that “my case was a rare one and I just got lucky”. According to him, “on average only around 25 out of 100 Ukrainian refugee applications were successful”. Several times in his narrative he used the word “lucky” to refer to his permanent stay in Australia. He said:

I think I was just lucky to get permanent residency, as I did not really want it.
Many of my friends failed to stay here permanently; out of 5 of us who arrived together, I am the only one who managed to stay.

Pavlo observed his friends leaving. He said that his friends who had to leave Australia took as much money as possible and the skills they had acquired from their years of official employment in the country on their bridging visas. “They travelled onwards, purchased forged documents, waited to be joined by other Ukrainians”, explained Pavlo. Pavlo’s case is typical of the survival life strategy utilised by blue-collar working class and entrepreneurial migrants. Pavlo’s own experience and his friends’ shared sense of escaping economic hardship and utilising the maximum available practical pathways to realise their four life strategy components—material values, physical survival needs (food, housing, security), escaping poverty and starvation, and weak agency (feeling no power/control over
their lives)—is what stands out in the stories of the first type of asylum seekers, the economic migrants.

The second type of asylum seekers among the ‘transition migrants’ was initially interested in permanent residency and saw themselves as genuine Ukrainian asylum seekers. This group comprised participants who were driven not solely by a short-term opportunity to make money, but by an initial wish to move to Australia permanently and have a better and safer life in Australia. Oleh and Artem’s narratives clearly demonstrated that participants who sought asylum did not meekly accept the blows of fate and resign themselves to the unenviable position of being poorly educated and unskilled “perpetual outsiders” in the restrictive Australian immigration system. They had critically evaluated and developed the “manoeuvring tactic” of seeking asylum as a means of resisting the limitations of migration policy, trying to fight for a better life in the most available, but uncertain, way. These participants chose the path of “manoeuvring” between the Australian migration policies that enabled them to withstand the fierce migration policy restrictions and finding the optimal niche for themselves to extend their stay and stay permanently in Australia.

These participants had a clear view and a philosophical attitude to their own positions in Ukrainian society and their objectively low chances of migrating to Australia through the skilled migration or family reunion streams. As Oleh explained:

> Upon arrival I found Ukrainian and Russian-speaking migration agents. They evaluated my skills and education, and advised that the only way I would be able to stay in Australia would be to claim asylum. But they couldn’t guarantee the success of my application.

Oleh was advised that his qualifications and skills would not be of any use in Australia, so he had to think of ways to “manoeuvre”. As Oleh said in the interview, together with his migration agent in Australia they tried to find real life situations from the past that might have helped create a case for seeking protection in Australia. Due to the hard work of the migration agent, they discovered examples of discrimination and political persecution that Oleh had once suffered in Ukraine. However, still having no guarantee of the success of his asylum applications Oleh said that he started to implement “manoeuvring tactics”. He prepared “parallel scenarios on how to stay or where to go next in case Australia refused
He was forced by circumstances to manoeuvre, allowing himself to survive even in the ever-changing conditions of his mobile life. In terms of the four key micro components of his life strategy, Oleh’s case suggests that “manoeuvring tactics” was the way through which he managed the insecurity of his position as an asylum seeker. His plan was predefined by his aims for a wealthier life—and his need in a more secure and stable environment to make money (his business was suppressed)—and the values of family and material well-being. By adding some emphasis and a bit of colour to his life story, Oleh successfully received refugee status in Australia. However, it took him more than three years to prove his case.

These forms of tactical individual response by the regular/irregular migrants to their lack of power and control, described above, were effective because they were growing out of their individual efforts but also their social networks. The remainder of the chapter explores the role of the ‘transition migrants’ social networks in their efforts to get a visa to Australia, extend their stay and manage the different types of precarity associated with their migration strategies.

**6.2.3 Precarity and social networks**

The concept of “social networks”, one of the central concepts of sociology, considers the individual and society to be interrelated and interdependent elements. Social networks are a kind of “trust structure” or plausibility structure (Berger and Luckman, 1967; Putnam, 2007; Cheung and Phillimore, 2013) performing the functions of not only conductors of useful information (Massey, 1987; Coleman, 1990), but also of values and cultural perceptions (Curran and Saguy, 2001). Social networks played an important role in all stages of the migration process of the ‘transition migrants’, from the decision to go abroad to the decision about ways and tactics to stay in Australia. In the case of the participants who stayed in Australia through the humanitarian migration stream, their networks of compatriots in Australia played a crucial role. Social networks helped them to manage different types of precarity associated with a lack of predictability or security, which affected their financial and psychological welfare during the actual act of migration.

Firstly, ‘transition migrants’ mentioned that without social networks they would never have known that they had human rights for which they could fight, including rights against
political and ethnic discrimination, persecution or death threats. Several participants said they did not even know that it was possible to seek asylum abroad at that time:

*We didn’t even know about that. While in Ukraine nobody advised me or told me that it was possible to come to the US or Australia and to tell people that you had been thrashed, your human rights were violated and you wanted to seek asylum. We were told that we could leave only as specialists, or as a Jew to reunite with the Jewish community.*

This is how Oleh, who came from a small town in Western Ukraine and had a college education, explained his awareness of the humanitarian migration stream. Oleh explained that in the early 2000s, in most cases only scholars, Jews and highly-qualified specialists emigrated from Ukraine. He belonged to neither the first nor the second group. However, he was discriminated against on political grounds and harassed by the police whom he described as “bandits”. He had resigned himself to “observing the regression and lawlessness”. He didn’t know that he could escape his situation by claiming asylum. As a result, he came to Australia on the suggestion of his boxing trainer, who had been a trainer for the Ukrainian Olympic team and who had friends in Australia:

*One day M----, a trainer for the National Team of Ukraine for the Olympics, suggested: “Let me make you happy. What about going to Australia? By running a currency exchange business, we sponsored the National Team of Ukraine’s trip to the Olympics in Atlanta. And M---- suggested that I get official documents and come to Sydney with him as a part of the team. I agreed. At that time I wished to see a lawful and just society and probably not just to have a good holiday, but to remain there permanently.*

Oleh described during the interview how he had problems with criminal gangs and the police, which encouraged him to emigrate. His decision on how to enter Australia was influenced by his trainer, who invited him to come to Australia for the Sydney Olympics. The aim of staying in Australia permanently was informed by Oleh’s values, which he described as a desire to be part of a “lawful and just society”. The values of a just society and the rule of law signposts the set of needs for security (order and stability, and life in a safe and just environment) that guided Oleh’s migration. Oleh’s case is representative of
other ‘transition migrants’ (Serhiy, Taras, Vasyl, Pavlo, Yehor, Solomia). Later in the narrative Oleh explained that when the Olympics finished he told his trainer that he wanted to stay in Australia. However, the trainer challenged Oleh’s decision and was not supportive of his decision to search for ways to stay permanently in Australia.

Secondly, information obtained through social networks helped inform the decisions made by the ‘transition migrants’ on how to extend their stay and obtain permanent residency. ‘Transition migrants’ who were not initially inclined to take some types of risk started to get involved with others who were adopting these strategies. This was the case with Oleh. Despite the fact that Oleh’s trainer was not supportive of Oleh’s decision to extend his stay in Australia and try to remain permanently, Oleh found psychological support and confidence in his new acquaintances. These acquaintances of Ukrainian background told him that he had a chance of obtaining a protection visa to stay in Australia permanently:

*One of my new friends told me his story of how he had received a protection visa. I learned that in order to stay, I had to submit an application to the migration service, because this institution would grant me the right to work and do other basic things. Having no other chances to stay, I decided to follow the successful experience of my friend who was recently granted a refugee permanent visa in Australia. He gave me the confidence in what I planned to do.*

Oleh’s story shows that the initial concerns about the possible risks associated with the migration process lose importance, as more and more people from their surroundings are migrants with the same story. As Oleh said, it provided a sense of “confidence” in the success of his strategy. Portes and Bac (1991) explained this by the fact that the more dense a social network is, the more likely it is to provide potential migrants with more reliable information about opportunities and dangers. The success of Oleh’s new friend in Australia convinced Oleh to try the same tactics.

Thirdly, the individual is often dependent on the ideas of a ‘more powerful’ member of the community about resistance to unwanted circumstances. In Oleh’s case he invented a way to maximise the benefits he could accrue from the migration control system and stay in
Australia with the help of his networks. When Oleh was asked why he decided to claim asylum in order to stay in Australia, he replied:

*With a strong desire to stay here, I began to enquire how I could do that, where I could find a job, accommodation and so on. The first thing I was told I had no chance of remaining here if I was not a student. A migration agent, a Ukrainian woman, told me that I had only two options to stay here: either I should get married to get permanent status immediately, or I should send in my application for a refugee visa. I chose the second option.*

A migration agent of the same background played the role here of a “more powerful” member of the community who influenced Oleh’s choice of how to remain in Australia.

Furthermore, “network sociality” (Wittel, 2001) and the individual capacity to mobilise resources (Portes, 1995) along with social networks, played a particularly important role in the life of the irregular migrant, Serhiy, in Australia. His story provides evidence that social networks are influential in the choice of migration destination and that they can push those who entered the country regularly to remain in Australia irregularly. The decision to stay in the country for a while to improve his financial situation was prompted by Serhiy’s surroundings which were “*half of Australia—are my Ukrainian friends*”. His friends assisted him in solving his financial precarity and any scrutiny about his irregular employment.

Migrants’ chances in the labour market are affected by social capital in the form of their networks with people who can provide information about job opportunities and the skills needed to get them (Drever and Hoffmeister 2008; Engbersen et al., 2006; Van Meeteren et al., 2009). The ‘transition migrants’’ connections with neighbours and acquaintances from their own ethnic group were often described as “*strong ties*” to good friends and family members (Granovetter, 1973) and as “*bonding ties*” (Putman, 2007). These people provided very specific knowledge and shared much of their own experience which created barriers rather than helping the migrants to succeed in the recipient society to the same extent as members of the dominant group (domestic population). Serhiy’s story is a good illustration, where as a result of friends’ advice, his irregular “*temporary employment*” lasted for seven years:
I was not actually making a decision by myself. We were sitting and having dinner and my friends suggested a well-paid job in N-industry, but without a legal employment contract or sponsorship to stay in Australia on a valid visa. They promised that they would solve my visa problem and would help me to get the documents. I thought I would stay in Australia to try another life. The decision to stay illegally was spontaneous. I didn’t plan it. I realised very late that even five years is too little time to establish a proper life. Now my stay is legal, but I still don’t like Australia.

Serhiy’s decision to stay irregularly in Australia was influenced by his friends, who did not fulfill their promises. This shows that even in the case of overstaying tourists, despite the unarguable benefits of their employment, migration cannot be viewed as a completely positive experience on an individual level. However, through social networks, Serhiy and Oleh were able to find loopholes, inherent contradictions and limitations in the system of the receiving country. Serhiy managed to live and work in Australia for seven years without regular status, which he would not have been able to without social connections and supportive networks. Being in a state of social exclusion from the socio-cultural environment of the host society in both formal and informal terms, Serhiy resorts to social networks as a means of involving himself in the micro-environment of ethnic networks and social capital accumulation in the destination country.

Over the 1990s–early 2000s, ‘transition migrants’ learned to cope with the difficulties of the migrant’s life by creating social networks which were the main tool through which they received their visas, developed tactics and ways to stay in Australia. These networks helped them cope with precarity and risks upon arrival, such as finding jobs, housing, and friends. These ‘transition migrants’ tried to arrive in Australia with some aspects of their lives arranged in advance, at least a possible job or a house to live in. They made such arrangements even if they came to Australia on short-term tourist visas which did not give them the right to work. This is clearly illustrated in Pavlo’s narrative, which echoed the stories of several other participants who came as tourists and claimed asylum onshore.

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12 See Harney (2010) for a similar case study of Naples.
As soon as Pavlo got his tourist visa to Australia he started intensively searching for friends or friends-of-friends who lived in Australia. Through his wife’s network he was able to find a Ukrainian woman who was the sister of his friend’s friend:

To this day, I thank her. I do not know how my life would have gone in any other situation. Well, to cut a long story short, I was staying at her house. It was a tough period; I had no job and felt bad. I found my first job through her. She knows many people and has good connections. It had been a week when I applied for asylum. She advised me to seek asylum.

In his narrative Pavlo expressed and emphasised the importance of the psychological and financial support he got from Ukrainian friends in Australia. He concluded his reflection with the expression: “I would not now be here chatting with you in Australia if it was not for my friends; they changed my life”. He clearly stressed that the key to the realisation of his aims, needs, values and sense of agency was social networks. Particularly, Pavlo demonstrates his agency through the pre-migration search for contacts in Australia. His use of family networks suggests values that are ordered around community and reciprocity, demonstrated in his gratefulness. Needs in security, both emotional and financial, were highlighted as meaningful and informed his aims to gain material well-being and stay in Australia permanently.

Another interesting fact is that the participants who stayed in Australia using the humanitarian migration stream tended to come from Western Ukraine. The exodus from Western Ukraine to other countries for economic purposes has been explained in terms of religion (Harney, 2010). Traditionally, Ukrainians from the same church communities who had moved to other countries helped their compatriots from Ukraine to join them in Australia (Tolstokorova, 2009). However, my observations in conjunction with the narratives suggest that a major factor in this economic migration (disguised by seeking asylum) predominantly from Western Ukraine, was the new kinds of migrant social networks. This is what I call a kind of “strategic partnership” that allowed Ukrainian asylum seekers to support each other in conditions of economic hardship and uncertainty. The Australian Ukrainian migration network has links with Ukrainian diasporas internationally. As Serhiy, Solomia, and Vasyl said when describing their networks: Solomia had “connections from previous labour experience in Europe”; Vasyl said of his
migrant friends in Italy and Spain “we’ve been through a lot together”; and Serhiy noted that “friends from Holland arranged my migration to Australia”. The value of friendship and the benefits of social support and ties through migrant networks threads through the stories of all five asylum seekers who received permanent visas in Australia through the humanitarian migration stream.

Through social networks, aims, values, needs and links were recreated and transformed, new experiences relating to informal income and irregularity were acquired, and new methods of providing financial and psychological support were tested. These socio-economic aspects of social networks underpinned the phenomenon of Ukrainian asylum seekers and overstaying tourists/businessmen.

6.3 Family reunion visa

The most popular way used by ‘transition migrants’ to get to Australia was on family reunion visas. The family reunion stream is a type of Australian migration. It requires a sponsor, who can bear the financial costs of those people they bring into Australia. There are three types of family sponsors: (1) parents (when dependent children or other relatives from Ukraine want to join them in Australia); (2) children (when parents who stayed in Ukraine want to join their children in Australia) and (3) partner (when people who are married to, or in a de facto relationship with an Australian partner, want to join them in Australia).

Twelve out of the 26 participants arrived in Australia on family visas (Natalya, Hanna, Svyatoslava, Snizhana, Ivan, Lyubov, Sofiya, Nadiya, Leonid, Viktor, Oleksandra, Vasylyna). Most of these participants were in their late 20s to late 30s when they arrived in Australia to join their spouses. For example Natalya, Hanna, Svyatoslava, Snizhana, Ivan, Lyubov, Sofiya, and Nadiya arrived on partner visas. The cases of reunion between parents and children were less common among the interviewed ‘transition migrants’, but statistics show they were common among all Ukrainian 1991–2003 arrivals. Leonid, Viktor, Oleksandra, and Vasylyna joined their parents/children who had moved to Australia between the 1970s and the late 1980s. Compared to the short-term arrivals analysed above, family reunion arrivals were permanent (long-term).
The similarity between the short-term and family reunion arrivals is rooted in the survival character of their migration and is revealed in the opportunism and economic rationale behind the use of short-term and family reunion visas. These participants negotiated their family migration as part of their aims to escape unemployment and poverty, improve their security and health environment, and to gain material well-being. The experiences of family reunion ‘transition migrants’ differ from short-term arrivals in three ways: (1) in the dominance of financial and emotional security over precarity; (2) in networks, being family and close family friends; and (3) in plans—moving to Australia with long-term plans to stay permanently.

6.3.1 Getting a visa

All the family reunion migrants were regular migrants who entered Australia on valid visas with genuine documents. Importantly, similar to participants getting short-term visas, the discourses of family reunion migrants revealed that getting a family reunion visa was not a matter of choice, but an opportunity to squeeze in through the system. The way they obtained a visa to Australia was determined by the sort of connection they had with their family and their location. Family reunion between children and parents, and spouse migration showed slightly different patterns in terms of the aims behind getting a visa.

Family reunion for parents and children

The choice of migration and the destination for these migrants (Leonid, Viktor, Oleksandra, Vasylyna) was limited by the location of their family. As Leonid, the 49 year-old painter, said about coming to Australia on a family reunion visa as the last relative remaining in Ukraine:

>If I had a choice, I would choose to go to America. But my parents were in Australia. I thought I will come and they might provide some help and advice. I simply had no possibility of going to America. I had no skills, no university degree, and no savings. It turned out that the easiest option for me was to come to Australia through family migration and start a new life.

Leonid’s narrative shows that he clearly realised that migration for him was not a matter of choice, but a matter of very limited possibilities and opportunities to use the Australian migration system to his advantage. He used the words “no possibility”, “no skills”, “no
university degree”, “no savings” to express what made him take the “easiest” way of leaving Ukraine by joining his parents in Australia. Similar to short-term visa arrivals who managed to stay in Australia permanently through the humanitarian stream, getting a family reunion visa did not require skills, knowledge of English or an education; Leonid simply had to have a relative who was an Australian citizen/permanent resident and have some solid and convincing motivation to reunite with his family. For Leonid, the family migration stream was the easiest and most guaranteed option for him to get out of Ukraine. In sharing his life story Leonid said his main aim for getting a family reunion visa was economic survival: “I had wanted to leave Ukraine for more than 10 years. I just couldn’t survive the economic need, which I suffered from all the time”. Leonid, as with other parent/children reunion participants (Oleksandra and Vasylyna) and some spouse reunions (Hanna, Lyubov, Ivan, Svyatoslava, Nadiya), organised his family migration as part of his aims to escape unemployment. As Oleksandra said: “since I lost my job, I searched for a position for years with no luck”. Leonid, Vasylyna and Svyatoslava cited poverty and Lyubov wanted material well-being: “I wanted to have a proper life and be able to afford my son a decent living”. Therefore, behind the family reunion of parents and children, as well as the majority of partner reunions, there was a motive of an economic nature. Clearly, the main aim guiding short-term and family reunion migrations was economic survival.

Spouse reunion

What is interesting about half of the spouse reunion migrations (except for Ivan, Sofiya, and Svyatoslava who married ethnic Australians) is that they were joining their Ukrainian husbands who migrated to Australia earlier to join their parents, or who stayed as part of the humanitarian stream a couple of years before (Lyubov, Nadiya, Natalya, Hanna). They were not young and, importantly, not financially dependent on their husbands in Australia. An interesting case is Svyatoslava, who came to Australia on a partner visa to take care of her elderly Australian husband. Her story is a mixture of love and economic survival, and is representative of all the spouse reunion cases interviewed. As Svyatoslava told me, she came to Australia to:

…take care of my old, sick and blind partner; he was a good man and needed someone to take care of him; that’s why he married me and promised to leave
me his house after his death ... It was my only way to come to Australia and be able to send money to support my family in Ukraine.

Similar to the parent and children reunions, several spouse reunion participants confessed that love was not the only, nor the main, motive for coming to Australia. In some cases, it was just a way to get into the country and survive the economic hardship of the 1990s in Ukraine (Ivan, Svyatoslava, Lyubov, Nadiya, Snizhana).

Ivan, who fell in love with Australia on his first visit and works as a builder, explained that he had no other opportunities to return to Australia after his first tourist visit to Australia other than through marriage to an Australian girl. He said:

During my three-month tourist stay in Australia, I met a girl and we got married. My first application for a family reunion visa was rejected and she had to live with me in Ukraine for a while before my second application successfully went through. I was young and had nothing to lose—no well-paid job, no savings, my family was poor—I had no other choice to live in Australia, which I fell in love with from the first visit.

Ivan’s story demonstrated his opportunism and eventual success using the migration system to his advantage. He noted that other “options such as the skilled and humanitarian migration streams didn’t work with my profile and qualifications”. Ivan stated that he was “young” and “had nothing to lose”, which described him as a person who consciously took the risk of applying for a family reunion visa, and whose first application aroused the suspicion of the Australian Government and was rejected. Ivan’s case is different from other spouse migrations in terms of having nothing to lose in marrying, and making a huge emotional choice. During the interview Ivan was very open about his genuine love at the beginning of his relationship, and the fact that his marriage was unsuccessful in the end. As he said: “after living together for three years, we got divorced. We were culturally different people”. His motivation behind migration was a love for Australia combined with economic hardship in Ukraine. This example of an opportunistic way to get a family reunion visa in order to move to Australia and having no other choice but to migrate through spouse reunion is typical for both parents/children and spouse reunion ‘transition migrants’.
6.3.2 Life on the visa

The lives of participants implementing a survival life strategy using family reunion visas significantly differed from the lives of the short-term visa migrants described above. The lives of family reunion migrants (parent/children and spouse) in Australia were characterised by financial and emotional security offered by state welfare and family network support; quick adaptation through family assistance and help; and continuation of survival life strategy.

The most notable experience expressed by several family reunion participants (Oleksandra, Leonid, Nadiya, Svyatoslava) was the financial and emotional security that was provided by the support of the family network and the state welfare system. Upon arrival, family reunion ‘transition migrants’ relied on welfare and state support in the form of income support offered by the Australian Government for those looking for work, or completing approved studies, or for those with a disability and looking for work. With many of the participants interviewed for this study, family reunion migrants were dependent on the Australian welfare system as their main income source. As Hanna mentioned: “in the first half a year upon arrival I received good financial support from the government which helped me with my life expenses and supported me and my family while I was looking for jobs”.

Some participants (Leonid, Ivan, Lyubov, Snizhana) mentioned they were struggling to find their first job and were unemployed, on average, for six months to a year and a half. A vivid example is the continuous unemployment history of Leonid before and after his migration. He did not have stable employment in Ukraine before departure. He was working from time to time and earned money irregularly by “buying red caviar from Moscow and selling it in Kiev” or “buying and selling TVs in different cities of Ukraine”. His experience of unemployment back in Ukraine is similar to other family reunion migrants (Hanna, Oleksandra, Vasylyna, Lyubov, and Ivan). Before Leonid started work as a painter, he gave up his first low-paid job in Australia for welfare payments: “It was not big money, thus I decided to quit this low-paid job and remain on unemployment welfare payments for a little while. I won some time to start my own small construction company”.

As Leonid explained, for practical reasons he saw no sense in working for “not big money” when it was possible to receive State financial support. Because of this support he had time...
to start his own company, which employed three people. In this sense, an Australian Government-supported family reunion migrant created even more jobs in Australia. Therefore, this State investment paid off. However, unlike Leonid, Lyubov was welfare dependent and without employment for a significant period of time. The case of Lyubov is more typical of the experience of family reunion migrants in Australia. Indeed, as Ruddock (2000) has demonstrated, in 2000, family reunion migrants to Australia had unemployment rates around twice the national average.

Furthermore, family reunion migrants mentioned that they benefited from the support of their relatives who gave them money and who also, in the case of all the interviewed family migrants, found their first job for them. Given the generous financial and emotional support of their family members, family reunion migrants tended to see themselves as adapting more quickly and more successfully in a shorter period of time compared to short-term visa arrivals. As Oleksandra told me:

*I came to Australia for my mother. I stayed at her house for a year; she helped me financially and through her I found my first job at the chocolate factory in Sydney. Compared to my other Ukrainian friends who arrived as tourists and claimed asylum, I felt psychologically more protected. I had my mum who had an established life in Australia.*

Oleksandra voices the emotional support she received from her mother who had an “established life in Australia”. She used the word “protected” when she talked about her first year in Australia, suggesting both psychological and financial support. As with other family reunion participants, Oleksandra expressed strong family values and love for her parents and family. As was the case for Oleksandra, other family reunion “transition migrants” settled near, or in, the same locality as their relatives. This created a special “cultural oasis” for these newly-arrived migrants and helped them adapt to life in the established Ukrainian diaspora. It also led them to integrate faster into the Australian low-skilled labour market.

The lack of an ability to freely communicate in English affected the entry of family reunion ‘transition migrants’ into the workforce. English proficiency was low among participants in this immigration stream, as well as among the short-term visa migrants who
remained in Australia through the humanitarian stream, compared to the cohort of migrants who arrived after 2004 through the skilled migration stream. Leonid’s and Oleksandra’s narratives suggested that their access to a family network created a comfort zone in which they did not need to speak English. However, it did not open up better professional opportunities for them. As Oleksandra said, family connections helped her find employment at a chocolate factory, and this was the same for Leonid who was employed as a painter in the Ukrainian construction industry.

No-one advised them to go and study and gain new skills, or to develop personally and professionally; instead the family reunion migrants (predominantly parent/children reunions) said that their relatives “advised them to get the first and easiest job and make money” (Oleksandra). As explained in Chapter Five, based on a set of values, aims, needs and sense of agency, the life strategy of the ‘transition migrants’ is one of survival. Being motivated by a set of economic aims, material values, needs in security and stability, and weak agency, they aim to get the first, easiest and most accessible job, but this can turn out to be the least well paid and low-skilled job around. In this way, participants transferred themselves into the same Ukrainian environment in Australia and lived by Ukrainian standards which produced the lack of initiative for growth and development that had shaped their lives in Ukraine. The connection to family, dependency on the resources that the family already had, and the comfort zone of housing and employment provided by Ukrainian friends kept participants on the same level of professional development and personal change. Therefore, family reunion migration appeared to be a pathway that reproduced participants’ survival life strategy after migration, which is analysed in Chapter Seven.

The stories of family reunion ‘transition migrants’ reveal that instead of successful integration into the Western type of individualistic society of Australia, participants adapted to the life of their family. Instead of being guided by the more liberal values and aims that encourage professional and personal development, the family reunion migrants immersed themselves in Ukrainian life in Australia. Table 4 summarises their place of residence, their circle of close friends and their means of finding their first job.
Table 4. Reliance of family reunion migrants on the Ukrainian primary group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Place of residence</th>
<th>Means of finding first job</th>
<th>Circle of close friends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leonid</td>
<td>Not in the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Uncle (Ukrainian)</td>
<td>Migrants from Ukraine, Russia and Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>Not in the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Ukrainian community in Sydney</td>
<td>Migrants from Ukraine and Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oleksandra</td>
<td>In the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Ukrainian community in Sydney</td>
<td>Migrants from Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna</td>
<td>In the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Ukrainian community in Sydney</td>
<td>Migrants from Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svyatoslava</td>
<td>In the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Ukrainian community in Sydney</td>
<td>Migrants from Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadiya</td>
<td>In the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Ukrainian community in Sydney</td>
<td>Migrants from Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natalya</td>
<td>Not in the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Independently</td>
<td>Australians and migrants from Ukraine and Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snizhana</td>
<td>In the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Ukrainian community in Sydney</td>
<td>Migrants from Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyubov</td>
<td>Not in the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Independently</td>
<td>Australians and migrants from Ukraine and Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofiya</td>
<td>In the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Ukrainian community in Sydney</td>
<td>Australians and migrants from Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan</td>
<td>Not in the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Ukrainian friends</td>
<td>Migrants from Ukraine and Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasylyna</td>
<td>Not in the Ukrainian community</td>
<td>Independently</td>
<td>Australians and migrants from Ukraine and Russia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The conditions presented in Table 4 and participants’ involvement and reliance on the primary groups for housing, finding a job and for friendship, served as barrier to successful integration into Australian society. Family reunion migrants lived according to their mentality of survival, but in better economic, political and social conditions than they had in Ukraine. Chapter Seven describes the life of ‘transition migrants’ after migration.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has elucidated how the short-term arrivals and family reunions formed the backbone of the migrations of ‘transition migrants’. In analysing the life strategy narrative of the ‘transition migrants’, the chapter introduced two new descriptors - “conspiracy” and “manoeuvring” tactics - to explain the strategies used by these migrants. Social networks were particularly crucial for the group of short-term arrivals to assist in
managing different types of precarity associated with a lack of predictability and security, which affected their financial or psychological welfare while getting a visa to Australia and trying to find ways to extend it.

In a comparison of short-term and family reunion Ukrainian arrivals the following interesting points that underpin their survival trajectories have emerged: (1) the opportunism and emotional nature of these migrations; (2) a driving economic rationale in the form of escape from unemployment, poverty and aiming for material well-being; (3) connection to family/Ukrainian community/social networks and dependency on their resources in coping with different forms of precarity; and (4) the continuation of survival life strategy after migration to Australia. The theme of life for the “transition migrants” after migration is explored further in Chapter Seven.
CHAPTER SEVEN

AFTER MIGRATION: ADJUSTMENT TO NEW LIFE

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the experiences of the participants during the actual and extended act of immigration were explored. This chapter explores the life of Ukrainian survival migrants after migration. Ukrainian migrants, while ‘embedding’ themselves in the structure of Australian society, actively modify their lives and change their life trajectories (Reznik & Reznik, 1996), and plan for the future. Special attention is given to the sociological understanding of the behavioural patterns of ‘transition migrants’ after migration (Reznik, 1995). The first section of this chapter explores the emotional experiences that accompany the survival migration of the participants. It addresses the positive and negative experience of separation from home, as well as the emotional aspects of belonging. The second section utilises two case studies (Yulia and Serhiy), in combination with extracts from other participants’ interviews, to extend the discussion to the occupational experiences of two different social classes of migrants after they arrived in Australia, and in relation to their previous occupations in Ukraine. The third section analyses the outcome of migration in relation to class mobility, adaptation processes and the associated personal changes and shifts in life strategies of the survival ‘transition migrants’. In the fourth section, the future plans of survival migrants are examined as a crucial element of their life strategies and of their transformation over time.

7.2 Emotional reactions and migration

A key part of the interview focused on questions about the emotions related to migration. These questions were an important part of the interview and highly significant as they enabled migrants to reflect on their past and present lives, in Ukraine and Australia, and to evaluate their migration experiences as part of their survival life strategy implementation.

In order to probe into the emotions behind migration, which were elicited from the ‘transition migrants’ narratives, this section will discuss how the separation from one’s native home is experienced by immigrants from different social classes. It focuses on the simultaneous and contrary processes of distancing themselves from their old home and
appraising the personal changes they experience in their new home. As noted, migration is an emotional experience. At all times and in all places immigrants are emotionally linked to their relatives, their friends and their country despite the geographical distance (Kennedy, 2007; Ryan, 2014; Gill & Bialski, 2013). In the context of separation from their old home, the act of migration is an episode that reconstitutes the immigrant’s relationship with both old and new places, by elaborating and refining the perceptions, memories, and attachments the migrants feel for the familiar places of the past, and past times with friends and family (both negative and positive). In their interviews the ‘transition migrants’ from both class groups (professionals and scientific and cultural intelligentsia; and blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs) conveyed stories about their arrival in Australia and their positive and negative emotions about their separation from their native home and their attachment to national identity and class belonging.

7.2.1 Positive emotions

The first set of positive emotions is attached to the hybridity of the position of being not local and not a stranger (Lomsky-Feder & Rapoport, 2000), and the cultural disorientation upon arrival. Hybridity in this context is a positive experience that supports and assists migrants’ fast and successful acquaintance with the new environment. From this hybrid position, immigrants are relatively free to adapt and immerse themselves in their new environment, to interpret the new and old places and to figure out who they are and what they should do to establish themselves. In this sense, a migrant is a person whose connection to the past space and time is continuously ruptured, while new attachments to the new space and time are being formed. Svyatoslava said, “I felt lost when I arrived, everything was knew and unknown. At the same time I felt I was starting my new happy and beautiful life here”.

The sense of being lost and culturally disoriented upon arrival corresponds to the feeling participants said they experienced in Ukraine before migrating. As described in Chapter Five, after the collapse of the Soviet system, respondents experienced negative cultural and emotional shocks. However, the feeling of cultural disorientation they experienced after their arrival in Australia is described by respondents in a positive sense. For example, Oleksiy, Natalya, Tetyana, Myroslava, and Konstyantyn dealt with their cultural shock by reflecting on the multicultural, democratic and capitalist nature of Australian society compared to the post-communist Ukrainian social order using such expressions as
“unusual mix of nations”, “freedom of speech and self-expression”, “huge choice of different foods”. For example, Oleksiy a doctor and academic who arrived in Australia in 1994 with his wife and daughter, remembered his first “positive shock”:

*I was struck by supermarkets filled with products and things. I was amazed when I went to the hospital—with their medical system, organisation, caring attitude towards patients—and what caught my attention the most was the way everyone was treated as an individual.*

The capitalist market economy and the range and abundance of products on supermarket shelves, which Oleksiy was not used to in Soviet Ukraine, significantly opened his mind and turned his world, in a positive sense, “upside down”. He emphasised the importance and power of his first visit to one of Sydney’s hospitals, where he saw an advanced medical system and social relationships between people, doctors and patients that were more respectful, tolerant and individualised. These experiences of cultural clash inspired Oleksiy to seek further professional achievements and personal development. Migration to Australia was, for the majority of the participants from the class of professionals and scientific and cultural intelligentsia (Myroslava, Oleksiy, Konstyantyn, Yulia, and Olha) migrants, a positive emotional and professional change. For example, at the end of the interview Oleksiy stated that he had the feeling that migrants are “becoming better in Australia, everyone wants to be better here”. As Chambers (1994) and Thompson (1984) argue, there is a constant redefinition and change that happens as a result of experiencing this ambiguity and obscurity after migration.

The second set of positive emotions expressed by participants is related to class equality in Australia and the feeling of being treated with dignity. Recollecting the positive experiences of their immigration, the respondents from the class of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs (Leonid, Solomia, Serhiy, Nadiya, Ivan, Yehor, Pavlo, Oleh, and Oleksandra) emphasised the emergence of feeling of being treated with dignity in terms of experiencing a sensation of freedom, self-realisation and a rise in self-esteem. In their words, the positive feeling of “being human” or being treated with dignity in Australia was associated with a completely opposite set of feelings and emotions experienced back in Ukraine. In Australia, these positive emotions are attached to class belonging. For
example, Oleksandra said “in Australia you are treated and feel equal to everybody else” and Oleh said:

There is no class division in Australia, at least I don’t feel it. When people see me in my dirty working clothes they treat me even better, as they show their respect for my work as a builder of Australia.

Leonid, who was employed in low-skilled positions in different industries in Ukraine and as a painter in the construction industry in Australia, shows through his narrative how he gained a feeling of being human in Australia. He indicated a sharpening of the destructive emotions he experienced in Ukraine from not being treated as a human being. He shared how these feelings were based on negative interpersonal encounters he experienced in public spaces before emigration:

The laxity was everywhere. People literally did not care about each other. In stores especially, the attitude to customers was terrible. Respect and a personal approach to each individual always came last. I did not feel there was a principle of treating me as a human being. I was always reliant on something and on someone’s mood and madcap ideas.

Life in Australia and the contrast of experiences before and after migration produced positive emotions. Leonid used such words as “laxity”, “individual always came last”, “reliant on someone’s mood” to describe the lack of feeling like a human being in Ukraine. It should be noted that Ukrainian society in the first few years of independence was in fact preceded by chronic frustration that had existed for decades. The population had been through wars, repression, lack of freedom, the rule of dogmatism and ongoing financial deficits, and was affected by constant stress factors (Shulga, 2011). In such situations people suffer from a decreasing sense of self-esteem, an increased sense of personal incompetence, and moral regression (Zlobina and Tykhonovych, 1996).

The third set of positive emotions associated with migration emerged when participants reflected upon the negative features of their life in Ukraine before migration. Many of the negative emotions about being in Ukraine were described in terms of a category they called ‘national character’, or in participants’ terms ‘Ukrainianess’. The ‘transition migrants’
commonly suggested that the problem was in the national character, an expression that corresponds to some features typical of Ukrainian national identity. In judging his former society, Leonid, a worker whose main concern was the economic well-being of his family, explained the essence of the national character in terms of a combination of what he sees as the most common features of ‘Ukrainianess’—“disrespect to others”, “putting personal benefit above everything and everyone else” and “dreadful bureaucracy”. He said “all these features after migration become unacceptable and meaningless”. For Leonid, they became synonyms for “a lack of prospects and emotional inertia”. Another participant, Taras, when describing ‘Ukrainianess’, also referred to what he saw as inherent features of the national character—“senseless corruption, nepotistic relationships and carelessness towards each other”. Taras, Oleh, Leonid and Nadiya thought this undermined the natural feeling of being treated with dignity in their home country.

The emergence of such negative emotions towards the sending society, and by way of contrast, the positive emotional experience recalled after migration, is supported by the social mobility of participants in better and well-paid jobs in Australia. As will be analysed further in the chapter, the majority of participants underwent shifts in class and national identity after migration. All the aforementioned negative characteristics and attitudes noticed in Ukraine in comparison to Australia, particularly those made by blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs, constrained active survival strategies of ‘transition migrants’ being driven by social need of integrity of social and individual values described in Chapter Five.

### 7.2.2 Negative emotions

The emotional aspects of the ‘transition migrants’ are often focused on negative emotions such as disappointment, guilt, nostalgic depression and homesickness caused by separation from their home and those they left behind. A significant group of interviewees (Leonid, Taras, Yehor, Vasyl, Serhiy, Pavlo, Svyatoslava, Oleksandra, and Nadiya) from the blue-collar working class and the class of entrepreneurs admitted they felt negative emotions caused by their experiences of rupture and longing (Skrbiš, 2008).

Some participants expressed disappointments and anxieties about their first impression of Australia. Many of the blue-collar and entrepreneur migrants (Taras, Yehor, Vasyl, Serhiy, Pavlo, and Svyatoslava) made it clear that they had negative and disappointing experiences
upon arrival, resulting from the cultural difference between Ukraine and Australia. An example is the narrative of Svyatoslava, a 71 year-old migrant employed in the Australian cleaning industry. She was born in a small village in Western Ukraine in which she had lived since birth. She migrated from Ukraine at the age of 53 and started working for the Ukrainian community in Sydney as a cleaner. This is Svyatoslava’s account:

*It was a tremendous disappointment. Firstly, I took myself in hands, closed my mouth and was silent. By nature—I talk about what I see. I had to be silent, because I did not know the language, and I had to listen to what other people thought and said. My way of thinking was completely different compared to people who lived here for 20–40 years. I walked around open-mouthed, stared at all the shopping windows: I had never seen such windows before, such wealth. I was told that I was walking around like a cow, but I did not do anything wrong—these sorts of nuances happened. I had to change a lot, it was difficult.*

In Svyatoslava’s case, as with several other Ukrainian ‘transition migrants’ from small towns and villages (Pavlo and Nadiya), their limited life experience of different places and cultures in the context of the new location and mindset formed negative and even emotionally painful experiences upon arrival. It actualised the mechanism of adjustment of Svyatoslava’s dreams and aspirations to objective realities and constraints. From Svyatoslava’s first impressions of Australia it became clear to her that some personal transformation and a certain flexibility would be necessary—she said she “had to change a lot”. In Svyatoslava’s case, as with other participants (Leonid, Taras, Yehor, Vasyl, Serhiy, Pavlo, Svyatoslava, Oleksandra, and Nadiya), the new experiences caused her to undertake some reflexive reorientation of the components of her life strategy (aims, needs, values and sense of agency), analysed further in the chapter. The separation from home and a set of negative emotions reinforced for the majority of ‘transition migrants’ the life strategy of survival, in which the only stable reference point was their connection to community and family.

The pattern of connections the participants had with the community and family who remained in Ukraine was observed in their narratives in the context of the rupturing of ties with home after migration and the feelings of guilt. The negative emotion of guilt emerged
from the fact that several participants (Taras, Yehor and Leonid) said they were seen or stigmatised as “betrayers of the motherland” (Yehor). For example, Taras’ words gave the sense that he had to cope with the stigma of betrayal that, as he said “was attached to all migrants from post-Soviet countries” during the long years of the Soviet regime when leaving the USSR was almost impossible and horrible (Gatucho, 2010). Hence, in the first years after the USSR collapsed, the choice to emigrate was viewed as voluntary and was treated by families and communities as a demonstration of a lack of patriotism, and a betrayal of the motherland. This was the case with Taras, who said:

Some of my friends didn’t tell, but I know they thought that if a person did not stay to live in his native country despite any hardships, the person is no longer a patriot of Ukraine. I think the same. I cannot be a true patriot, as I would have been if I had stayed in Ukraine no matter what the circumstances. I wish my life situation was different and I stayed.

Taras admitted that he cannot call himself a patriot and expressed a feeling of guilt because he left Ukraine. To express his regret he said he wished the situation was different and that he could have stayed in Ukraine to be able to call himself a true patriot. The emotion of guilt arising from “being lost as a good citizen” (Taras) to the Ukrainian State, and yet not being native (or at home) in Australia, significantly influenced the success of his integration. Despite the fact that participants found themselves in another society, where being a migrant is a common experience and the norm, the stigma they felt from the native community in the sending society (Ukraine) created barriers for the participants in making changes or adjustments to the values, needs, aims and sense of agency that might have helped them change from a survival life strategy toward an achievement life strategy. The feeling of guilt and of being stigmatised resulted in imposing self-limitations. It was typical for those ‘transition migrants’ to protect the continuity of their aims, needs, values and sense of agency formed in Ukraine after migration, even if they lost relevance. As Taras said, “I saw that my life principles and meanings which I lived by in Ukraine did not work in Australia, but I saw no other way but to keep to them in order to survive”.

Even though ‘transition migrants’ felt that they were judged negatively by their community for migrating, the most common emotions expressed by the participants about leaving their native home were homesickness and depression in relation to friends and family, the
Ukrainian way of life, food, and the weather. In many cases participants referred to the depression and homesickness as nostalgia, and it manifested as a melancholy resulting from people, spaces and times now lost.

For example, Myroslava constantly mentioned the word “nostalgia” in her migration story. She shared her own experience and the experiences of her friends and relatives. Key to these nostalgic feelings was a sense of loss. Nostalgia and migration are considered to be inseparable (Lomsky-Feder and Rapoport, 2000). In telling her life story, Myroslava, an IT professional who arrived in Australia through the skilled migration stream, articulated her nostalgia for family and friends:

*I had very strong nostalgia for two years after I arrived here [in Australia]. When I arrived—some kind of a half depression overwhelmed me; it was of a nostalgic character. I’m not crazy, but I just really missed my parents, and especially my sister. When I arrived, I was 29 years old. Then, the following year, on my thirtieth birthday I wished: "Can I get my sister as a gift". We immediately asked her to visit. When she left Australia after three months, she said: "You are criminals!" I asked: "Why?" She answered: “You cannot make people get used to such a good life, and then send them back”.

The logic of Myroslava’s story is internally divided. On the one hand, she expresses the hardship of being in a nostalgic depression, which as demonstrated in other parts of the interview, led to inviting her sister for a visit and encouraging all the family members in Ukraine to move to Australia. On the other hand, Myroslava realised that life in Australia is of a much higher standard and can offer many more opportunities than Ukraine in terms of career and quality of life. She said: “I have many more opportunities here and the quality of Australian life is much higher; I have no right to complain”. Thus, remembering the period of nostalgia, Myroslava simultaneously deconstructs her affinity for Ukraine by focusing on how good life is in Australia, which was evident to her sister when she came for a visit. Her sister only half jokes that it is a ‘crime’ to share the good life of Australia with someone who cannot stay. Myroslava arrived at the conclusion that she was nostalgic for family and the Ukrainian way of life, because after all her family moved to Australia the nostalgia went away: “Several years later, the severe depression and nostalgia
disappeared. I felt completely harmonious and satisfied when eight years later my mum and sister joined me for good in Australia”. 

In her interview, Myroslava also talked about other cases of depression and homesickness amongst her friends in Australia:

_We spent a month at my friend’s house when we arrived. She had very bad depression in physiological terms; she was just lying down. She was allergic to different foods and to many things. Now she is in order. Despite some difficulties, they did not return home; actually no one among our friends returned to Ukraine._

Myroslava’s reference to her friend’s case shows that the effect of her depression was listlessness. She could not live without food from home, although it was probably more psychological. Despite food allergies and hard times, no one among Myroslava’s friends returned to Ukraine. Many of the participants had similar experiences to Myroslava (Vasyl, Nadiya, Taras, Yehor, Oleh, Svyatoslava, Hanna, Tetyana, and Serhiy), from which it is assumed that many Ukrainian ‘transition migrants’ experienced nostalgic depression and homesickness due to their separation from home, relatives and friends, and the Ukrainian way of life. However, they found their way out and now have a complete life in Australia.

Nostalgic depression for the past, for people, spaces and times appears to be expressed predominantly by those migrants who came to Australia for survival. For example, Vasyl, who arrived on a short-term business visa and stayed permanently through the humanitarian migration stream, said he was very nostalgic for Ukrainian communication style and going out with friends: “_I can’t live without my friends and our crazy New Year celebrations and long nights in pubs_”. Yehor, a sportsman with a criminal past who works in construction in Australia, even shed a tear saying “_I do not feel winter holidays in Australia; after more than 10 years, I haven’t got used to New Year in hot weather. I always dream about winter and snow. It’s hard to leave so far away from your native home_”.

One of the solutions the migrants found to their nostalgic depression and homesickness was to visit back and forth between Ukraine and Australia. Vasyl, a blue-collar worker and
entrepreneur in Ukraine who started his own small construction company in Western Ukraine and had to flee because of the suppression of entrepreneurship during the early 2000s, had a similar nostalgic experience to Myroslava, but uses the word ‘depression’ to describe his emotional stance. He found that the way to cope with depression was by maintaining regular visits to Ukraine: “I go to Ukraine annually. The positive energy, the recharge from this energy which I gain at home, is enough for the next half of the year. Then, roughly speaking, the depression begins again”.

Yehor, Taras and Serhiy also used the word “depression” when talking about their emotional condition upon arrival to Australia. Ganguly (1992) argues that the familiar experience of returning home is undoubtedly one of the major motivations migrants have for staying linked to their home. She says the joy comes from the experience of the unconditional love and trust of the family at home, the sincere and time proven friendships, eating familiar food and smelling familiar smells (Ganguly, 1992). Going into more detail, Vasyl explains that his visits to Ukraine, even though temporary, helped him to escape loneliness and the lack of Ukrainian-style relationships in Sydney. He explained that the main things he lacked were close ties with people, and “real friends”, which in Vasyl’s life means sincere and loyal supporters who will always be by his side:

*Here in Australia there is no such communication as there is at home. Here, I have many acquaintances, but there is only one friend among these acquaintances—one arm (meaning a real friend who is happy to help whenever needed), out of a hundred acquaintances. Those friends, that I had there, I do not have in Australia. Here, all people live apart somehow. There are just a couple of people who would come if I had a hard time. Here—it’s “Hi, how are you?”—everyone smiles at you. Roughly speaking, it turns out to be so wilfully disingenuous, insincere. With friends, with good friends, you feel the sincerity. Here, I really miss sincerity.*

Vasyl elaborated a great deal during his interview about what he considered to be a mismatch between the communication style of Australian people and the friendship that eventuated. Based on his own experience, Vasyl decided that Australian “friendliness” was superficial—“insincere”—because initial conversations and smiles were not followed by substantial meetings and ongoing friendship. In this sense, his story clearly suggests that
visits home do not allow depression and homesickness to develop and that they bring relief by connecting him with the familiar. Taras, Myroslava, Ivan, Kostyantyn and Svyatoslava also missed home and visited Ukraine regularly.

In recollecting their depression and homesickness experiences, the respondents emphasised the cultural aspects as well as the comforting sense of familiarity they experienced as they reconnected with beloved people and places when they travelled to Ukraine. Such connectedness heals homesickness, brings with it a feeling of care and sincerity, and impedes the development of depression. Yet, these expressions of satisfaction from visits home are ambivalent as they are simultaneously contradicted with criticism, from the participants, of their former home. This sometimes leads to a distancing from their old national identities; they no longer perceive their old home as a source of meaning and value. So, as Ivan and Vasyl admitted later in the interview, even when visiting their old friends they felt that it was not the same and that their friends were no longer as connected to them due to the infrequency of their contact. Ivan said: “With the years I feel I am losing connection to Ukraine, my friends, our interests we shared. I am becoming more Australian than Ukrainian”; Vasyl said: “Sometimes I cannot understand their actions and expressions; I feel I am less supportive of my old friends than before”.

Negative emotions such as disappointment, guilt, nostalgic depression and homesickness caused by separation from home and those left behind, dominated the interviews with the Ukrainian ‘transition migrants’, particularly the group of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs. It is these negative emotions that painted the process of immigration in darker colours. However, despite the negative emotions felt by participants, they expressed their satisfaction with their relocation to Australia (Oleksandra, Svyatoslava, Serhiy, Pavlo, Vasyl, Oleh, Nadiya, Solomia, Taras, Yehor, and Ivan). For example, Svyatoslava mentioned that she is very satisfied with her immigration despite the fact that sometimes “the soul is empty: you do not hear our songs, you cannot get out of the house for a quick chat”. Despite nostalgic feelings for their native home, the interviewed ‘transition migrants’ did not express a wish to re-establish their lives in Ukraine, nor were they seeking to build economic networks that would enable them to move between the two places. Therefore, travel back and forth between Ukraine and Australia and the “emotional recharge” (Vasyl) received from home visits help Ukrainian migrants to cope with
negative emotions like homesickness, and “paralysing emotions such as nostalgia and depression” (Myroslava).

7.3 Survival occupational experiences in Australia

The exploration of the typical occupation experiences of survival migrants across labour markets before and after migration becomes possible when life after migration is reflexively negotiated in the narratives of ‘transition migrants’. The labour force experiences of the ‘transition migrants’ were varied. Coherent evaluations of the migrants’ work lives were rarely present in their narratives, but some collectively shared experiences of participants from both classes (professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia, and blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs) can be distinguished. They include feelings of continual occupational insecurity (expressed predominantly in the narratives of participants from the class of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs) and the progressive loss of resources necessary to deal with a changing economic environment (expressed predominantly in the narratives of participants from the class of professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia).

In the context of life strategies and occupational experiences after migration, the concept of “structural disempowerment” (Mrozowicki, 2011) is important in explaining what was happening. “Structural disempowerment” is defined by Mrozowicki as the constraints placed on personal life projects and the deterioration in collective economic and social situations. In the majority of the narratives respondents noted that resources were undermined in Ukraine by the effects of system change and were not stabilised after migration. Therefore, accepting an occupational downgrade in order to achieve an economic upgrade, became inevitable for many migrants (Oleh, Vasyl, Artem, Yulia, Svyatoslava, Oleksandra, Vasylyna, Ivan, Nadiya, and Solomia). The majority of the ‘transition migrants’ were blue-collar workers. As outlined in the introduction to Part One, the life strategies of 21 migrants (out of 26 interviewed) were each identified as a survival life strategy. Nine of the 11 men are builders and painters in the construction sector, while four of the 10 women worked in a chocolate factory for the first few years after arrival.

7.3.1 Case study: Serhiy’s and Yulia’s occupational experiences

Serhiy and Yulia are good examples of the occupational struggles of the ‘transition migrants’. These two participants had completely different occupational experiences in
Ukraine. Serhiy is a representative of the group of migrants from the class of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs, and Yulia illustrates the experiences of migrants from the class of professionals and scientific and cultural intelligentsia. Their experiences bring to the fore the difference in occupational trajectories while in Ukraine and the survival occupational trajectories adopted after migration.

In Chapter Five the main reasons behind the aims of survival ‘transition migrants’ in Australia were explored and it was demonstrated that the key issues were the extremely low income of the whole family, which did not allow respondents to maintain their families’ existence at an acceptable level. Unfortunately, when asked about their average family income, most respondents did not want to respond to the question; or if they did answer, they confined themselves to monosyllables such as “little” or “not enough” (Tetyana, Pavlo, Serhiy, Oleksiy, and Olha). As is the case with Serhiy and Yulia, a number of respondents (Oleh, Pavlo, Taras, Yehor, Solomia) started their careers early at fourteen years old. In addition to trades, the most common area of employment for youth (up to thirty years old) in Ukraine was in agriculture and construction. Six respondents (all from Western Ukraine) said these were their jobs at home (Ivan, Pavlo, Taras, Vasyl, Serhiy, and Yehor). Serhiy, a 49 year-old painter with secondary technical education, is representative of this trend:

I come from L--- region. My parents were ordinary workers. I finished school, went to college, then served in the army. Then I went to Siberia and worked there on a rotational basis for about five years. And then I tried different jobs in construction, agriculture, etc. There was a time when I was buying-selling goods, but it ended up more as barter than making real money. Life was changing all the time. There was a time when I made huge money, but it didn’t last long. I realised it was simply impossible to do anything in Ukraine legally. The system was changing, laws were changing, and people in power were changing. So one day I ended up working in Holland, where my friends suggested I come to Australia. The main aim at that time was to help my parents, to help my family, because someone had to go abroad to make money. So I thought if I don’t go—there will be none. My younger brother would not go, my nephews were younger; Mum, Dad and that’s it.
The next case study illustrates a very different occupational trajectory before migration, though it was also impacted by financial hardship. This is the story of 50 year-old Yulia, who was trained in IT and as an academic, but is employed as a nurse in Australia:

*I was born in O----. Mum and Dad had a university education, good jobs; they looked after me very well, I studied at a good school. After school I entered O---- University; I studied maths and played music a bit while I was studying. After graduation I worked for the scientific research institute for three years. Then I was invited by the Board of Education to teach programming and computer literacy to both children and adults, for accountants to work with computers and other highly-skilled professionals, even from the Ministry of Education. I worked there for four years and my level improved so much that I started reading technical literature in English and explained it in Russian the next day at my seminar for regional technicians. I was actually very young for such a level. My life collapsed when the economy collapsed and everything was turning to chaos during the early 1990s. I wasn’t able to afford anything on my salary. There was nothing to eat, all the organisations were reducing their staff. There was real starvation! Migration was the only way out from that horror.*

The narratives of Serhiy and Yulia, both survival migrants who arrived in Australia between 1991 and 2003, document the contrasting experiences of the two groups of migrants who came in this cohort—the highly-skilled workers (university degree) and the low-skilled labourers (secondary/college studies). These two groups correspond to different occupational experiences depending on the class of the respondent. In this section, the term ‘highly-skilled migrants’ is used to mean the class of professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia (with special skills, knowledge, education or ability acquired in their field of work), not solely the skilled migration stream through which Ukrainians migrated to Australia. The term ‘low-skilled migrants’ refers to blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs with small businesses.

The survival highly-skilled migrants are the minority among the ‘transition migrants’. Nine other skilled university-educated survival migrants from the class of professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia shared Yulia’s status. Examples of highly-skilled jobs
among the interviewed migrants include IT, engineers and academics. For Yulia and the rest of the group, she experienced delays in receiving her salary and the loss of her job to which she responded by increasing her work activities, or turning to the primitive entrepreneurial buy-sell business (described above as chovnykarstvo) in Ukraine. In Ukraine at this time, Yulia and others in her class experienced a downgrade in their economic and social status from skilled professional to ordinary seller at the city market (Myroslava and Tetyana).

Twelve out of the 21 migrants who came to Australia for survival as ‘transition migrants’ represent the group of low-skilled workers. In Ukraine they were in constant search of opportunities to make money through physical labour. Their strategies led them to craftwork or membership of criminal gangs (particularly in the raucous 1990s) (Taras and Yehor), or to labour migration back and forth between Russia and Europe (Serhiy, Pavlo, and Vasyl). Like Serhiy, they saw work as an economic necessity and were willing to be part of a labour force as long as they received a minimum guaranteed income. Sometimes some of them were fortunate to have made huge amounts of money through racketeering or by starting some small business that operated under the authority of a regional racketeer (criminal gangs) (Taras and Yehor). In the raucous 1990s, when the Soviet Union collapse caused systemic disruptions in all spheres of life, criminal groups strongly established their power over the not-yet-privatised industrial objects and markets (Shulga, 2011). Those who managed to start any type of business were only able to do so through cooperation with criminal groups, administrative officers and the police.

What united Yulia and Serhiy, as highly-skilled and low-skilled survival ‘transition migrants’, was the feeling of exhaustion and being “worn down by hard work” (Yulia), as well as “the constant turbulence” (Serhiy) in their lives as they continually searched for any income-generating opportunity. Some of the respondents called themselves “eternal mavericks and bagmen” (Vasyl). Similar to Vasyl, Pavlo said he felt himself “constantly searching for a better life”, and Serhiy said “such a life is tiring”.

7.3.2 Dead-end and patchwork survival careers in Australia

The contrasting experiences of Yulia and Serhiy, as representatives of the highly-skilled and low-skilled survival migrant groups, are also easily captured when considering their preferred career types and occupational choices after migration to Australia. In this section,
Mrozowicki’s (2011) concepts from studying workers in Poland are used in addition to the narrative analysis of the interviews to help assess what was happening to the participants.

Inspired by Chicago school concepts, Mrozowicki integrated objective and subjective aspects of careers, describing structural changes in the sphere of work and the subjective experiences of workers. In this study the migrants’ employment after migration and mobility/immobility between jobs after migration will be classified under structural (objective) changes. The subjective changes will include the reshaping of identities and the transformation of biographies. Mrozowicki (2011) argues that “unprotected exposure to market mechanisms, when combined with the lack of significant resources leads to dead-end or patchwork careers” (p. 165). Subsequently, the common story found in the narratives of ‘transition migrants’ is the experience of remaining in the same occupational niche as they were in back in Ukraine (Oleksiy, Konstyantyn, Olha, and Natalya), or a downgrade in their professional life (Yulia, Tetyana, Oleh, Taras, Svyatoslava, Lyubov, Artem, Oleh, and Viktor).

The two types of careers described by Mrozowicki as “dead-end” and “patchwork”, are a useful tool to explain the variable occupational patterns of skilled and low-skilled survival migrants in Australia. Mrozowicki is not the only scholar to have used the term “dead-end” careers. Indeed, many DEJ (Dead-End Job) theories define occupations as “dead-end” if they generally lack career opportunities in terms of wage increments and promotion chances (Bihagen and Ohls, 2007). Based on their empirical study of working women in Sweden, Bihagen and Ohls (2007) suggest that “dead-end” jobs are characterised by low level acquisition of specific human capital associated with an easily measured output, and a lack of future rewards in terms of additional pay with time spent in the job, and few possibilities of promotions. The defining feature of dead-end careers is the absence of occupational upward mobility—in some cases there is downward movement. Subjectively dead-end jobs reflect the job immobility of workers in a new or changed environment. In the study’s sample of 21 survival migrants, 14 cases involved dead-end careers.

Having had single-track linear careers in the Ukraine, some highly-skilled ‘transition migrants’ (Yulia and Tetyana) fell into dead-end careers in Australia and thus experienced a sharp downturn in their professional and social status. This occupational downgrade originated in “the unacceptability of the new rules of the game” (Tetyana) and is also the
result of a conscious or unconscious failure to take up opportunities of gaining new and suitable skills to get a better job, or at least the same skilled job as they held in Ukraine. For example, Yulia said: “I couldn’t find my way into the same qualified job in Australia; I gave up one day” and Tetyana said: “It took time to figure out how to act and what the rules are in the Australian labour market, but it didn’t help”.

For some participants, these decisions led to immobilisation and dissatisfaction with their working lives after migration. Usually, the dead-end careers of the large population of Ukrainian immigrants who left home after 1991 are non-occupational jobs (Malynovska, 2011). These are jobs for which the worker does not need an education or any specific knowledge to do the work successfully. Dead-end careers are described by Thomas (1989) as those where the worker is “stuck … in organizational structures that do not yield to their (real or fantastic) desires of self-expression” (in Mrozwicki, 2011, p. 359).

For example, Oleh left Ukraine as a businessman running a currency exchange business and in Australia ended up as a painter, and Svyatoslava worked in a factory and kindergarten in Ukraine and ended up as a cleaner in Australia. Yulia experienced a similar professional downgrade from being a highly-skilled migrant, to taking a low-skilled job after migration. Her background and life in Ukraine are outlined at the beginning of this section. She is a highly-skilled IT professional who arrived in Australia in 1993 through the skilled migration stream, but could not find a job in the IT sector for many years. After feeling completely discouraged by yet another rejection from a potential employer, she took a short course in nursing and started to do the “dirtiest work” at a nursing home to earn a living:

After I came to Australia, I can say that I completely fell out of occupational and social life. I would be socially isolated if I didn’t have a husband and children. In 1993 there was an absolutely different level of programming here and my Ukrainian knowledge was irrelevant. I attended courses six times and was not successful. I don’t remember exactly how many CVs I have sent from the moment I came here. I sent tonnes of letters and was “lucky” to even get a response. I sent 20–30 letters a week and got 5–10 letters with “Sorry, you are not successful”. I think there was always somebody better with an Australian education and more experience. [.....] Then I realised I had to retrain. At
TAFE I did a course to be a “low care supervisor”. “Low care” is work with elderly people who can still walk themselves. Now I am working as a registered nurse. It is very hard, dirty and terrible work. I took this job in 2001. My children were two and three years old and I felt that my husband practically lost his job and the job he started doing was a low-paid one. And I thought this was the way to avoid quarrels around money, as in my previous marriage. I did this horrible job to save my marriage and now I want to do it to help my children.

Yulia’s narrative seems to reflect the idea that dead-end careers frame the structurally forced occupational discontinuity (Mrozowicki, 2011) across sending and receiving countries, accompanied by a lack of resources, the devaluation of skills valuable in Ukraine, and barriers to the acquisition of new skills relevant to the Australian labour market such as language, qualification and social skills. Migrants who find themselves in dead-end occupations are significantly impacted by the process of de-skilling. Similar to Yulia, several other survival migrants stuck in dead-end careers suffered “economic deprivation” because they could not re-enter white-collar jobs. As Artem said: “I had to forget about my military experience and tried my hand at construction. I know I will never be able to start doing something skilful in Australia”.

Another type of survival career pattern found in the narratives of ‘transition migrants’ in Australia is “patchwork careers”. Patchwork careers are typically marked by a multi-track employment history without any clear design or plan. A patchwork job pattern consists of many unintentional moves interwoven with periods of unemployment and desperate job-seeking (Mrozowicki, 2011). Patchwork careers are the dominant pattern in the collected stories of low-skilled migrants who came to Australia for survival. In the case of Ukraine, the ‘transition migrants’ patchwork careers are the result of the poorly regulated post-Soviet capitalist system. The narratives of Pavlo, Vasyl and Serhiy suggest that the effects of structural inconsistency are unpredictable work patterns where Ukrainians who are limited by resources, such as skills and knowledge, have work lives that are marked by chaotic patterns.

Their professional and social life combined in unhappy circumstances of company closure, job cuts, work conflicts, family problems are ruled by a logic of accident and coincidence.
As Pavlo said: “My life is guided by unhappy circumstances. The factory I worked for closed and my small business was not bringing in much income”. Such non-intentional occupational moves, low pay, gender-constraints and health problems, resulted in employment in “peripheral sectors” of the labour market before migration, and in the low-skilled job sector after migration to Australia. A patchwork career appears to be a survival strategy based on a form of non-intentional job mobility in search of better pay. What remains the same in all these cases of job change and migration is resourcefulness and the desire to work hard. An example is Serhiy, who had occasional jobs in Ukraine and worked as a labour migrant in Holland before coming to Australia. After migration he changed many jobs, from irregular employment in one industry to painting private houses. Now he works as a painter and expresses strong dissatisfaction with his working life in Australia:

When I came here I worked one year at a factory, producing s---- to build bridges. I had to clean, wash and pack them according to size. I was the only Ukrainian there; all the others were Australians. There was no future at the factory. I realised it when I was talking to Australians about holidays; they can afford two or three weeks holiday a year. And then they have to work again to pay tax and those who have houses, to pay the mortgage. It is impossible to earn good money here. That was in the beginning, and then I tried other jobs that my friends suggested. I was trying but had no satisfaction. I did it just to earn a living. I think that if I had stayed in Ukraine I could do better now or be on the same level as here. Now I am a painter, but there are also lots of people who hire me to create designs for them as I have some talent. I discovered it recently. Still I don’t like the country and I don’t conceal it. I am tied up now. My wife with my child will not come back. Nothing depends on me here.

In some cases, such as Serhiy, patchwork career migrants accumulate experiences and start a new life by adjusting their aims, values, needs and capacity of agency to the new labour market opportunities in Australia. This happened with Serhiy, who recently discovered that he has a talent for design, and who started crafting custom-made wooden furniture and offering interior design services. In his case, this new value and the aim of realising
himself in what he likes became possible only after migration, in the structurally stable capitalist system of Australia.

However, Serhiy still has regrets about lost opportunities back home and has strong nostalgia, which cultivates feelings of helplessness and dissatisfaction. In Serhiy’s story, he attempts to move beyond what he sees as the “impossibility for a worker to earn money in this capitalistic world”. However he is blocked by objective constraints—his age, having a child and his lack of other skills that would enable him to change his job. Ultimately, as he said, because of “language and knowledge-related limitations”, Serhiy seems to endorse the assumption that his life could have been better if he had not migrated. He said: “Sometimes I think of how my life would have gone if I had stayed in Ukraine. I could have done so many important things. One day I will return”.

For the ‘transition migrants’ who came to Australia for survival and experienced a professional downgrade, the main reasons for their employment downgrade were professional insecurity (Tetyana said “I didn’t believe from the start that my profession would be of use in Australia”); problems with English and the lack of opportunities (Yulia said: “My English was bad and I couldn’t find a job in the IT sector in Australia”); and no desire to get new skills suitable to the new environment (Yulia said: “Till the very last I tried to place myself in the IT sector, but at one point life chose for me—I went to study nursing”). Importantly, the professional downgrade due to not having skills that were valued in Australia and the absence of good English skills, is what defines the experiences of survival by ‘transition migrants’, regardless of which class they belonged to.

7.4 Migration outcome

The main focus of this section is the longer term outcomes of those ‘transition migrants’ who in terms of class mobility, the peculiarities of their adaptation and the associated personal changes in their national identities, emotions and professions shifted their life strategies from survival to achievement. This section also looks into some future plans common to the group of ‘transition migrants’ that explain the continuity of a survival life strategy type.
7.4.1 Class mobility

Returning to the earlier analysis of social identity, it should be stressed that a sense of affiliation and an awareness of belonging to a particular class in a social environment occurs hastily. A sense of class or status is evident in everyday life through markers such as occupation, education level, area of residence, type of dwelling, clothing, and consumption and leisure patterns. In the former Soviet Ukrainian society individuals mostly worked and socialised within the same social class, the same social category, or a single social stratum (Zlobina and Tyhonovych, 1996). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukrainian society underwent severe class restructuring (Kutsenko, 2004). Certain professional groups gained access to higher earnings, more power or prestige, while others lost their privileged position (Kutsenko, 2004). This is very clearly evident in Ukraine after 1991, as Olha, an academic, explained: “when the establishment of a capitalist system based on private ownership and a market economy increased, certain professional groups won”. In such conditions, intellectuals, civil servants and government servants (public institutions) were pushed out into poverty. Konstyantyn, referring to his own example, said that “they lost their former relatively high financial position, and partly also a former reserve of power and prestige”.

The participants from blue-collar working class and entrepreneurs explained that they lost their jobs when the Soviet Union collapsed and were doomed to marginal existence: short-term occasional employment, low-income manual jobs, trading and involvement in criminal groups. A number of such migrants (Oleksandra, Leonid, and Ivan) came to Australia as family reunion migrants or short-term arrivals looking for ways to survive the terrible economic and social conditions in Ukraine, and to escape their marginal position. The examples of ‘transition migrants’ who performed upward movements between classes after migration (from marginals and criminals, into Australian middle class) are spread among the interviewed sample (Vasyl, Artem, Serhiy, Taras, Yehor, Pavlo, Leonid, Ivan, Oleksandra, Solomia, and Nadiya).

These participants attribute their class mobility, typically from marginal into middle class, to the peculiarities of Australian society. Vasyl said: “Everything is possible in Australia if you work hard. You can earn money, afford more, and Australians will approach you as an equal. I would assign myself to the Australian middle class”. Searching for explanations in the scholarship (McGregor, 1997; Inglis, 1999; Colic-Peisker, 2008, 2011), it is evident
that Australia is a typical “open society” (Sztompka, 2005) in which the individual’s or group’s progress is not only possible in a wide range of spheres, but is part of ‘popular culture’ and is in a way expected and publicly recognised. It is in Australia that a career can progress “from a shoeshine boy to a millionaire” (Vasyl). It is also worth mentioning that being considered an egalitarian society, Australia does not have a strict class division.

‘Transition migrants’ are convinced that true Australians do not really care about social status—“It is a society where everyone who does a minor job gets paid enough to maintain a decent living”, said Yehor. Ivan, a young family reunion (spouse) Ukrainian migrant, who in 1999 at the age of 19 arrived in Australia and began his career in construction, now has his own construction firm and earns enough money, as he said, “to travel the world, support his family in Ukraine, buy real-estate in Ukraine and in Australia”.

However, Ukrainian criminal group offshoots in Australia perform the most obvious social class mobility (Yehor, Taras, and Vasyl). Yehor, who is a former gang member and boxing coach from Western Ukraine, is not a rare type of migrant among the ‘transition migrants’. He came to Australia with his wife and child in 1999 as a boxing coach. He was born into a wealthy family; his parents are educated. During communist times his family lost all their domains. They moved to an apartment block, but still Yehor went to the best school in town. During the interview, Yehor remembered his teacher who once told him, “You are a boy from an educated family but you hang out with bogans!” At school he started boxing. All his friends were much older (24–25 years old); they took him “to do business” (meaning some illegal deals) which they said was preparing him for "adult life" (meaning harsh realities, perhaps criminal). In the late 1990s Yehor became part of the bandit circles and got engaged in racketeering. The gang picked on entrepreneurs and businessmen. He explains that in the 1980s those entrepreneurs opened factories together with duplicates of such factories. For example, one plant produced caviar and vodka, and the second (duplicate) produced the same, but counterfeit. In other words, illegal businesses especially flourished after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Yehor expressed a longing for his criminal past and his forced escape from the country. He also conveyed some regrets about his occupation in Australia in relation to the possible “easy wealth” he could obtain back in Ukraine. Today, Yehor works as a tiler. He said that he literally had to survive in Ukraine, he could not trust anyone. He said that he had no friends; there was “solely a catch” (friendship for benefits). He believes that nowadays
individuals are formed more by society than family. The things in his life he values the most are justice and nobility. He has an interesting hobby collecting antiques and is versed in musical instruments. Today Yehor owns a house in Sydney. “I bought it old and renovated it myself”, he said.

As is the case with Yehor, the social class mobility of Ukrainian survival migrants, brought about by immigration, is determined by growth in economic capital. Evidence suggests that the ‘success story’ started with the economic status of many recently arrived low-skilled Ukrainians from the class of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs who were characterised by instability, minimum-wage employment, welfare dependency and participation in the informal economy. The narratives of Taras, Vasyl, Pavlo, Serhiy, and Oleh suggest that economic opportunities for the blue-collar workers and newly emerged entrepreneurs were limited by the configuration of circumstances that surrounded their entry and settlement into Australia, as well as by a lack of social and cultural capital. For example, Taras said “I had no English language skills; no skills Australia demanded in the years of my migration; I also had no family ties or friends in Australia”.

The social mobility patterns of these migrants relate to their pre-migration backgrounds. The majority of the informants who form the cohort of ‘transition migrants’ originate from the blue-collar working class and rural regions of Ukraine. These structural features of class and geography significantly determine the formation of their survival life strategy. It is not surprising, that those informants who experienced material deprivation throughout their lives and who had more limited education and English language skills, did not have social capital to draw on during their migration experience. As a result I argue they formed their life trajectories in a different way compared to the ‘dividend migrants’. For example they did not aim for rapid class mobility after migration. The group of migrants who said they enjoy their new middle-class position in Australian society today were mostly recruited from the migrants who arrived on short-term visas and stayed permanently in Australia through the humanitarian migration stream. Lacking professional skills to stay in Australia through the skilled migration stream and having no relatives in Australia, they found jobs in the construction sector (see Chapter Six for more details on the group of asylum seekers from Ukraine).
Those survival migrants who assign themselves to the Australian middle class enjoy respect in Australian society. For example, Oleh works as a painter and always drives home in his work clothes. He stressed that all labourers who work in construction receive respect among Australians. Oleh said: “I can go to a café or shop in my work clothes and no one will make a comment about my look, everyone treats me with respect”. He explained that Australia values those workers who “build Australia”, and he adds “physical labourers would never feel disadvantaged in Australia”. Such survival ‘transition migrants’ say that they actually “do very well” (Vasyl and Pavlo), even though they are mostly in manual work. They are more likely than local Australians to own their own homes and keep their children at school, and less likely to be unemployed and live off welfare. Yehor said: “The majority of Ukrainians I know worked in construction after arriving. And all Ukrainians I know make money through hard work, and pay tax—you wouldn’t find a Ukrainian man feeding from state benefits”.

All of the ‘transition migrants’ who have a criminal past stated that they have started a new life in Australia based on respect for the law. They guaranteed they live completely different lives now, and what is important is that they value it and enjoy legal income opportunities. “It was the Ukrainian system that made a criminal out of me”, said Yehor. Now they say they are happy to be able to provide a decent living for their families. At the end of the interview Yehor mentioned: “Let it be harder, but honest”.

7.4.2 Adaptation: maximising profits, minimising integration

In the fourth part of the interview called “Adaptation”, respondents were asked about their perceptions of life in the new society and about any barriers they encountered to successful inclusion, along with their perceptions of their own place in Australian society. In this section it is argued that the economic adaptation and integration of ‘transition migrants’ happens in different ways and also takes place much faster compared to social integration. The experiences of migrants shared through narratives, reveal the obstacles to successful social integration. These can be congregated into three groups: (1) ethno-cultural differences and the distance between Ukraine and Australia; 2) compact settlement and (3) high involvement in primary groups.

Firstly, the patterns of the economic integration of ‘transition migrants’ will be discussed. Given the main rationale behind ‘transition migrants’’ life strategy is economic, the
participants emphasised that survival was focused on the consolidation of their position in the labour market. In these early years the economic adaptation of many ‘transition migrants’ (Yehor, Leonid, Artem, Taras, Serhiy, Pavlo, Leonid, Svyatoslava, Oleksandra, and Yulia) took the form of the competent and efficient performance of physical labour operations that were required from them in their jobs, typically construction, cleaning, nursing or factory work. The classic daily schedule of the ‘typical’ survival ‘transition migrant’ employed in the construction sector, is illustrated by Vasyl: “Early start, usually about 4 am; work until sunset, usually five or six o’clock in the evening when the outdoor construction work can be done; arrive home around six; dinner and sleep”. Yehor, Leonid, Artem, Taras, Serhiy and Pavlo all shared a similar work routine. One aspect of their narratives demonstrated that for some participants, hard physical work was the only way to earn money, and yet it is also one of the ‘choke points’ in their careers. For example, Taras and Artem both had problems finding jobs with their qualifications and were convinced that hard physical work was the only way out for them, while Serhiy noted: “I will pay out the mortgage and hope to go into design which I am passionate about. Hard physical work was my only way to material well-being”.

Another factor that in these conditions helps ‘transition migrants’ economically adapt, is their high level of entrepreneurial activity. After some time (two to three years after arrival in Australia) when migrants began to realise that the money they earn is not enough and that they can earn more, those migrants employed in construction (Pavlo, Vasyl, Ivan, Serhiy, and Leonid) left their places of work, “looking for something more ‘comfortable’ in terms of schedule and money” (Ivan). Thus, they typically start to organise their own companies to provide building or painting services, depending on their experience. For example, Vasyl said: “why should I work for someone else and earn less, if I know how to run a business. I created my own company offering painting services”.

Their economic activity signposts the shift in adaptation towards individualism and reliance solely on their own resources, while simultaneously utilising social networks as a valuable resource. “I can provide construction services myself with a small team. If needed, my friends will be there for me”, said Leonid, who started his own building company after couple of years working for a Polish owned firm. Using the mechanism of imitation, as well as personal qualities and experience, survival ‘transition migrants’ began to be included in different kinds of work from managerial to manual labour. This affects
the pace and rhythm of migrants’ lives, when they almost do not have any time to recover from the hard manual work. As Oleh said: “I feel very tired and take a long holiday twice a year”.

Since the main value, need and aim of their lives in Australia is concentrated around material well-being and decent profits, social life and successful social integration pales into insignificance. Behaviours, consumption, and the lifestyle of ‘transition migrants’ are narrated as maximising profits and minimal time for social integration. Yulia said: “After hard work I do not have the time or strength to socialise and actively participate in social activities. Once in a while I visit the Ukrainian community—this is my social life”. Narratives suggest that ‘transition migrants’ simply have no time and no desire to integrate into the life of Australia (Leonid). As the narratives of Oleksandra, Nadiya, Yulia, Taras, Yehor, and Pavlo show, family ties both in Australia and abroad are a major source of emotional support. As Leonid said: “my family is everything to me—they are my support and love. I do not want to spend my free time on something else”.

As was articulated above, the narratives of ‘transition migrants’ demonstrate that their economic integration happens faster and smoother than their social integration into the host society. Taras said: “I got a job earlier than I started to talk proper English and before I made Australian friends”. Leonid said: “it feels like I am not a part of Australian society. I am a part of something smaller, but based in Australia; however I pay tax and serve the Australian people”. Berry (1997) argues that social adaptation is a historically conditioned practice, the essence of which lies in the adaptation and habituation to the conditions, forms and methods of social life and social environment, and integration.

The narratives of ‘transition migrants’ showed that migrants’ integration (in the sense of acquiring a new culture to achieve full adequacy in it, overcoming intercultural barriers, and understanding and accepting a different world) is not completely common for survival migrants. The experiences of ‘transition migrants’ that emphasise obstacles on the way to social integration can be categorised in three groups of factors: 1) ethno-cultural differences and distance between Ukraine and Australia; 2) compact settlement and 3) high involvement in primary groups.
The first obstacle expressed through participants’ narratives (Tetyana, Yulia, Oleksiy, Myroslava, Svyatoslava, Lyubov, Serhiy, Ivan, Taras, Yehor, Oleh, Solomia, Oleksandra, Nadiya, Pavlo and Vasylyna) is the ethno-cultural difference and distance between Ukraine and Australia. As migrants, distant to Australia, Ukrainians are usually faced not only with new geographical conditions, but also a different ethno-cultural space. Therefore, their adaptation presents as a struggle between two inclinations: integration into the new environment and the preservation of their ethnic identity. For example, Vasylyna spoke about the challenge she experienced in keeping her Ukrainian identity and trying to be useful in Australian society:

When I was applying for jobs in academia, no one in Australia wanted to hire me as they thought my professorship in Ukraine and my Ukrainian mindset and culture were too much for the Australian education system. I wanted to be useful in Australia as well, so I became an independent researcher and wrote three sociological books about Ukrainians in Australia. I love Australia, but I feel I do not belong here.

Similar to Vasylyna, other ‘transition migrants’ showed that they adapted to their new environment, but were never completely integrated. They end up being stuck somewhere in between two countries, between two different worlds. As Konstyantyn said: “I am somewhere in between”. The narratives showed that the ‘transition migrants’ identify with Ukraine, or lose their identity when they no longer see themselves as Ukrainians but do not feel Australian either. None of them claims to have a strong Australian identity. Shifts in national identity are explored in detail in the following section.

The second obstacle to successful social integration, as articulated through the ‘transition migrants’ narratives, is their compact settlement and ‘enclavisation’. As Oleksandra said: “I settled at my mother’s house in the Ukrainian suburbs”; Artem said: “we live next to the Ukrainian community”; Yulia mentioned: “we live near the Ukrainian House; I used to be an active member, but have not been for some time”; and Pavlo said: “we live in a suburb where many Ukrainians have houses; it’s great when friends are nearby”. As shown in Table 4 in the last section of Chapter Six, the majority of the ‘transition migrants’ settled near the Ukrainian community and in the Ukrainian suburb of Lidcombe (Sydney),
and in this way unconsciously created conditions for their isolation from the host community (i.e. “enclavisation”, “ghettoisation”).

As is clear from the narratives, the root of the problem is the cultural differences and lack of English language skills. The ‘transition migrants’ mentioned that they see big differences in cultural terms between Ukraine and Australia, to the extent that some believe there is a complete absence of culture in Australia. Solomia said:

There is no such thing as Australian culture. Ukrainian culture has many celebrations and community spirit. Once, I invited a mix of Ukrainian and Australian friends to my birthday party and I ended up having two groups that were chatting on their own. They do not understand the way we celebrate and hang out. And it’s mutual.

Furthermore, the need to communicate, especially when a minority of the ‘transition migrants’ spoke English, caused gravity among survival Ukrainian migrants to settle in the Ukrainian community suburbs, which slowed down their social integration process. Nadiya had no English skills when she arrived and remembered that she always “felt a desperate need to speak in Ukrainian and keep in contact with the Motherland through communication”. These obstacles to integration are age-related. The average age of informants in the group of ‘transition migrants’ is 50 y.o., which significantly impacts their English learning ability, formation of social networks with local Australians and their career prospects.

The logic of the explanation of these processes must be reversed: we should move not from the culture to marginality, but from marginality to the culture. Interviews revealed that from the beginning, migrants are willing to become an economic and social part of the recipient society. For example, Leonid said he thought that when he arrived in Australia “the world will be mine and I will easily become a new citizen of Australia”, but the different social environment in the host society, in combination with a hard economic situation, raised the barrier to social integration. As Leonid continued, “then I realised I just do not have time to go to social gatherings and sit in pubs to meet new Australian friends; I prioritised my work”. Serhiy, Taras, and Pavlo told similar stories. Therefore, the collection of values, aims and needs which brought ‘transition migrants’ to Australia is the
key to understanding the participants’ main focus on how to maintain the same social and economic status as in Ukraine. It led to self-restraint and a decline in life chances.

The third obstacle to the successful social integration of ‘transition migrants’ is their high involvement in primary groups. This means they actively participated in Ukrainian community life in preference to general Australian society. Oleksandra, Nadiya, Solomia and Hanna voluntarily spent their free time preparing Ukrainian celebrations in the Ukrainian community and helping the Ukrainian school in Lidcombe. Hanna said:

_We gather to make Ukrainian dishes: dumplings, baked pies. Every second and fourth Sunday of the month our Ukrainian school has a café where we sell them and simultaneously collect funds to sponsor trips for our kids to Ukraine, and for other projects. We also do it for older people who are lonely, so they can come to eat and chat. At the same time, we want more people to come to church._

The more a person is loaded with activities in primary groups, the slower he/she integrates into the Australian community. As Hanna said: “I have no time for anything else, my life consists of my family, job and the Ukrainian community”. In contrast to the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’, ‘transition migrants’ are strongly linked to the Ukrainian community. The narratives of ‘dividend migrants’ demonstrated that this link is declining over the years (see Chapter Ten).

Thomas and Znaniecki (1958) proved that adaptation is primarily a group problem. In their analysis of Polish immigrants, they demonstrated that these migrants lost their ethnic orientation with the erosion of their original groups, but that they sought to preserve their identity as far as possible in social groups, which partly compensated for the lack of family, and provided a sense of security. Similar to the Polish migrants, the desire for security, support and assistance with economic integration (finding a job) is what brings the ‘transition migrants’ to primary Ukrainian groups in Sydney. For example, Vasyl said “I came to the Ukrainian church to look for some help in finding a job and housing”; Serhiy said: “when Ukrainians arrive they seek support from the Ukrainian community”; and Taras said: “the community had resources which helped me to start my life in Australia”. 
Subsequently, the ethno-cultural differences, compact settlement and high involvement in primary groups complicates the social integration process for ‘transition migrants’. Being driven by a motive to maximise their income the social integration into the host society is minimised.

7.4.3 Personal change and shifts in life strategies

At some point after immigration, migrants tend to re-evaluate their lives in terms of values, identity, and future plans, measuring their new selves against the old (Ganguly, 1992). This re-assessment may lead to the formation of a new life strategy or the continuation of the old one. For the ‘transition migrants’ this re-evaluation was apparent in their narratives. They used expressions such as "I have changed" (Svyatoslava), “I see things differently now” (Oleh) and “I started to value different things” (Taras). The narratives of the participants suggest that migration induces a process of self-exploration and self-discovery for all people at all times, and particularly for those people who are eager to explore and experiment (Levy and Weingrod, 2014).

The key time at which identity re-evaluation occurred for the participants was during their encounters with culturally different others. The face-to-face interactions are emotional encounters and include fulfilment of their individual aims, needs and values—as moments of self-confirmation, as positive exchanges, and achieving a sense of inclusion and trust. Drawing on the narratives of Svyatoslava, Oleksiy, Leonid, Myroslava, Serhiy, Tetyana, Yulia and on Maulucci’s (2008) findings, it can be argued that when interactions with non-Ukrainians met the emotional needs of the participants, they felt satisfaction and happiness; in contrast, some participants experienced emotional dissatisfaction—for example, anger, fear, sadness (Maulucci, 2008). Vasyl and Ivan mentioned in their narratives several cases of ‘collisions’ with Australians based on different interpretations of situations that resulted in fights. Such emotional and cultural collisions influenced the perception of their own identities and distanced their identification with Australians—as Vasyl said: “I didn’t want anything to do with Australians anymore”. It was a more positive experience for Oleksiy and Myroslava, who felt happy and satisfied with their migration because of their emotional connection and shifts in national identification with Australians built through shared values. Myroslava’s story is presented later in the section.
7.4.3.1 Shifts in national identity

The migrants’ re-evaluation of their identity also manifested in terms of national affiliation or loyalty. All respondents were asked if they considered themselves Australian. Given that for the ‘transition migrants’ their emigration to Australia took place more than a decade ago, by the time the interviews were conducted, the participants had clearly enough time to consider how they saw themselves in terms of nationality and how they felt about being in the new society. The interviews demonstrated the different types of belonging that they formed.

The majority, who tried their best to preserve a sense of Ukrainian self-identification, are referred to in this section as the ‘preservation group’. The second group, referred to as the ‘nowhere group’, felt stuck in the middle of nowhere. A few of the ‘transition migrant’ underwent a complete shift in identity and thought of themselves as Australian—they form the third group, called, as you might guess the ‘Australian group’. The finding that some participants successfully changed their national identities from Ukrainian to Australian suggests successful inclusion (Zlobina and Tykhonovych, 1996; Elder, 2007). However, at some point each migrant had to deal with a crisis of identity following their immigration.

The ‘preservation group’ of ‘transition migrants’ had not completely integrated into Australian society and even after living in Australia for 10–20 years, still expressed a very strong Ukrainian national identity (Yehor, Vasyl, Taras, Pavlo, Oleksandra, Hanna, Solomia, Nadiya, Serhiy, Svyatoslava, Sofiya, Viktor, Oleh, Sofiya, and Vasylyna). Emotionally, these ‘transition migrants’ felt strongly linked to their homeland and consciously limited their inclusion and interactions with the Australian community. As Svyatoslava said, “my heart and soul are always in Ukraine”, while Vasyl shared that he listens to Ukrainian radio and watches Ukrainian channels after work on a day-to-day basis: “after work I always listen to radio Era and other stations which my radio can catch, read Ukrainian newspapers and watch Ukrainian TV channels”. Typically, such a lifestyle adds to nostalgic emotions for the past—as Vasyl said “it makes me feel nostalgic and at the same time it morally supports me”.

Generally, ‘transition migrants’ express in their narratives that they have relatively limited control over their ‘external situation’ in the host society and that this limits their ability to “define the situation” (Serhiy). It becomes a source of Ukrainian identification—as Taras
mentioned “it feels like you do not belong here and thus, you feel more Ukrainian”. Such uncertainty and ambivalence makes them keep their Ukrainian national identities. For example, Hanna said: “I rediscovered my Ukrainian nationality here, in emigration. Here, I feel Ukrainian more than ever before”. Strong Ukrainian identification in Hanna’s and many other cases (listed above) must be seen as an actor’s reaction towards complex, cognitively confusing or emotionally exhausting adjustment to the host society. The reactions and attitudes towards Australia reflect a mixture of attraction and repulsion, which intermingles with feelings of acceptance. The two key points here are the feeling of instrumental acceptance as members of the labour force (as Vasyl said, he “is one of the hardworking tax payers of Australia”), and the rejection—“being outside the main society, having rights, needs and life plans on my own” (Solomia). Therefore, in order to deal with these emotions, these migrants chose to preserve the integrity of their Ukrainian identification and belonging.

Another key factor that caused the separation from Australian society and the focus on Ukrainian past lives is the feeling that some of ‘transition migrants’ have of being a “second-class person” (Tetyana). Tetyana, who came to Australia in the early 1990s through the skilled migration stream and started lecturing at one of Sydney’s universities, explained how her aspirations were shattered as she began to feel she was a second-class person:

\[ I \text{ left Ukraine just to live in a good capitalist country. I was not married; I wanted to start a family. New opportunities attracted me in general, but I had no idea that I would become a second-class person. As soon as you open your mouth, even Aboriginal people here can tell you to go back to your home country; students do not want to listen to a Ukrainian teacher. Thus, you condemn yourself to the status of a secondary person, whatever you do. It simply makes you feel excluded.} \]

Tetyana refers to her unsuccessful career as an academic, when she struggled with her accent and the different Australian style of teaching. The sense of rejection and exclusion that resulted from the feeling of being a second-class person in Australian society penetrates Tetyana’s whole story of migration and confirms her Ukrainian identification. As she said later in the interview “I am not Australian, I am Ukrainian and will stay this way”.

200
The ‘nowhere group’ of ‘transition migrants’ expressed their feeling of losing clear national identification. Migrants’ relationships with their home societies may produce ambivalence, the product of what has been described as “ambiguous loss” (Boss, 1987). Migrants’ narratives have shown how uncertainty and ambivalence appears either as an enduring emotion, a more situation-specific attitude, or even as a permanent life condition (Konstyantyn, Yulia, Lyubov, and Leonid). As Smelser (1997) argues, the quintessential character of ambivalence is the thorny co-existence of “opposing affective orientations toward the same person, object or symbol” (p.175). This type of attitude is evident in the ‘transition migrants’ typical life experiences, which are marked by contrasting, and sometimes contradictory, roles and fluid identities. For example, Lyubov, a family reunion migrant who was a doctor before coming to Australia, but now works as salesperson, explained:

I have lived in Australia for 15 years; of course something has intertwined—the Australian nature, the location. As Pugacheva sings in her song: "you left your native shore, but have not reached the other yet". You are kind of nowhere. I recently read an article in a newspaper where the author talks about migrants being lost in space. This is what happens.

Lyubov’s feeling of ambivalence, which is typical for some other migrants (Konstyantyn and Yulia), is expressed by her self-identification being “lost in between two worlds”; a “kind of nowhere”. She meant she could no longer identify herself as either Ukrainian or Australian. Other migrants used similar words. For example, Konstyantyn said: “I see myself as no longer Ukrainian, nor Australian, I am in between”.

The ‘Australian group’ of ‘transition migrants’ is made up of those who consider their national identity to be Australian or cosmopolitan. Out of the 26 interviewed ‘transition migrants’, seven migrants belong to this group (Olha, Oleksiy, Natalya, Myroslava, Ivan, Leonid, and Snizhana). These migrants see themselves as being successfully integrated. For example, Ivan said he sees himself as “local here, I am Australian”; Oleksiy said he is “part of this society”. The interesting fact is that those participants who consider themselves Australian were sometimes prompted to re-examine their national identities after they travelled back to Ukraine for a visit. Participants were asked the question: “When did you first feel yourself to be Australian?” A common response was similar to
this one from Myroslava: “when I returned from my visit to Ukraine, after my plane landed in Australia, I felt that I am at home now”. In this way, Ukrainian immigrants experienced the limits of their old identities and unconsciously exercised their ‘Australianness’. The visit home distanced the ‘transition migrants’ from having feelings for their native home. As Leonid said after his last visit to Ukraine: “nothing has changed for the better; it changed for the worse”, which supports the impression that emigration from Ukraine was the right choice.

One participant, Olha, said she thinks of herself as cosmopolitan. Unlike Tetyana, whose story is presented above, Olha is a successful “Australian academic”. She said:

I do not see myself in Ukraine. I am no longer native there. Australia is the country where we live and in general I am already accustomed to considering myself a resident of Australia—although on the whole, I see myself as more cosmopolitan. I lived in America, and then in Canada and travelled around Europe. I do not consider myself a Ukrainian citizen, although I still have a passport—but I have no craving for Ukraine. I go there just because I have relatives there.

The dominance of Ukrainian self-identification among the informants from the group of ‘transition migrants’ can also be related to their age and their regional origin. As noted above, the average age of the cohort is 50 y.o.. At this age people are typically less flexible in changing their beliefs, attitudes and are less open to undergoing drastic shifts in their identities. Furthermore, the majority of these informants originate from Western Ukrainian region, where the self-identification with Ukraine is stronger than in Eastern, Central and Southern Ukraine regions.

7.4.3.2 Emotional and professional transformations: from materialist to non-materialist

In this section the emotional and professional shifts in a particular participant are examined which suggest that there was a shift in life strategy after migration from survival to achievement.

Social psychologists and sociologists have devoted much attention to the problems of choice of profession, professional adaptation, development and transformation of
professional abilities, job satisfaction and emotions related to one’s profession (Turner, 2002; Shvachko, 1994). Ananiev (1977) noted that labour activity can reveal the “maturity of the person”, including their “professional maturity”. However, the question of the interrelation or identification with one’s profession was not covered in this research. In this study, the nature of the relationship between the individual and profession is viewed as determining one’s potential for shifts in life strategy from survival to achievement. In other words, Ananiev (1977) suggests the choice of profession determines the prospective (future plans and trajectories), and retrospective values, needs, aims and agency of the individual.

In this section the stories of the participants are considered in terms of how they illuminate insights that express personal and professional transformation, self-development and the start of a completely new life with new values, aims, needs, agency. Some ‘transition migrants’ told a story that showed a shift from a survival life strategy, which was dominant among ‘transition migrants’ when they left Ukraine, to an achievement life strategy. Tracing personal changes in the four key elements of life strategy (values, aims, needs and a sense of agency) captured these shifts in relation to the participants’ professional and emotional lives.

Myroslava’s narrative, which is very reflexive, makes her aware that she has undergone a professional and emotional shift, compared to those who stayed behind in Ukraine and compared to what she thinks she has left behind. Myroslava, who came to Australia mainly for economic reasons through the skilled migration stream, explains her shift from a materialistically-oriented life to one of spiritual self-development. She sees this transformation as the result of experiencing a different reality.

Myroslava said that “the emotional and professional transformation following immigration changed my life significantly”, which indicated a shift in values and needs. Working as an IT programmer for years, “solely for profit”, and “feeling unrealised”, Myroslava decided to finally discover what she really likes—she said “I finally let myself do what I always wanted”. After she obtained the necessary economic capital working hard for an IT company in Sydney, at the age of 40 she went to study psychology and energetic healing, and successfully switched from IT to counselling. Myroslava’s shift in values, aims, needs and sense of agency can be confined to a particular institutional domain such as work,
specifically professional re-qualification. This highlights a change of values and the basis for the change in her entire life strategy, from survival to achievement.

It is also interesting that she talks about the professional, value and agency shift in the context of the realisation of her dream to study and activating her agency to practice psychology, which she is passionate about:

I realised a dream that could not be realised in Ukraine. I worked for a total of twenty-five years in the computer industry, with my Ukrainian experience. Five years ago, I decided to learn what I like. At a time when we were leaving, I did not even have it in my head. Psychology was always interesting to me. Perhaps I always had the skills and abilities, but did not reveal them ... I always wanted to study psychology.

The emergence of the courage to follow her dreams, which indicates a shift in agency from weak to strong, and a capability to produce change. Her values and aims shifted from material well-being to self-development, which only became possible for Myroslava when her survival plan was accomplished. Myroslava was born into a family of professionals. She never thought of migration until her life in South Ukraine turned into “financial struggle” (Myroslava). Driven by economic survival and cultural disorientation after the collapse of the Soviet Union, she followed her friends’ migration path, and together with her husband and daughter, came to Australia through the skilled migration stream. Her decision was made hastily and the only thing she thought about was, as she said, “financial security and the material well-being of my family”. Upon arrival she found a good job in the IT sector and built a successful IT career, becoming part of top management in one of Australia’s leading IT companies.

Several years later after she obtained the desired amount of economic and social capital, she decided to finally discover what she really liked. She received diplomas in counselling and energetic healing and now she is successfully working as a holistic counsellor. She said she is very happy in her new career, which motivates and stimulates her spiritual development. Myroslava was never concerned about losing her Ukrainian identity and in her own words, for 20 years of her life in Australia she underwent a “positive shift in national identity and values from materialistic to non-materialistic”.
Such an emotional and professional shift clearly corresponds to shifts in life strategies. The change from a materialistically-oriented strategy of survival to self-realisation, professional transformation and achievement, stemmed from Myroslava’s openness to new values and a new system of relationships in Australia. Myroslava’s gradual shift from a survival life strategy to an achievement strategy is not an exception, but a rare case among ‘transition migrants’. An interesting fact is that such positive shifts in life patterns were captured only in the group of Ukrainian skilled migrants who came from the class of professionals and/or cultural and scientific intelligentsia (Myroslava, Kostyantyn, and Oleksiy). Their life chances from the start are higher compared to the majority of humanitarian and family reunion Ukrainian migrants in Australia, who consist of representatives of the class of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs.

In this case, the narratives have shown that class background significantly determines the life patterns of Ukrainians after migration. The group of skilled migrants (a minority among the ‘transition migrants’—Kostyantyn, Tetyana, Oleksiy, Olha, Myroslava, and Yulia) appears to be more reflective and conscious about their lives in terms of aims, needs and values, about “the best trade for skills” (Olha). The stories of humanitarian and family reunion migrants rarely show any life strategy shifts into achievement or self-realisation. The main sense of their lives in Australia remains the same set of values, aims, needs and agency as before their arrival (in Ukraine), so after (in Australia), that is the struggle for economic security, financial well-being and material comfort. In these cases, structural factors prove not to be as imperative as the four micro-components of life strategy, meaning inner-world perceptions of the circumstances and the ability to master them enable migrants to live their dreams. There is no limit for material wealth; therefore the majority of survival migrants continue by inertia, even after economically successful migration, to measure their lives by the number of material goods they acquire, trying to maintain their professional and social status rather than opening up to new opportunities, personal and professional development, liberal values and innovation.

Another example of a shift in life strategy from survival to achievement is found in the story of Oleksiy, who conveys his emotional transformation and shift in values in the following way:
As I was leaving, I was probably still largely an idealist raised in the Soviet system with its settings. I will not say that I have turned into a capitalist, but to a certain extent I have revised my views on the future of mankind in a global sphere. I did not become an anti-communist or an anti-globalist, but there was a re-evaluation of values.

The shift in values takes place not only in the lives of migrants originating from the class of professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia, but also for some of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs. Taras, a former boxer and small entrepreneur from a family of manual workers who came to Australia for economic reasons and was driven by a desire for a better life and adventure, reflected on shifts in his personal value system after migration:

*My value system has changed. I was more down to earth—but it is not the right word. In Ukraine everyone still holds on to material values, since Soviet times when there was a queue for sausages. In general, mindset and values in Ukraine are more materialistic: to have a good apartment, good car and good food. In Australia it is more of a value to take everything from life, while in Ukraine—to surround yourself with sofas, good furniture. I changed.*

Such a shift in values, from materialistic to non-materialistic, in some sense of spiritual development and re-evaluation of life’s meanings, was one in which people tended to forget the conditions of socio-economic and political uncertainty in Ukraine. However, after their migration to a more stable environment, one more favourable personal development shift occurs. They may have less of an impact and be more unconsciously adopted by migrants from the class of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs.

Further, in his narrative Taras adds: “I know many Ukrainians who came during 1991–2003 to Australia driven by material well-being at the expense of personal relationships, and are now sorry that economic security was the main objective”. He stressed that “many women have divorced their husbands and vice-a versa”. He finds this meaningless, when migrants sacrificed friendship ties and family relations in order to stay in Australia to earn a living. “*Some Ukrainians haven’t seen their families for six years in trying to get Australian permanent residency status onshore*” he claimed. As several other participants
explained using their own examples (Oleh, Taras, Pavlo, and Nadiya), the family drama is often the result of the migration of only one family member, typically for “bread-winning” reasons and survival. Such transformations as shifts in values in the direction to non-materialistic, activate the most intense navigation mechanisms and perceptions about oneself and others and about how one should be treated by others, what things are important and valuable in life.

The stories of ‘transition migrants’ from the class of professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia who came to Australia for survival, indicate the expansion of professional horizons. This is especially the case for those migrants who came to Australia to build their lives in better conditions and who aimed to regain social and economic status. Shifts in professional self-realisation and identification appear to be peculiar elements of life strategy transformation for skilled migrants, who perceive their professions as a form of personal life (Shvachko, 1994). For example, Oleksiy reflects on the importance of identification with the group of “professionals in the new environment” and his professional development after migration:

I received independence that was needed to fill my life with meaning, to be interesting and full of opportunities. You move forward because you promote science, you develop certain theories, you analyse results and you identify yourself with a group of professionals in your field. When you are invited to speak or give a lecture, you feel that you benefit the science and have the independence to express your point of view freely, without looking at the boss of the party and the structure with which you must agree. And the feeling that when you come to work, you are happy to see your colleagues and work together.

This new-found independence and freedom to grow professionally and create a significant outcome, which is recognised by colleagues, serves as evidence of achievement and success recognised in the new society. Oleksiy and several migrants (Kostyantyn, Olha, and Myroslava) consider Australia to be a place that enables development of a professionally and morally new person. As Konstyantyn said: “after migration I grew professionally and changed morally. I wish I had migrated earlier, then I would have achieved more”. Konstyantyn’s case, along with others who underwent emotional and
professional changes which reflected shifts in their values, needs, aims and agency and thus, life strategy, express regret that the changes had not taken place earlier. Similar to Kostyantyn, Myroslava, from the class of professionals, felt it was a loss of additional opportunities for self-realisation. She said: “I regret that I was not twenty; I would have been able to realise myself much better”. This attitude is associated with the importance of the aims and needs in future changes/improvements, which find their active realisation when the shifts towards the achievement life strategy take place.

7.5 Plans for the future

Life strategy is a socially conditioned and dynamic concept guided by long-term plans (Reznik, 1996). Therefore, the future and overall vision of prospects is an inherent element of life strategy. The generalisation of positive experience and the forecasting of its future prospects is the integral part of life strategy that allows an individual to build the best suitable strategy for himself/herself and to live fruitfully according to individual values, needs and aims (Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 2001). After the block of retrospective questions, participants were asked a block of questions about their future plans. The majority of ‘transition migrants’ expressed a shared vision of their future and plans determined and recreated by a survival life strategy. These are explored in this section.

The narratives showed that the scenarios of the future common to ‘transition migrants’ are reduced to future employment and realisation in labour (Hanna, Leonid, Lyubov, Serhiy, Ivan, Taras, Yehor, Oleh, Oleksandra, Artem, Solomia, Vasyl, Nadiya, and Pavlo), as well as plans to obtain citizenship for their family members who remained in Ukraine. Participants mentioned that there are no problems as such in their present lives, but, as observed and shared by the majority of participants, they felt “lonely” (Vasyl), helpless, “left to themselves” (Tetyana), socially isolated, attached to the Motherland and homesick—all of which significantly impacts building their plans for the future (mentioned by 15 respondents).

The stories of migrants who came to Australia for survival give grounds to assert the “migration myth” that “all Eastern Europeans only dream about getting to live their whole lives in the West” (Tolstokorova, 2009). Nine out of the 21 survival ‘transition migrants’ expressed the wish to return to Ukraine when they retire (Pavlo, Oleh, Serhiy, Taras, Yehor, Leonid, Vasyl, and Svatoslava). One could argue that this desire might be age-
related, and typical of an older age group that has become more aware of their roots and so want to return to beloved familiar places in the motherland. However, the narratives show that this desire is not only about their romantic attitudes and warm feelings towards Ukraine, but also a practical approach. For example, Oleh, who was born into a blue-collar working class family and came to Australia as a tourist and received refugee status, is employed in the construction sector as a painter: “At present I have been realising my potential to the full! I am sure Ukraine will be my home when I retire and become an old man”.

His retirement return plans are not just an emotional decision, but the aim of his strategic trajectory planned many years in advance. Later in his narrative, Oleh said: “I am serious about my plans; I have a plan for how much I need to earn before I retire and move to Ukraine”. His attitudes, as he said, are “serious” and he has a “plan” for making it happen; thus they cannot simply be explained by emotional linkage and nostalgia for the Motherland. The “objective Australian reality” as Ivan said, is what makes migrants, “choose to go back to Ukraine one day”. By “objective Australian reality” Ivan means “unaffordable prices for housing” and “hard jobs in construction”.

Two interviewees (Oleh and Taras) explained that their financial situation would never allow them to buy an apartment or house in Australia. These Ukrainian migrants do not accept mortgages as an option (or as an opportunity.) Within the Ukrainian mentality, all Ukrainians aim to possess their own houses. Taras said: “Renting for my whole life and ageing in somebody else’s property is miserable”. This finding from the narratives is supported by statistics. Ukrainian-speaking households were owned outright (62.4 per cent compared to the nation’s 32.1 per cent), 19.8 per cent compared to the nation’s 34.9 per cent were owned with a mortgage (SBS Census Explorer, 2012). Three interviewees (Oleh, Ivan, and Leonid) said that they invest their money in property in Ukraine. Oleh explained his thoughts regarding mortgage and investment in Ukraine in the following way:

*I don’t know how to earn enough to buy property in Sydney. A flat, which I am now renting, costs $700,000. I don’t believe that I will be able to pay it out in 20 years, even if I earn big money. Maybe, I will manage to pay for it within 15 years, but I don’t want to have such a burden on my mind. If I came here as a 25 year-old with my family, then I would take a mortgage. But instead of...*
Ivan and Leonid stated that they prefer to invest in Ukraine, than in Australia. They buy real estate in Ukraine for investment purposes and, as Ivan said “with the intention to return to loved places of origin and live for myself”.

As described in Chapter Five and Chapter Six the survival ‘transition migrants’ see their migration as a way of coping with economic hardship, which they suffered in Ukraine. Being a structurally formed migration wave, the plans of the ‘transition migrants’ have an emotional, hastily-made and opportunistic character, precisely expressed by one of the participants: “I had to go somewhere else, so as not to stay helpless in Ukraine” (Pavlo). Pavlo, as with the majority of other ‘transition migrants’, did not choose to come to Australia intentionally and had no strong desire to leave Ukraine. Given the shared feelings of being pushed to migrate, having economic freedom after migration, some participants naturally plan to return to Ukraine not just for a holiday, but for indefinite period of time. Ivan, Pavlo, Oleh, Serhiy, Taras, Yehor, Leonid, Vasyl, Svyatoslava, Solomia and Nadiya talk about strong spiritual links and self-identification with Ukraine that penetrates their hearts and minds. Therefore, the Australian saying about the migrants that they “haven’t completely unpacked their bags in Australia” defines a typical experience of these ‘transition migrants’ within the framework of a survival life strategy that as a result fosters nostalgia and plans to return back to Ukraine. As Svyatoslava said: “I have nostalgic unbearable feelings for Ukraine, I write poetry, financially support my family in Ukraine and plan to return back one day”.

Even those migrants (Ivan, Sofiya, and Snizhana) who did not mention plans to return to Ukraine forever when asked about their plans for future, talked about their intention to try to live in Ukraine for a short term period (1–2 years) “to relax and have fun” (Ivan). No one from the interviewed migrants planned to seek employment in Ukraine, but instead saw themselves spending money earned in Australia and enjoying their lives. Snizhana said: “the economic life in Ukraine is not improving. The cost of living in Ukraine has risen due to inflation, while incomes have not increased. I know this from my relatives and friends in Kyiv. I would never think of going there for employment, but I always bring my money to support the Ukrainian economy”. Therefore, at this time Snizhana explained that
she sees no sense in Ukrainians in Australia “going back home for good, because it’s extremely hard to survive in Ukraine with that squalid income”. She added that she travels to Ukraine “for music classes, cultural life and inspiration”. Hence, migrants’ plans to return to Ukraine even for a short term stem from a wish to live a wealthy and easy life in their country of origin.

Consequently, the narratives have revealed that plans to return to Ukraine appear in the form of a strategy of resistance to the adverse conditions of the housing market in Australia and the economic problems of Ukrainian migrants who came to Australia for survival. These ‘transition migrants’ embody a survival strategy of swapping between the host state (Australia) to enable them to meet their economic needs, and their country of origin (Ukraine) as a desirable place of residence and spending money. This observation confirms a general trend, typical of Central and Eastern European countries: after they became receiving countries of immigration flows, the previously dominated unidirectional migration paths gradually lose their relevance (Wallace, 2002). It also gives reason to identify the migration of ‘transition migrants’ (i.e. 1991–2003) to Australia as not one-sided direction of migration due to its complexity and the potential multi-vectoring. The theme of return migration is not the focus of the current study, but it is worth mentioning that there are Ukrainian migrants who chose to return to Ukraine. And the most important finding is that they are recruited from the group of ‘transition migrants’ implementing survival life strategies, while the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ implementing achievement survival strategies expressed no wish to return to Ukraine (see Chapter Ten).

7.6 Conclusion

The process of personal adaptation and adjustment to a new life after migration is complex and cannot be regarded simply as a function of individual psychological and social factors, nor can it be attributed to a general emotional satisfaction/dissatisfaction with life or acceptance/rejection of new values, aims, needs and sense of agency. This Chapter has revealed how the same reality is evaluated by different migrants in different ways, based on their life strategy type and in relation to their class, national identity and emotions. The life circumstances experienced by the ‘transition migrants’ back in Ukraine and after their migration meant that participants in the overwhelming majority continuously implemented the life strategy of survival after migration. The emotional, occupational, and class adaptation mechanisms, as well as an absence of shifts in national identity or professional
downgrade after migration were found to reinforce the survival life strategy after arrival. The shift in life strategies from survival to achievement life strategies for ‘transition migrants’ happens in some cases.
PART TWO

LIFE STRATEGIES IN THE SECOND (2004-2013) POST-INDEPENDENCE MIGRATION PERIOD

1. Introduction

Part Two focuses on life strategies of post-independence Ukrainian migrants – the ‘dividend migrants’ - who arrived in Australia in the period from 2004 until 2013. Illuminating micro components of their life strategies and exploring the shifts in character of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia in the second period of independence (2004-2013), the analysis presented in the Part Two spans pre-migration, actual act of migration and post-migration stages aiming to deconstruct achievement life strategy typical for migrations turn into a kind of ‘investment’ of individuals (and their families). The 25 narratives of migrants, explored in the Part Two, show that the choice of Australia as a destination was informed and driven by calculated advantages from migration. Therefore, it is more correct to speak of ‘socio-economic dividends’ from their migration investment. Under socio-economic dividends, I understand the surplus value of migration experience in the form of individual intangible ‘savings’ of migrants - social, ethical, cultural, aesthetic, educational, civic capitals.

Three Chapters form Part Two (Chapter Eight, Chapter Nine and Chapter Ten) and they examine achievement life strategies shaped before leaving Ukraine, enacted in the ways these migrants entered and stayed permanently in Australia and shaped their achievement life patterns after migration in Australia. Chapter Eight utilizes the life strategy framework and logic introduced in Chapter Five and provides insights into the micro components of life strategy (values, needs, aims and sense of agency) that shaped achievement life strategy of migrants before leaving Ukraine. It also explores in detail the decision-making process by this cohort of migrants. Chapter Nine) explores the migration streams adopted by ‘dividend migrants’ to achieve their aims, realize their needs and act according to their values. Skilled and marriage migration streams are found to be popular ways of implementing the achievement life strategy. Chapter Ten presents the analysis of the lives of ‘dividend migrants’ after migration. This chapter looks, first into what the dividends migrants gained from migration, second it explores migrants’ adaptation and identity, new
occupational trajectories, and, third, it examines the prospective element shaping achievement life strategies - future plans and aspirations - of ‘dividend migrants’.

2. Respondents’ profiles

The Ukrainian migrants who arrived in this period are a mixed group. The migration experiences of 20 respondents in this group were identified as migration for achievement, while 5 respondents came to Australia for reasons of survival. My participants originated from different Ukrainian regions: 11 from Eastern Ukraine, 5 from Western Ukraine, 5 from Central Ukraine and 4 from Southern Ukraine. 11 people were males and 14 were females. The main channel of immigration to Australia was temporary migration (10 respondents entered Australia on student visas), while 15 Ukrainians entered Australia with a permanent residency status (5 – family reunion visas and 10 – skilled visas). By the time of the interview 23 out of 25 participants held permanent residency visa and Australian citizenship. Depending on the stream of receiving permanent residency status: 18 participants received it through skilled migration stream and 6 – family reunion (marriage migrants); 1 participant is still on temporary student visa. With the regard to social origins, 19 interviewees were born into white-collar working-class families and 4 interviewees – into blue-collar working class families, while the rest 2 interviewees originated from the class of cultural and scientific intelligentsia. Short respondent profiles are presented below and show the vast range of migration experiences associated with survival and achievement migrants.

Andriy

Andriy is in his mid-30s. He arrived in Australia in 2003 to do a PhD in physics. Now he holds permanent residency in Australia and works as a post-doctoral fellow at one of the Australian universities. He chose to leave Ukraine for several reasons: 1) the impossibility of self-realisation in academia due to stagnation and what he refers to as the “absence of science itself” in Ukraine; and 2) the lack of scientific progress and research funding. Andriy had a financially secure life in Ukraine, therefore, he stressed that economic reasons played the least significant role in his decision to emigrate.

Anastasiya

Anastasiya was born into a family of professionals in Southern Ukraine. She is in her mid-50s. She holds a Master’s degree in linguistics. She taught English at a school for several
years, before she abruptly changed her career and started to work for a library, where she has worked for 21 years. In 1996 she came to Sydney through the Library Sistership program – an international linkage between the Ukrainian library in Odessa and the State Library of New South Wales. She spent half a year in Australia working for the State Library in Sydney. Then she returned to Ukraine. However, her heart stayed in Sydney where she met her future husband in one of the State library archives. She returned to Australia on a Spouse visa in 2004. She has a very happy family life and continuously tries to establish herself in her professional life.

Dmytro

Dmytro recently turned 40. In 2005, together with his family, Dmytro migrated to Australia through the skilled migration stream as an IT professional. He comes from family of professionals in Eastern Ukraine. His emigration was driven by economic imperatives; he was searching for better life for himself and his family. Circumstances such as low wages and the inability to start a business because of high crime (and extortion/corruption) levels were key factors in Dmytro’s decision to emigrate. His first job in Australia was in the IT sector. He worked long hours and had no time for family. His friends working in the construction industry offered him a job with the same pay. Dmytro decided to take that offer and switched to manual labour. Now Dmytro works as a painter. He is satisfied with his job and income. He spends his free time snorkelling, fishing and playing with his children.

Alex

Born in Central Ukraine, Alex finished university in Kiev and majored in physics. His father was academic and his mother worked as a secretary in the police department. He remembers it was very difficult during the collapse of the Soviet Union. He was young and experienced the following difficulties firsthand: people not being paid for their work, and no electricity, heat and money. After graduation, he started to search for a PhD program in physics abroad. Not knowing a word of German, he was accepted for an English-language PhD program in Germany. He said it was hard to leave Ukraine the first time. In 2001 Alex came to Australia for post-doctoral research and still works in academia. Alex mentioned that it was easier to adapt to life in Germany without knowing the language compared to Australia, even though he can speak English. Alex commented that this was because the "rules of the game" in Germany are clearly defined, meaning systemic social rules. He
remarks that in Australia, rules "always have an asterisk" which defines the exception to the rule. From Alex’s perspective, the system is continuously changing, making the rules difficult to discern.

Iryna
Iryna is in her mid-30s. She was born into a family of professionals and lived in Western Ukraine. She holds a Bachelor’s diploma from the Pedagogical University. She arrived in Australia in 2005 through the family reunion migration stream as a dependent family member. Iryna remembers that she didn’t want to leave Ukraine. She had a boyfriend there, good relationships and many friends. She says that she never sought “big money” or material wellbeing and basically she had everything she needed in Ukraine’. She received her Australian visa a year before she actually immigrated. She tried to postpone emigration. As a result, Iryna had to withdraw from her study for a Master’s degree to enter Australia in time, otherwise her visa would have expired. Her first job was at a chocolate factory, which Iryna found through her mother’s social networks. She worked there for 4 years before she got pregnant. Her child is now 3 years old and she has decided to start her studies again. She said it is hard to start life ‘from scratch’ in Australia when your qualifications are not recognised.

Kateryna
Born in Kyiv (Central Ukraine), Kateryna always wanted to emigrate from Ukraine, and was inspired by her father – who was a sea captain – and his stories about life abroad. Her father always encouraged Kateryna to travel overseas for study. After graduation from the Slavistic University where she majored in translation and teaching, she went to France to work as an au pair to get the chance to study a language and culture while living as part of a family overseas. There she met her future husband who was English and they both moved to England. After couple years together they decided that life in England was “a bit depressing”. Hoping for a better life for their children’s future they decided to move to a better country. They chose Australia because they thought it was a promising destination for young families. Their application for immigration was successful. In 2006, together with her husband and two children, Kateryna moved to Australia. She is now divorced. She is very active in Ukrainian community life, and works as a journalist for a Ukrainian newspaper and SBS Ukrainian Radio.
Oksana

Oksana is in her early 30s. She comes from a blue-collar, working-class family in Central Ukraine. After graduating from a medical university and completing an internship, Oksana was offered a position translating medical articles from Ukrainian/Russian into English. This position was well paid, but Oksana had to strengthen her English in order to be accepted for this role. Therefore, in 2006 she came to Australia on a Student visa to improve her English language skills. In Australia she fell in love with an Australian of Ukrainian descent and they got married soon after. Now she has two children. She likes Australia. She thinks that Australia is a country where you can achieve anything by virtue of your own effort, while in Ukraine success depends on your social network and family connections.

Mariya

Mariya is 35 years old. Mariya comes from blue-collar, working-class family. Her parents were ordinary labourers, who worked hard all their lives. She has two brothers who left Ukraine for Italy and Australia. Her eldest brother, who encouraged Mariya to try life abroad, determined the choice of Australia as a destination country. She trained as a nurse in a medical college in Western Ukraine, and had 10 years of work experience in a city hospital by the time she decided to emigrate. In 2007 she immigrated as an independent skilled migrant with her husband and child. She works in Australia in a Russian nursing home. She started as a nurse, but she has recently been promoted to the position of Recreational Officer. She is a hardworking self-starter. Mariya feels blessed to be in Australia.

Ruslana

Ruslana arrived in Australia at the age of 30 to do a Bachelor of Law degree. She comes from a family of cultural and scientific intelligentsia in Eastern Ukraine. She holds a PhD in law from the best law school in Ukraine. Ruslana built a successful career as a lawyer in Ukraine. She came to Australia to broaden her knowledge and study for a Diploma of Law that is recognised in Commonwealth countries. During her studies, she met her future husband and stayed in Australia permanently. Now Ruslana has a child and works as a legal advisor for immigration.
**Maksym**

Maksym is in his early 30s. He was born into the class of professionals in Eastern Ukraine. He came to Australia in 2009 with his family through the skilled migration stream as an IT professional. When the GFC reached Ukraine in 2008, he decided to leave the country. He saw immigration to Australia as an exciting journey and opportunity for self-realisation in an economically, socially and politically secure environment. He now works for a large international IT company in Sydney as a programmer.

**Lyudmyla**

Lyudmila is in her mid-40s. She was born into the family of professionals in Eastern Ukraine. She arrived in Australia in 2010 through the family reunion migration stream to take care of her father, who migrated to Sydney in the early 1990s. Having a university degree, Lyudmyla worked as an accountant in the Ukraine for several years before she and her husband started their own business selling industrial equipment. The Global Financial Crisis of 2008 destabilised the economic situation of her family in Ukraine. When their business stopped making profits, they invested the last of their money in construction supplies, in an attempt to start a new business. Given the economic instability in the Ukraine at that time, and having a father in Australia who needed their care, Lyudmila decided to move to Sydney together with her husband and son. Currently, Lyudmila is trying to build her accounting career in Australia. She feels comfortable in Australia and strongly believes that Australia provides her family with more opportunities than Ukraine.

**Svitlana**

Svitlana came to Australia with her 8-year-old daughter to join her husband who was at that time working in Sydney. She did finance degree at a University in Eastern Ukraine. Leaving a decent life with a secure, well-paid job at a bank in Ukraine, she feels disappointed with the laid-back and relaxed lifestyle in Australia. Svitlana came to Sydney three years ago and could not secure a professional position in her field, due to her lack of English skills. She also had difficulty accepting the thought that she had to restart her career in Australia. An adventurous spirit drove Svitlana when she made her decision to migrate. Despite expressing some regrets, Svitlana generally feels happy that she is providing her child with more future opportunities by migrating to Australia.
Borys

Borys is an IT professional. He arrived in Australia in 2010 with his wife. His main motivation for migrating was to see the world, and to live in a country with a warm climate and where he could live by the ocean. Australia was an informed choice, meaning that in principle the decision was not only based on emotions. Borys and his wife were well informed about employment and environmental conditions in Sydney before Borys applied as an independent, skilled migrant. He is successfully working for a large state company, but is looking for other work opportunities in a more challenging work environment. Borys does not seek the easy route in life. He says that he works hard to create opportunities for himself, setting new goals only after he has achieved his original goals. Furthermore, he is a very active member of a climbing club and an aeroplane society, and also practices yoga.

Zoryana

Zoryana is in her early 20s. Since childhood, her parent’s main aim was to give her an international education. She came to Australia on a Student visa in 2010. Before coming to Sydney she travelled to England, America, Canada and Australia to choose the best destination for study. She chose Australia because her father and several friends lived in Sydney. At the time of research, she had nearly completed a Master’s degree and was looking for permanent employment in the field of accounting. She has recently received her permanent residence visa, as a skilled migrant.

Zoya

Zoya is approaching her 20th birthday. In 2010, at the age of 17, she arrived in Sydney on a Student visa. She is currently enrolled in a BA program at one of the best universities in the country. Zoya comes from a family of successful sailors from a city on the Southern coast of Ukraine. By the time she graduated from school, she was well travelled, and grateful to accept her father’s suggestion and financial support to come to Australia to study. A very open-minded person with strong self-motivation, Zoya combines study with casual employment during holidays.

Alla

Alla is in her early 40s. Before coming to Australia in 2005 for love, she ran private painting classes for children and had her own art studio in Ukraine. Now she is working as an art therapist in Sydney. Alla met her Australian husband on an Internet dating website.
However, Alla was initially prejudiced against the idea of online dating, and it was a friend of Alla’s who initially created Alla’s online profile and responded to enquiries in her name. With her friend’s assistance, Alla got married to an Australian man and moved to Sydney in 2005. However, their marriage did not last long. In accordance with Australian immigration law, Alla had to leave the country after the divorce. In 2011 after years of judicial procedures, Alla received independent permanent residence status to remain in Australia. Now she is now happily married to a Ukrainian and has a daughter.

**Bohdan**

Bohdan came to Australia at the age of 24 to undertake PhD research in theoretical atomic and nuclear physics. His decision to come to Australia was motivated mainly by his wish to conduct research in his field under an outstanding supervisor, in a country where science is well funded, and where there are more opportunities to find a job in academia. Before coming to Australia, Bohdan worked at a scientific research institution in his hometown. However, the stagnation of science as a research field in Ukraine and lack of funding pushed him to look into research opportunities abroad. He is currently teaching general physics and thermodynamics at one of the universities in Sydney. He does not plan to return to Ukraine after completing his PhD.

**Anatolyi**

Anatolyi came from a small mining town in the Eastern Ukraine. He is in his early 30s. Trained as informatics teacher, Anatolyi worked as an IT programmer in Ukraine before immigrating to Australia. Since childhood he dreamed about moving to Australia. In 2012 he finally arrived in Australia after applying for a visa through the independent skilled migration stream. His boss in Ukraine contacted a branch of the company in Sydney and Anatolyi easily transferred to a well-paid job in Australia upon arrival. He is very satisfied with his move to Australia and thinks that Australia is the best country in the world. His main aim is to achieve maximum enjoyment in life: “not to become a millionaire, but just to have a good life”.

**Panas**

Panas came to Australia in 2012 through the Independent Skilled migration stream. He is 27 years old. Before coming to Australia he worked as a programmer for different international companies and was part of projects based in Canada, USA, New Zealand and
other countries. He travelled a lot before coming to Australia. After his girlfriend (who is also an IT professional) returned to Ukraine from a working trip to Australia, they decided to emigrate. The lack of development opportunities, the financial crisis of 2008, low salaries and plenty of professional experience pushed them to apply to immigrate. Panas currently works together with his girlfriend for a foreign IT company in Sydney and is thinking of starting his own business.

**Mykola**
Mykola arrived in Australia in 2012 at the age of 28. By the time Mykola applied for independent skilled immigration as technical engineer he had 6 years of work experience in the field of mobile communications. The wish to emigrate emerged after he heard a successful Australian immigration story from a friend. Mykola was driven by the desire to try something new. He does not find the idea of working 30 years for one employer and the “home–work–home” routine attractive. He wants to see the world, to feel inspired and to get to know new people and cultures. He is not completely happy with his current job and is constantly looking for better opportunities.

**Vira**
Vira is a recent graduate of a medical university in Ukraine. In 2012 she came to Australia on a Student visa to learn the English language and decided to stay in Australia to undertake further studies. Her migration to Australia was inspired by her father, and his network of friends in Australia were a major reason that she chose the country as a study destination. However, her father was currently working in the construction industry in the USA after his application for refugee status in Australia was refused by the Australian immigration authorities. Recently Vira got married to an Australian Ukrainian and received permanent status in the country.

**Fedir**
Fedir and his wife arrived in Australia in 2012 through the independent skilled migration stream. Fedir was born into a family of entrepreneurs who run a furniture business in Western Ukraine. Trained as software developer, Fedir worked at several international companies in Ukraine. He had the idea to move to Australia permanently three years before he received the visa. The 2008 GFC and problems in his family helped him to
realise that he did not want to stay in Ukraine; he was seeking greater social and economic mobility.

_Daryna_
Daryna came to Australia from Turkey in 2012 after she divorced her husband. She is 29 years old. In search of stability, security, peace and self-realisation, she came to Australia to study and to join her sister’s family. Now she is married to Australian. Daryna’s life is a life characterised by continuous migration. She first left Ukraine as a child for a better life in Argentina, then moved to New Zealand, Turkey and finally, to Australia. According to Daryna, she will never be able to return to Ukraine because life is “too tough” and she believes she will simply not be able to survive there.

_Tamara_
Tamara is 28 years old. She comes from white-collar working class family from South Ukraine. Before applying to immigrate to Australia, she came to Sydney on a Tourist visa to visit her brother, who moved here with his family six years ago. She was fascinated with Australian life. In 2012 she came to Australia through the Independent Skilled migration stream. It took her one month to find a job in a large Australian company. She does yoga and is happy to live and work in Australia. As Tamara says, it is “easier to breath” in Australia compared to Ukraine.

_Marko_
In 2013 at the age of 23, Marko came to Australia to study for a Master’s Degree in IT Management. He was born into a family of professionals in Eastern Ukraine. Before coming to Australia he travelled the world and worked for several months in the US. He holds two Master’s degrees in IT and economics from Ukrainian universities and has over three and a half years of work experience as an IT business analyst. At the time of my research, he had nearly completed his Master’s degree at an Australian university, and was looking for permanent employment in the information technology field. He has also applied for permanent residency in Australia through the skilled migration stream.
CHAPTER EIGHT
BEFORE MIGRATION: LEAVING UKRAINE

8.1 Introduction

Chapter Four, which illuminated the macro structural factors and contexts for the 2004–2013 migrations, serves as a frame for this chapter. The main focus of this Chapter is the experiences of the ‘dividend migrants’ before migration. Aiming to identify the significant differences in the narratives of ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’, the chapter starts with a section that looks into the micro components of life strategy in relation to the two types of achievement life strategies. The second section examines in detail the decision-making and rationality/reflexivity involved in the choice to migrate expressed in the informative character and the conscious calculation of costs and benefits from migration, combined with irrationality, guided by non-material values and self-realisation.

8.2 Micro components of achievement life strategy

The initial research hypothesis that the majority of 2004–2013 migrants implement an achievement life strategy is confirmed by the investigation of the four key micro-components. This section analyses the needs, values, aims and sense of agency that constitute the achievement life strategy found in the narratives of 20 of the 25 ‘dividend migrants’.

The fact that ‘dividend migrants’ constitute a more homogeneous group in terms of class, identity and emotions compared to the cohort of ‘transition migrants’, explains the lack of any analysis of the four key life strategy micro components through the prism of class, emotions and identity, which proved important in revealing the differences in the life strategies of ‘transition migrants’. Instead two types of achievement life strategies were identified: (1) the strategy to achieve success (professional, family or cultural) and (2) the strategy to achieve self-realisation. Therefore, this section presents the analysis of the four key micro components of achievement life strategy through the prism of the type of life strategy and migration stream.
8.2.1 Needs

As in Chapter Five the analysis of needs, defined in relation to the simplified version of Maslow’s hierarchical model of necessities, is formed out of five main layers: physical, safety, belonging, esteem and self-actualisation. The three bottom layers of the pyramid inform the survival life strategy typical of ‘transition migrants’, the two top layers constitute the needs found in the narratives of ‘dividend migrants’. However, the line is blurred and different combinations of needs were found in the life strategies of both ‘transition’ and ‘dividend migrants’. However, the core areas of these two sets of needs are most often polarised in the narratives as (1) socially-oriented esteem needs and (2) individually-oriented self-realisation needs. Emerging out of this duality, the two types of achievement life strategy become evident in the migration stories of ‘dividend migrants’.

Participants implementing the first type of achievement life strategy (Simon, Oksana, Ruslana, Maksym, Lyudmyla, Svitlana, Borys, Zoya, Zoryana, Anatolyi, Panas, Mykola, Fedir, Daryna, Tamara, and Marko) to achieve success (professional, family or cultural)—are found to be guided by socially-oriented esteem needs. These needs describes a situation when migration is used to ascend to the desired “top level” of life, where an individual might enjoy public recognition and provides for a solid financial position and esteem. For example, Marko said with a smile: “I came to Australia to satisfy my need to gain more skills and experience to become successful professionally, to get respect in society and become rich”. The ideal result, which fulfils the socially-oriented needs, is “a strong, vibrant and successful person” (Tamara) and, as Borys said, to “be universally accepted in society by having a strong financial position and skills”.

Professional success and cultural success, by which Fedir meant “high quality of life in relation to people and surrounding”, informs the achievement life strategy for these migrants. The need for professional and cultural success, proved to be particularly vital for ‘dividend migrants’ who came to Australia through the skilled migration stream (Maksym, Borys, Anatolyi, Panas, Mykola, Fedir, and Tamara). Participants articulate the quality of life and high living standards first of all in relation to people and the surrounding environment, thus the need for a high-quality surrounding environment and professional recognition is an important socially-oriented need. For example, Maksym, an IT professional and skilled migrant to Australia, explained how crucial the quality of life is that is made up of the “good quality of people around”: 
Appealing to history and common sense, you realise how important the quality of the surrounding environment is, which is all about the quality of people around you. In Ukraine, people break the law, bribe one another and look for ways to escape tax. It influences the environment around you. I see how in many normal countries people behave in more pleasant and honest ways; they don’t seek benefits in everything. And it makes the society and quality of life better. The need for good quality people made me leave Ukraine.

Drawing on the comparison between “normal” countries and Ukraine in terms of the obligations of the State and others, Maksym sees Ukraine as a country the system of which does not work properly and which leads to the “low quality of people” and thus, the low quality of life in Ukraine. Originating from a white-collar working class family, Maksym, along with the majority of the ‘dividend migrants’, understood that the quality of life that his class has in Ukraine is the top and there is no class-mobility that can bring him to a better social environment that will result in an improved quality of life. His realization of the fact that in Ukraine, his family, as with many other informants, had already achieved the highest available quality of life in Ukraine, produced his aim to further improve his quality of life by migration. Through migration Maksym and many other migrants changed their surrounding environment and saw it as improvement to the quality of their social life. It made Anatolyi’s life “complete and harmonious”. Similar to Maksym and Anatolyi, Tamara (IT-skilled migrant) mentioned, “I couldn’t accept the rudeness of the vast majority of people in Ukraine, I needed a better social environment”. Furthermore, she expressed no hope that the situation would ever improve in Ukraine, which was a factor that informed her life choice to migrate.

The need for professional recognition, which comes from the value of professional success, was articulated in the story of Borys. He said he worked in a big international company on a good salary, before moving to Australia. His need for professional recognition was not met in Ukraine: “I felt I needed more professional recognition and promotion”.

The second type of achievement life strategy, identified in the narratives of Andriy, Anastasiya, Kateryna, Alla and Bohdan, was the strategy to achieve self-realisation. The main meaning of life in this strategy lies in “free creativity, development and self-improvement by changing the world” (mentioned by Alla and Kateryna). Defining this
strategy in the way that Donij (1996, p. 95) might, as “creative productivity of the individual in the ‘material’ of his/her own life”, the strategy to achieve self-realisation introduces a special kind of art and manifestation of personal freedom and transformation. The narratives of these five participants suggest the content of their life strategy is built on individual-oriented needs, which are grouped into two types: 1) needs for professional self-realisation and 2) needs for creative self-expression.

The first need of professional self-realisation is found in the stories of two young academics, Andriy and Bohdan, who came to Australia first to do a PhD, both in physics. One of the main motivations behind their migration was the problem of professional self-realisation. Both of these participants emphasised the fact that the structure of Ukrainian institutions suppressed all emerging initiatives that were not bringing any dividends for the institution, and undervalued skilled people. Bohdan said that he “left Ukraine because I saw no perspectives for being myself in the profession that I was qualified for.” They both expressed sorrow and pain about the fate of Ukrainian science. Andriy, who arrived in Australia in 2004 on a temporary student visa to conduct doctoral research in physics and stayed permanently to continue his successful academic career, explains:

I find Ukraine rather unstimulating for those willing to devote their lives to science and self-realise themselves in research and teaching. Science was, in my eyes, being destroyed. The development of science has never been set by the State as a priority. The whole system became rotten. In reality, there are people who do nothing and want nothing. They just hold their positions to receive salaries. The whole structure is inoperative. The problem is not only with funding, but also in public structures. In short, I came to the understanding that there was no development in science. Therefore, I sought an opportunity to depart and work elsewhere more fruitfully.

Andriy used the words “unstimulating”, “destroyed”, “rotten”, “inoperative”, “no development” to express his vision of the academic environment in Ukraine and the lack of opportunities to realise himself as professional. Therefore, similar to Bohdan, he applied for permanent residency to remain in Australia after his temporary student visa expired. Such groups of creative and professional individuals significantly contributed to the Australian ‘brain gain’ during 2004–2013.
In Andriy’s words, in Australia, academics on the whole and post-doctorals in particular receive “very good salaries”. For example, Andriy said: “a post-doc in the USA receives $35,000, half as much as Australia. S---- University offers $75,000 as a starting salary for a post-doc”. Bohdan and Andriy, who expressed a strong need for professional self-realisation, cited the lack of research funding in academia as the main reason behind their academic migration to Australia. The Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science spends 58 hryvnia (US$6) on research activity per academic (Shelegeda, 2014). Andriy said: “the research facilities and funding opportunities in Australia are incomparable to those in Ukraine”. Both respondents mentioned that in Ukraine the standard level of education and research facilities is not as high as in Australia or elsewhere; therefore they saw no other opportunity to do science, other than emigrating. “I had no hesitations about going to Australia, after I received an invitation and scholarship to conduct my research project in Australia”, said Bohdan. It is important to mention, that in their emigration choice, economic factors played a secondary role. Bohdan said: “the issue of money was never crucial” and Andriy said: “money came last, as I had a financially secure life in L--”.

The second need found in the narratives of three ‘dividend migrants’ was creative self-expression: two came to Australia through the family stream (Anastasiya and Alla) and one through skilled migration (Kateryna). Kateryna’s case is a vivid illustration of the need. Kateryna, an interpreter in Ukraine and journalist in Australia, said she could not “find an outlet for my creativity and self-expression for many years before migration”. She said she realised exactly what she was lacking when she started a publishing company producing Ukrainian children’s books for children of Ukrainian migrants all over the world:

I saw that I had no opportunities to grow in Ukraine as a writer and as a journalist, unlike here. Life was very depressing in Ukraine: I did not want to see peeling and battered communal entrance hallways, drunk people who do not look after themselves; I couldn’t freely speak the Ukrainian language—it made me very depressed. I felt I could not grow. Here, in Australia, I have more opportunities—I write books, I do not fear that someone will tell me something, and come and take over my business as in Ukraine.

She describes the circumstances in Ukraine to explain the lack of the right conditions to support her creative self-expression. She talks about a depressing atmosphere, drunk
people and dirty entrance hallways, judgement of people around. Several times during the interview Kateryna emphasised that she felt as though she were “a stranger in her own country” (Ukraine). She wrote poems and novels, and drew illustrations for books, but she said she “never thought that such self-expression could bring money, success and satisfaction”. Kateryna’s case is not exceptional; other migrants (Panas, Borys and Fedir) who came through the skilled migration stream mentioned that in Ukraine they were so busy building their professional lives and earning money, that they did not have time to stop and think. Borys said he felt “lost in futile and a hectic life”. Only in a more stable and supportive environment were they able to express themselves. Several of them started painting, or writing prose and poetry, and became active in Ukrainian cultural life in Sydney.

The most important ‘reinforcement’ of the needs is either received ‘welfare’ or a general sense of satisfaction with how he/she builds his/her life (Abulhanova-Slavskaya, 1991). As the narratives showed, the satisfaction is not a feeling of pleasure, but associated with the responsibility for their lives and accomplishment of duty before themselves. As Alla said: “it’s great to feel you are building your life and doing what you like and earning money with creative talent”.

Participants implementing both types of achievement life strategies expressed high satisfaction with their migration experience and accomplishment of their needs by leaving Ukraine, which significantly determined achievement strategy patterns after migration. Both types of needs (socially-oriented esteem needs, and individually-oriented self-realisation needs that inform two types of achievement life strategies) are penetrated with a sense of responsibility the participants feel for developing their own independent way at their “own risk” (Ruslana), and emerge from the knowledge that the course of one’s life depends on one’s own decisions. As Anastasiya said, “we migrants are one-on-one with our lives”.

Needs are not only a desire for something (or a necessity), not just future goals determined by a motive (Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1991), but also an experience that takes place in the course of realisation of the given motive. However, the motive to act in a certain way can be realised in action only being driven by a particular set of aims. The aims found in the narratives of ‘dividend migrants’ are analysed below.
8.2.2 Aims

The analysis of aims, the second micro component of the achievement life strategy, is based on the same approach as the analysis of migrants’ aims presented in Chapter Five. Thus, the aims of the ‘dividend migrants’ will be analysed based on the two indicators that help to distinguish and describe the achievement life strategy: 1) motivations behind migration and 2) scope of aims (Reznik, 1995).

As explored above, the analysis of migrants’ needs formed in Ukraine presented a bifurcation of ‘dividend migrants’ into strategies to achieve success (including professional success, success in family life or in the field of cultural activities), and strategies to achieve self-realisation. The division between these two types of achievement life strategies that emerged while in Ukraine is determined by a further difference in aims.

Firstly, considering the aims in terms of the motivations behind migration, the thematic narrative analysis of the transcribed interviews captured the emphasis in the group of 25 respondents on the two main pull factors influencing migration from Ukraine to Australia: (1) better quality of life and higher incomes in Australia and (2) comfortable social atmosphere and low crime rates.

Before analysing these two most-mentioned motivations for migration, it is important to emphasise the difference in the motivations behind migration found in the narratives of ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’. Unlike ‘transition migrants’, ‘dividend migrants’ are motivated by Australian pull factors. Economic push factors are not the primary ones for these migrants—they all come from the class of professionals or scientific and cultural intelligentsia, and said they felt economically secure back in Ukraine, and only went abroad seeking, to use Fedir’s words, an “upgrade in life”. A vivid example is Anatolyi, a 31 year-old skilled IT migrant from a family of professionals, who explained his migration choice using the following argument:

I did not have to run from anything, I did not leave Ukraine because it is a bad country. My friends and I, recent Ukrainian migrants in Australia, moved to Australia because it is a very good country. We were not motivated by negativism, but more by positivism; more voluntary than many migrants before.
Anatolyi uses “we” to sum up the experiences of other migrants who arrived in Australia during the same period and who share optimistic attitudes about immigration that outweigh the negative aspects of emigration. He used the words “motivated by positivism” to distinguish himself from the life experiences of the Ukrainian migrants who came to Australia earlier. Similar to Anatolyi, Panas said: “I left Ukraine not for the reason that Ukraine is a bad place, but because Australia is a better place for life”. These voices echoed the majority of the narratives of the ‘dividend migrants’ (Andriy, Zoya, Zoryana, Bohdan, Mykola, Marko, Borys, Maksym, Svitlana, Simon, and Daryna) and symbolise the difference between survival life strategies typical of ‘transition migrants’ and the achievement life strategies common with ‘dividend migrants’. Maksym reflected on the difference between ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’ in the following way:

The typical scenario is that the majority who arrived in the last 8–10 years came here not because of a poor and bad life back in Ukraine. They were already quite well-off in Ukraine, so they came to Australia to improve their lives. I speak about my friends—IT professionals. But lots of people who stayed here after the Olympic Games in the early 2000s are not very successful.

Maksym’s point of view suggests that skilled migrants (he used the example of his IT friends) who arrived in Australia between 2004 and 2013 had the economic capital (he used the words “well-off”) to invest in their migration project and came to Australia with the purpose of improving and broadening their opportunities (he used the words “to improve their lives”). Maksym compares them with Ukrainians who stayed in the post-Sydney Olympics period, whom he assesses as “not very successful”.

Maksym’s evaluation of the migrants’ success was based, as he clarified later, on their financial well-being, their employment experiences, and their place of residence in Sydney. Thus, he mentioned that “skilled migrants tend to live in wealthier inner city suburbs, the CBD and the northern beaches”, while those who arrived after the Soviet Union collapse up to the post-Sydney Olympics period “used to live in the far western suburbs which are less expensive and unite Ukrainians in the manual professions”. In contrast, the narratives of ‘dividend migrants’ expressed that they were motivated by Australian pull factors, which constitute the dividends from migration for the 2004–2013 Ukrainian arrivals.
The first Australian pull factor and dividend—higher incomes and better quality of life in Australia—was particularly important for the participants implementing a strategy to achieve success (professional, family or cultural). As the narratives showed, despite the fact that by the end of the 2000s, the economic decline stopped and the average salary and pension increased (and, as Zoryana said “people started to cherish faint hopes that the economic situation in Ukraine would gradually improve”), dissatisfaction with other aspects of life remained high (see Chapter Four for details).

As the thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews showed, the important migration reason for participants implementing a strategy to achieve success was not a lack of jobs, but rather low wages. For example, Mariya said that she came to Australia for better opportunities and higher incomes. She worked for 10 years in Ukraine as a nurse and what she remembers the most is that her salary “was only enough for 10–15 days”. She came to Australia in 2007 and said that “in the first year upon arrival, my Australian salary was enough to feed the whole family of two kids and a husband”. She works in a nursing home as a recreation officer and studies to upgrade her professional skills and get promoted. Andriy, Mykola, Marko, Borys, Maksym, Fedir, Panas, Svitlana and Simon also mentioned the better professional opportunities and higher incomes as one of the motivations behind their migration. Such a finding contradicts the idea of a direct link between migration and unemployment.

Other quantitative studies in 2009 by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine supports this finding from the narratives: the lack of suitable work or unemployment forced 38.7 per cent of migrants to seek earnings overseas, while for the majority (59.8 per cent) the crucial reason for emigration was low wages. This is consistent with the results of another quantitative study in which 67 per cent of employees said that low wages was the main push factor for their voluntary departure for work (GFK Ukraine, 2008), while the lack of jobs was noted by 46 per cent of workers (Levchenko, 2010, p. 28). Consequently, the low incomes in Ukraine create more reasonable social response than unemployment for ‘dividend migrants’.

Participants implementing the strategy to achieve success (professional, family or cultural) also widely mentioned the better quality of life and living conditions in Australia. For
example, Oksana, a research assistant at Kiev Medical University, shared a tiny “Khruschev-era” apartment:

To describe it as a Khrushchev-era apartment is enough to say that it looks like the builders did not manage to connect the floor to the ceiling, but all the rest is put together. The kitchen is a 5 metre by 2.5 metre corridor. The thought that I would spend all my life in this little room was killing me. It was terrible, not to mention that the whole building was dirty with broken postal boxes. People are just careless.

Oksana refers to the poor living standards, describing the horrible conditions of the apartment block and stairwells. She mentioned the careless attitudes of residents to their own communal entrance hallways, postal boxes and other shared areas, which need cleaning and renovations. As Maksym also said: “It is a common situation in Ukraine that you step out of your flat which is clean and relatively renovated inside, into communal areas, which are half ruined and dirty”. Several other participants (Marko and Panas) said that even in their case, when they made enough money to maintain high living standards for their own families, they were “not able to escape experiencing poor conditions around the living area” (Panas), and as Marko said: “significantly lower the quality of life overall”. Fedir, for example said: “The point is in the quality of life. You breath fresher air, eat better food, and face fewer risks”.

The second Australian pull factor and dividend—comfortable social atmosphere and low crime rates—was mentioned in the narratives of participants implementing the strategy to achieve self-realisation (Andriy, Anastasiya, Kateryna, Alla and Bohdan). Interview materials have shown that Ukrainians used migration not only as a strategy to ensure better professional opportunities, higher incomes and better living conditions, but also as a means of living and working in a comfortable social atmosphere with low crime rates compared to Ukraine. For example, Andriy, a skilled migrant, and Alla, a professional painter who came to Australia through marriage to an Australian, mentioned the strong impact of the social situation and how unfavourable it was to live and work in Ukraine. Alla talked about a “socially and culturally degrading and stagnating system in Ukraine” and the attractiveness of Australia for its “low crime rates” and its “secure and comfortable society, where it’s easy to create and identify as a painter and mother”. In Alla’s long
and interesting interview, she noted the downward trend in the development of the Ukrainian State, with it moving to a supplier and resource country which does not need educated, intelligent and creative people:

*I think Russia and Ukraine lost in the Cold War and that it hasn’t finished ... because the modern war is an economic war, the war of propagating certain lifestyles which make people do certain things. Ukraine is now a country where everyone hates each other, the Government hates its people, and the people hate their government. It is impossible to live this way. All people dislike teachers, doctors, because all of them take bribes and they want only money from patients. This is total disrespect towards each other. It happened not because people are bad, but because the social policy is not correct. I just see the tendencies for it to develop this way and I don’t like the destination at all. We didn’t even want to have a child in those social conditions.*

Alla’s position echoes the stories of other migrants who implement a strategy of professional and family success (Maksym, Mykola and Anatolyi). They love their country, but feel that in social terms it is not the right place to continue to live and work and bring up children. The aim to live in a country with low crime rates is the reason participants give for choosing Australia and its secure environment. For example, Maksym, who grew up in K-- in Eastern Ukraine in a family of engineers, worked for a couple of years before he emigrated for an international IT company in L-- (Western Ukraine). He left Ukraine because he said he wanted “to achieve professional and family success”, which was, as he said, “impossible in my hometown and other cities in Ukraine”. He emphasised social security as the one factor that motivated his decision to come to Australia in order to reduce the risks his family faced in Ukraine. Maksym remembered:

*If someone did something to your wife in Ukraine while she was returning from work, the only way out that you have is to take a sniper rifle and go and fire back ... Because the police will not help, the courts will not help, because the one who did it, he likely has connections, and everything is overcomplicated. And in Australia, because the system works, the probability of such an event occurring is several times smaller. I moved to protect my family from crime and prevent risks.*
Maksym used such words as “police will not help”, “everything is overcomplicated” and “protect my family from crime” and “prevent risks” to describe his concerns and motivation behind choosing Australia where the probability of crime is lower. Maksym’s representation of the practicality of migration in terms of reducing risk is rare among ‘dividend migrants’, but appears in different contexts in the migration stories of Anatolyi and Mykola as well.

The scope of the aims of ‘dividend migrants’ is wide and driven by the use of new possibilities (extensive goals) and extended recreation of their social and economic status. The ‘dividend migrants’ whose life strategy is identified as a strategy to achieve success (professional, family and cultural) said they came to Australia in order to upgrade their social and economic status. For example, Fedir, Panas and Borys said that they made enough money in Ukraine for a decent life. Professional development and an interest in gaining new skills were the leading factors for their move. For example, Panas, similar to other skilled migrants (Tamara, Marko, Mykola, Anatolyi, Borys, and Simon), summed up his story by saying: “I decided to move for better job opportunities, not only in terms of income, but also to acquire new skills and work in a different environment, which is more advanced than in Ukraine”. Borys said: “I am in Australia to develop my career and I do not exclude the possibility that one day with all that Australian experience I will move to another country”. In line with this comment, it worth mentioning that the aims of ‘dividend migrants’ are related to structural issues—in this case they are class-related. The class origin of the majority of the ‘dividend migrants’ is white-collar family or cultural and scientific intelligentsia, thus it is more natural that informants express striving to maintain the line of success and expand the class-limits by gaining new skills, opening new opportunities which they could not have by fact in Ukraine.

Such attitudes and strivings to create for themselves the necessary conditions for development—and foreseeing what is needed to achieve the aim and overcome difficulties and failures—is what motivates the ‘dividend migrants’ to achieve success. This cohort of migrants are, as Marko said, “in a constant state of search, striving for change, for something new, and not satisfied with what they already have”. Therefore, it is typical for these migrants not to be satisfied with the result by itself—it is the process of searching and the achievement that satisfies them. As Fedir said, “the novelty and breadth of perspectives makes my life complete”. This finding suggests the scope of the aims of this
cohort is defined by aiming for broad goals, having a transformative orientation, and trying to succeed in life with a focus on social recognition.

The scope of the aims found in the narratives of those migrants implementing the strategy to achieve self-realisation is limited by the use of aim-setting as a tool for the practical embodiment of individually important life meanings. As Anastasiya said: “I constantly search for what is meaningful to me; I seek inspiration and then bring my ideas to life to change the reality for the better in the long-run”.

Despite the differences across the types of achievement life strategies, in both cases the initiative goes from being an individual quality to an achievement strategy that is constantly expanding the range of life activities, affairs and communication. For ‘dividend migrants’, skilled and family, achieving success and/or self-realisation is common to pursuing wider goals with a transformative power and the drive to achieve what is desired in life. And usually they have all the necessary qualities of character—a strong will, persistence, skills, self-confidence and optimism. Therefore, one can speak about the achievement life strategies when the person expresses large-scale and long-term aims and is constantly searching for new standings and active changes in his/her life.

### 8.2.3 Values

The two types of achievement life strategies are primarily ensured by instrumental values, aimed at achieving the aims. The narratives of ‘dividend migrants’ demonstrated their values in the context of the two types of achievement life strategies which are represented by a common set of liberal and non-materialistic values. These include the values of the prospects and opportunities for self-realisation, and a favourable environment for developing their own initiative, freedom and independence.

Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991) suggests liberal values are integrated in an achievement life strategy. The stories of ‘dividend migrants’ are dominated by expressions of liberal values. For example, Tamara, a skilled IT migrant, said she “values freedom and independence above all”. Similar to Tamara, eight other participants (Borys, Fedir, Daryna, Zoya, Kateryna, Marko, and Panas) talked about freedom and independence in economic terms, referring to career opportunities and financial independence that made them choose to leave Ukraine. Marko noted: “It is important for me to build my life and
career only in a state of freedom”. Panas said: “freedom is crucial”. According to Marko, such people prefer “the status of being a free spirit to the comforts of a stable life”.

Furthermore, the value of initiative, as part of the set of liberal values, was expressed by several skilled migrants implementing strategies to achieve success (professional, family and cultural). Anatolyi, Maksym and Mykola talked about initiative as a value related to the workplace. Mykola said: “I always expressed initiative at my workplace, but felt it was not appreciated and even not welcomed. It was professionally demotivating. I am an initiative person myself and value this quality”. In his narrative, Mykola clearly explains that he values an environment favourable to initiative “that creates opportunities and encourages one to grow professionally”.

Another value that is clearly expressed in the narratives of participants implementing the strategy to achieve self-realisation, is also visible in some stories of those migrants realising the strategy to achieve success—and that is, the value of opportunities for self-realisation in combination with spiritual and professional development. Tamara, whose story is mentioned above, said that the determining factor for her skilled emigration was that “there were no opportunities for self-realisation, for further professional and spiritual growth for me in Ukraine”. At the different stages of her narrative, Tamara also expressed the value of “equality of life opportunities for people from different social groups”, and she mentioned “freedom of expression”.

Overall, the set of liberal values expressed above defines the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ from Ukraine as those people who possess, as argued by Zlobina and Tykhonovych (1996), a similar set of liberal values spread across, and typical of, Western societies. Reznik (1995) suggests that according to its social and cultural parameters the achievement life strategy is an essential condition for the existence of Western civil society. Such values as the spirit of autonomy and sovereignty, free competition, a variety of horizontal connections, a democratic culture, individual initiative, and entrepreneurship, which in turn create favourable conditions for the implementation of achievement life strategies in Western societies, are strongly encouraged (Reznik, 1995). For participants, being driven by values identified as liberal and similar to the West long before migration, it becomes easier to achieve professional and social growth compared to migrants who possess a traditional set of values found in the stories of ‘transition migrants’ (see Chapter Five). As
Borys said: “it was not difficult to find a job in Australia and be quickly promoted. The lifestyle and work ethic in Australia are in line with my values and beliefs”.

In Ukraine, achievers applied the same resources that led to success in Australia. For example, Maksym said: “my skills and knowledge were in need in Australia. I felt my time in Ukraine was not useless; it created a good precondition for my success in Australia”. The convertibility of values and resources (skills and knowledge) across the two countries facilitated a quick integration and adaptation for ‘dividend migrants’, described in Chapter Ten.

Non-materialistic values appeared as shared values for the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ implementing the two types of achievement life strategies. As mentioned above in the “aims section”, the financial benefits of migration were not the primary pull factor for migrating to Australia. Thus, material values do not determine the life strategies of these migrants. In their narratives they often do not mention financial and related material aspects at all. The non-materialistic values comes naturally/are more easily developed by those who are well-off (ie from the white-collar working class and class of cultural and scientific intelligentisa), because they have never experienced deprivation. As a result the material stabiltity is a given and so other values can be developed or cherished. This is the case with the majority of the informants from the cohort of ‘divident migrants’ (21 out of 25). This is what Fedir, an IT-skilled migrant, said about money and material wealth:

> When you move to the EU or Australia, lots of people may think it is all about getting a big salary and that’s all. You get more money and you go to the Maldives, which you can’t do in Ukraine. It is not so. I wouldn’t leave only because of money, I had enough in Ukraine.

Another IT-skilled migrant, Anatolyi, said: “In my life I most value life itself, not money! Even when I get my monthly pay, I am not excited. I see it as a means for living, not as a goal”.

These two extracts from the interviews with Fedir and Anatolyi suggest that material values do not occupy the top of the value system of these migrants. Tamara’s quote, given above, also serves as evidence that “spiritual development and growth”, as she said, “is very
important” for her. Therefore, the value of money among migrants is, from their perspective, not relevant in itself. It can also be explained through a structural factor, in this case the regional origin of the majority of the informants, who grew up in big cities that are big financial centers in Ukraine and who had opportunity to accumulate more wealth compared to those growing up in small towns and villages in Ukraine. The profiles of ‘transition migrants’ implementing a life strategy of survival proved different (see Chapter Five).

8.2.4 Sense of agency

Interviews with ‘dividend migrants’ who left Ukraine after 2004 captured the transition/difference between their actions and from what has been characterized as the irrational, natural and passive ways of dealing with uncertainties (indicating a weak sense of agency) dominant among ‘transition migrants’. The change in agency from weak to strong is articulated by participants in terms of how they expressed their own power to make individual choices about life directions, the ability to acquire an education and profession that best matches their personalities, satisfy their individual desires, develop skills and build a life strategy of achievement. For example, when talking about deciding to move to Australia, Anastasiya mentioned: “I clearly realised that I was making a big step in my life. I was taking another path, for which I had to give up my beloved work, and leave my family members”. Oksana presented herself as a person “who always realises why and for what” she is taking action. She said: “I was lacking English skills to get a better job at Kyiv Medical University, so I decided to take up English-language courses in Sydney to match the demands of my profession”.

Similar to Anastasiya and Oksana, the rest of the participants from the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ expressed in their narratives that they started to realise their agency and the power to influence their own lives. As Ruslana, a lawyer from Ukraine, said:

Life in Ukraine was changing and to keep up and stay on the wave I constantly improved myself. I remember also that many more opportunities were appearing. After I got my PhD in law in Ukraine, I decided to get a Western degree in law in Australia.

Ruslana’s case shows that with the change of life in Ukraine and the novelty that originates from the change of circumstances, the individual undergoes a profound change in the
direction of realisation of one’s own power over one’s life, and uses new opportunities to improve it.

Participants express themselves as more mature in the sense of understanding what they want from life and see more directly their place in it, and, thus, realise their aims, needs and values more clearly. Anatolyi said: “A couple of years after university I understood what I wanted from life and how to achieve it. I decided to take up a well-paid job in K---to start saving money for the migration procedures in order to migrate to Australia for better IT opportunities”. Such clear realisation and a strong sense of agency is what differentiate the life strategies of ‘transition migrants’ from the life strategies of ‘dividend migrants’.

The participants’ manifestation of the strong sense of agency in their narratives was found to be expressed through their (1) active life position, (2) internal capacity to take responsibility rather than rely on external circumstances; and (3) young age and class-affiliation or the class to which they belonged.

The first manifestation of a strong sense of agency is the active life position. Borys, Tamara, Fedir, Maksym, Anatolyi, Bohdan, Kateryna and Andriy described their active involvement in social and political life in Ukraine. For example, Borys said: “Together with friends I was actively involved in many activities: I visited orphan houses, tried to create bike roads and parking. I think people make their own choices and make something good out of it”. Tamara said: “I was involved in some social activities and shared my optimism and strength with people who were in hardship”. These cases demonstrate high capacity and a desire to produce further change, motivation, and an optimistic approach to life—in other words a high degree of internality. According to Kobasa (1979) such an ability to withstand hardships and difficult situations has been identified as an integrative personal trait for ‘dividend migrants’, which he called “hardiness” (i.e. stability and strength).

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13 The term internality is applied here and further defined by attribution theorists (Henslin, 1967; Langer, 1975; Langer and Roth, 1976; Weisz, 1980, 1981) as the ability of individuals to influence external circumstances or events, reflected in their belief they can influence the outcome. Several studies (Abrams and Finesinger, 1953; Averill, 1968; Comer and Laird, 1975) have found that those individuals who experience uncontrollable negative events prefer to blame themselves rather than chance factors and external forces.
The active life position of participants was also revealed in their involvement in political activities in Ukraine. Six participants (Borys, Fedir, Andriy, Kateryna, Bohdan and Anatolyi) indicated that they actively participated in the 2004 “Orange Revolution” protests in Kiev, meaning they were involved in the fight for the right and freedom to produce further social and political change in Ukraine. The lack of the “Orange Revolution’s” success fostered young Ukrainians to search for ways to control their lives and make a difference with the help of migration. For example, Borys, who took part in the “Orange Revolution” and came to Australia in 2010, explains his life position and decision to migrate:

I'm not one of those people who gets disappointed and stays silent, dissatisfied and stressed on the inside for the reason that I live in such a bad country and do nothing at the same time. I always felt I could, and had to, make a difference. I know that many people who are of brave character go into politics trying to change something, even risking their lives. Together with my friends we supported the 2004 protests. But unfortunately the “Orange Revolution” didn’t succeed. In such conditions, I decided that the best thing to do is to change countries (migrate), rather than fight endlessly to change the country from inside.

This way of thinking is evident in the stories of the other five participants (Fedir, Andriy, Kateryna, Bohdan and Anatolyi). This cohort reveals a certain level of flexibility, the ability to feel as though they themselves are the subjects of the change, and the ability to actively use every opportunity to improve their situation. Bohdan’s behaviour, like that of the other migrants mentioned above, is characterised by consistent decision-making, leadership and a clear understanding of his perspectives. He said: “I tend not to avoid problems, but solve them. I realised that Ukraine was a dead-end for me in terms of development and self-realisation”. Bohdan showed that he neither avoids problem situations nor falls into an escape strategy, and uses the situation to carry out his aims, needs, and values for the purpose of self-realisation.

The second manifestation of a strong sense of agency is the internal capacity to take responsibility rather than rely on external circumstances. Following the developments of attribution theorists (Langer and Roth, 1976; Weisz, 1980) and the developments of
Zlobina (2011), the term ‘internals’ is used here to mean the group of participants who adopt all the responsibility themselves. Likewise, the term ‘externals’ will be used for those participants who believe that their lives are predominantly determined by external circumstances.

The narratives of seventeen migrants (Andriy, Simon, Oksana, Maksym, Lyudmila, Borys, Zoya, Zoryana, Alla, Bohdan Anatolyi, Panas, Mykola, Fedir, Daryna, Tamara, and Marko) show that these participants exercised personal control over their circumstances, and took responsibility for their choices and actions to achieve their aims, values and needs, and thus form the group of ‘internals’. Their narratives have shown that they were able to separate the important from the secondary. As Andriy said: “I realised that for me self-realisation is important, while economic wealth comes secondary; thus I left Ukraine, and in a way liberated myself from degrading circumstances”. Similar to Andriy, the interviews of the other sixteen participants proved that with the help of migration, participants took responsibility and guaranteed a certain degree of independence, liberation and freedom for themselves. This sense of responsibility is what gives ‘dividend migrants’ the opportunity to build strategies aimed at achievement, to try different ways of achieving their goals and search for the most optimal ones.

An interesting fact that was revealed in the narrative analysis of the interviews across the cohorts of ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’ was that the number of ‘internals’ (participants who adopt all the responsibility themselves) per migration period is increasing with each year of arrival to Australia, while the number of ‘externals’ (those participants who believe that their lives are predominantly determined by external circumstances) is progressively decreasing. The narratives of the cohort of ‘transition migrants’ are dominated by externals (Hanna, Leonid, Svyatoslava, Lyubov, Serhyi, Ivan, Taras, Yehor, Oleh, Oleksandra, Artem, Solomia, Vasyl, Nadiya, and Pavlo) who more often believe that their desired aims are unachievable and too complicated. They therefore express greater passivity in their realisation compared to internals. Such a discovery finds support in the quantitative study “Ukrainian Society: Monitoring of Social Change”\(^\text{14}\) by the Institute of Sociology (NAS of Ukraine). It demonstrated that in 2005 the ratio of

\(^{14}\) The "Ukrainian Society: Monitoring of Social Change" is an annual social project coordinated by the Institute of Sociology since 1992. It consists of survey with Ukrainian population with a sampling of about 1,800 respondents (aged over 18), and representative for such parameters as gender, age, education, region and type of settlement. Center "Socis" conducts the fieldwork.
‘internals’ to ‘externals’ was 24.2 per cent to 45.8 per cent, respectively. Compared to 2004 data, the number of ‘internals’ had increased in 2005 by 2 per cent, while the number of ‘externals’ decreased by 3 per cent (Zlobina, 2011).

Another interesting finding that illustrates the sense of agency felt by participants is their expressed social fears. Compared to ‘dividend migrants’ most of whom are ‘internals’, as ‘externals’, ‘transition migrants’ more often express serious social fears in their narratives: “risk of unemployment” (Hanna); “making responsible decisions” (Solomia); “security fear” (Taras). ‘Dividend migrants’ voiced their readiness to independently overcome the various hardships of life, which demonstrates their high internality. Marko said: “I know I will always find my way out of difficult circumstances”; Mykola said: “I am an optimist, I know I will be alright whatever happens”. As was indicated above, the seventeen ‘dividend migrants’ are defined as ‘internals’ and form the basis of the 2004–2013 Ukrainian arrivals in Australia.

The third manifestation of a strong sense of agency is the young age of participants. The narratives of young participants (below 30 years of age) indicate their strong sense of agency, while the narratives of ‘dividend migrants’ (over 30 years of age) express a less active life position and show more ‘externality’ in the sense described above. As Natalya said: “I feel it’s easier to wait for a better life to come, and go with the flow”. There is a firm link between age and life chances and social opportunities (Heinz, 2003), which was expressed in Lyudmyla’s narrative. She said:

I struggled to make the decision to migrate as I knew that I was making a choice that would change my life. Given my age I would struggle to find a suitable place for myself in Australia, but I gathered all my courage and did it.

Further on in her narrative Lyudmyla said “I feel I become less flexible with age and become less active in showing my initiative”. Similar to Lyudmyla, Svitlana expressed the lack of flexibility and strong agency in reacting to the conditions of life changes in Ukraine. She said: “it was difficult to motivate myself for individual change and to adapt to new life situations and to pursue migration”.
Therefore, the sense of agency and the qualitative characteristics of the participants described in the sections above are age and class-related. The young age of participants (average age in the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ is 30 y.o) affects their language learning ability. Further their elite class affiliation means they are more likely to be able to have an easy-going attitude and be quick in establishing social and professional networks both in their sending and receiving countries. These factors then have a positive impact on their career prospects. Subsequently, this can be related to the formation of more risk-taking, development and future-oriented life stategies of achievement before and after migration. Furthermore, their sense of agency is class-related. The stories of ‘dividend migrants’ indicate that the informants who originate from white-collar working class families and the class of cultural and scientific intelligentsia (and this is 21 out of 25 interviewed ‘dividend migrants’), tend to express ideas about their life position, views and attitudes more freely compared to those informants from the blue-collar working class. Enjoying the benefits of financial security, convertable social capital (good education, professional and social skills) they express confidence, when articulating their life position and ideas for self-realisation.

8.3 Migration decision and rationality

A key difference between ‘dividend migrants’ and ‘transition migrants’ is the process through which the migration decision is made. The thematic analysis of the ‘dividend migrants’ narratives demonstrated a mixture of both methodically and hastily made decisions. Some decisions will be described as rational (that is they seemed methodical, and well thought out) and others as irrational (that is they seemed to be hastily-made, arising without due consideration). Depending on the type of achievement life strategy they have, migrants seemed to make their decision to migrate in either the rational or irrational ways.

The narratives of migrants implementing the first type of achievement life strategy, described as a strategy to achieve success (professional, family, cultural), reveal that these migrants made their decision rationally (methodically). They generated their pathways consciously by analysing their situation before leaving Ukraine, and counted potential ‘dividends’ from migration on the basis of information received from official channels, as well as from acquaintances, friends and relatives who had experience of migration. For example, Marko said:
I remember I was very serious about migration from the start. I analysed causes and the effects that I would hopefully get from moving to Australia. I talked to friends in Australia, and friends in the US and Canada. After calculating the potential return on investment, I made the decision to leave Ukraine for Australia.

Marko uses the very rich expression “return on investment” in relation to his migration decision. A similar mindset was revealed in the stories of Zoryana, Panas and Mykola.

An interesting fact that signalises the rationality of decision-making found in some of the participants (Borys and Mykola), is that even when the immediate cost was calculated (at least partially), the uncertainty and constant reflexivity still penetrated the migrants’ minds. Mykola said:

After my application for skilled migration was launched, I was still considering the future rewards and was hesitant about the best time to leave Ukraine. We had a visa to come in December, but came in March because Christmas and New Year are not the best months to apply for jobs and find an apartment in Sydney.

Other participants (Borys, Tamara, Anatolyi, Maksym, and Panas), all skilled migrants, expressed in their narratives that they chose means to achieve their goals efficiently. They were clearly aware of what they wanted to achieve and “how to make it real” (Anatolyi), and how much money they might need for life in Australia while looking for a job. Hence, the rationality of the migration decision is associated in participants’ stories with the periods of waiting. This finding is supported by Burda’s (1995) argument that individuals choose to wait before migrating, even if the present value of the wage differential is positive, because of the uncertainty and the high costs associated with migration. For example, Panas said: “our decision took time, we were waiting before we secured the necessary amount of time”. Anatolyi said: “I decided to migrate after I was offered a guaranteed job in Sydney”. Thus, their stories show that they chose the most efficient way to implement their aims, needs and values, reflected in rational decision-making.

The second type of achievement life strategy identified from the interviews as the strategy to achieve self-realisation anticipates some degree of irrationality in the sense that migrants talk about their migration decision as arising naturally and being made more hastily. The
narratives illustrated that the decision of those migrants who were driven to Australia by the desire for self-realisation and who received permanent residence status through skilled and family migration streams (Andriy, Anastasiya, Kateryna, Alla and Bohdan, were informed by non-materialistic motives and non-instrumental values—“I wish for freedom, happiness and creativity; that’s why I migrated”, said Alla.

These values expressed by Alla appeared to have intrinsic value for Kateryna and Anastasiya too. “My decision”, said Anastasiya, “was in and of itself; I didn’t think of acquiring something out of it”. Kateryna decided to emigrate in order to be able to do what he liked in life, “not with the purpose of money-making”. Such not very well considered and hastily-shaped decisions were found in the stories of women, who after marriage to an Australian, gave up their careers in Ukraine. With a strong desire to re-invent themselves in creative industries or be engaged in activities not for income, but for psychological satisfaction, they chose to leave Ukraine. As Anastasiya said:

"After I met A---, several years passed before I made the decision to marry him and move to Australia. I chose to give up my career and enter a new exciting life where I do what I like not for money, but for my soul and passion."

The overall cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ implementing the two types of achievement life strategies represent both methodically and hastily made types of decisions in relation to their migration. The narratives showed that participants implementing both types of achievement life strategies plan their migration, usually several years before the actual departure, and always use legal frameworks to enter the country. Their decision to migrate is not realised in a purely reckless and hastily-made action coming from occasional opportunities, but as a process which needs time and particular resources, which very often at the time of decision-making, were unavailable (Burda, 1995). Participants who migrated to Australia through the skilled migration stream, implementing both types of achievement life strategies, expressed that they realised moving abroad is a massive project that requires preparation, planning and management, and “involves allocation of a long period of one’s life to this project” (Borys). In the reminder of the section, the step-by-step way that skilled migrants made their decision to migrate and actually implement it, will be discussed.
Firstly, they gather information. The main information channels mentioned by Fedir, Borys, Tamara, Maksym, Bohdan, Zoryana, Anatolyi, Panas, Mykola, Marko, and Andriy are: (1) official sources (Fedir and Borys mentioned the official Australian immigration website; Marko said he looked into unemployment statistics and did IT industry research; Panas and Anatolyi said they used migration agents in Ukraine); (2) media resources; (3) friends and family (Mykola and Tamara relied on the advice of family and friends). While making up their minds, they often compared Australia to America, New Zealand and Canada. For example, Borys said:

*We thought about Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the US. The US went off the list very quickly because there were high unemployment rates and visa scandals. We decided Canada was too cold, and the weather in NZ unpredictable, so together we decided on Australia. Then there was the choice between Melbourne or Sydney, so we looked up employment opportunities. In Sydney the IT labour market was better. It means, in principle, that not all our decisions were based on emotion, but more on the following data—unemployment, average salaries, and geography.*

As was mentioned above and illustrated in Borys’ narrative, several other participants (Fedir, Marko, Anatolyi, Maksym, and Panas) looked into unemployment rates, the environment and health indicators across these countries, and stopped on the best match with their qualifications and desired lifestyle.

Secondly, after finding enough information to convince themselves that migration to Australia would be a professional, social and financial upgrade, which is extremely important for ‘dividend migrants’, they started to evaluate their chances of immigration. As Panas said:

*After my research it was pretty clear that Australia would be a professional and financial upgrade, both for me and my wife, who is also in IT. The next step was to see if I could receive a permanent visa to Australia with my skills and knowledge.*
During the evaluation of their personal characteristics for suitability for the skilled migration program to Australia, several participants (Mykola, Panas and Borys) said that they discovered they were lacking English skills and years of professional experience. Borys said: “After the decision was made, it turned out that my main problem was the English language. I began to learn it just before leaving.” In order to come to Australia through the skilled migration stream, which is a point-based system, applicants need to get a sufficient number of points to successfully launch their visa application.

Regarding the lack of language skills, Mykola and Panas said that they studied English for half a year before they were able to pass the English language test and get enough points for their language skills. Mykola, who trained as a radio engineer and worked as an IT support engineer in Ukraine, came to Australia in 2012 through the skilled migration stream, said: “I had to re-sit the IELTS test eight times before I got the required score”. Another skilled IT professional, Panas, went to London for three months to study English and to sit the IELTS in England. The narratives of skilled migrants suggest that these migrants had to financially invest in their migration. Also, money was often a barrier to acting quickly after the decision was made. Anatolyi said: “the money was a barrier, I moved to K--- and switched jobs several times to earn more”. Anatolyi said that according to his calculations, he had “to save $10,000 for the migration expenses associated with the visa and life in Australia for the first three months”.

Thirdly, participants said they used official and “expensive” (Anatolyi) migration agents to help them organise all the documents and guide their application process. Panas said: “I used a migration agent just to feel secure and to be sure that I hadn’t missed a thing. I could have done it all myself; I read a lot about it and knew the process. It was hard to get time off work at that stage”. Maksym also said he was busy with work—he mentioned: “I did not put in migration too much hope. I would easily accept failure of my application to Australia and apply to another country”.

The interview data analysed in this section suggests that a standardised assumption—as embedded in rational choice theory that all strategies are founded on purely instrumental rationality and are deprived of emotions and spontaneous decision-making without cost-benefit analysis (Crow, 1989)—appears to be rather limiting. Certainly, the narratives of migrants implementing the strategy to achieve self-realisation demonstrated that there are
participants among the ‘dividend migrants’ whose decisions are driven by non-instrumental values, which leave room for self-realisation and a hastily-generated trajectory of individual actions. However, even in their decisions there are elements of rationality and reflexivity. The process of decision-making for ‘dividend migrants’ compared to the way ‘transition migrants’ made their migration decision (see Chapter Five) is more rational, meaning they include reflexive monitoring of actions and environments. The narrative analysis captured the shifts from hastily-driven, not well considered and “unconscious” (Bourdieu, 1992) decision-making found in the stories of ‘transition migrants’ to the mixture of both methodically and hastily made decisions found in the narratives of ‘dividend migrants’. This finding suggests a fresh look at the phenomenon of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter brings to the forefront a completely different set of life strategy micro-components that inform the two different types of achievement life strategies of migrants. The micro-components of the achievement life strategy are: (1) large-scale and long-term aims for professional success and self-realisation, oriented to opening new opportunities (extensive goals) and extended recreation of social and economic status; (2) socially-oriented needs for professional and cultural success and individually-oriented needs for creative self-expression and professional self-realisation; (3) instrumental values, aimed at achieving the aims, accompanied by a set of non-material values, such as the prospects and opportunities for self-realisation, a favourable environment for developing their own initiative, freedom and independence. Compared to the ‘transition migrants’ financial welfare comes secondary and is a minor value. The main manifestations of the strong sense of agency that dominates the narratives of ‘dividend migrants’ are their active life position and the demonstrated internal capacity to take responsibility rather than rely on external circumstances. These two manifestations are a better demonstration of a strong sense of agency than structural features such as the age and class of the participants. However, the combination of values, aims, needs and agency (discussed above) can be regarded as class-related. My cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ was dominated by informants from the white-collar working class and class of cultural and scientific intelligentsia, who have never experienced material deprivation or a lack of social resources to achieve their goals. Whereas these types of deprivation were not uncommon for the cohort of ‘transition
migrants’. I therefore suggest this structural factor along with their sense of agency helps shape the formation of their achievement life strategies.

Contrary to the ‘transition migrants’ the narratives of the ‘dividend migrants’ are strongly influenced in their migration decision by pull factors, and their desires are all seen as realisable with the help of migration. The narratives of the ‘transition migrants’ are dominated by the expression of the role of migration push factors. Several people noted that the value of migration was that it enabled a better understanding of themselves; it helped them to realise who they are, and to learn what they like and can do. Therefore, migration contributed to the increased self-esteem of informants, instilled confidence in themselves and gave them the impetus to develop further. Furthermore, the process of migration decision-making by the ‘dividend migrants’ in Australia represents the mixture of methodically and hastily made decisions, but not deprived of an emotional component. The migration decision is determined by the power of choice rather than the power of circumstances.
CHAPTER NINE

MIGRATION FOR ACHIEVEMENT: IMMIGRATION STREAMS

9.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the ways ‘dividend migrants’ came to Australia. A narrative analysis of the ‘dividend migrants’ stories is conducted in combination with an investigation of the structural conditions that significantly shaped how they entered the country. The two most popular modes of entry were the use of the skilled migration stream and the family migration stream. In order to understand the different patterns in how ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’ managed their migration, it is important to include an analysis of the changing structural conditions in Australia and Ukraine at the times the two migration cohorts made their decisions.

As set out in Chapter Four, from 2004, and for the first time in the history of Ukrainian arrivals in Australia, the number of arrivals through the skilled migration stream outnumbered migrants coming through the family and humanitarian streams. Out of the 2,470 permanent arrivals between 2004 and 2013, a total of 1,312 migrants came through the skilled stream and 1,005 came through the family stream (DIAC, 2014). Between 1 January 2004 and 1 January 2014 only six Ukrainian migrants were granted a permanent visa through the humanitarian migration stream (DIAC, 2014). The earlier ‘transition migrants’ cohort mostly used the family and humanitarian migration streams to assist their entry. In the later cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ there were still family arrivals, but instead of using the humanitarian pathway, the skilled migration pathway dominated.

Having already explored the way their achievement life strategy characterised their migration to Australia, this chapter addresses the gender aspects and agency in the formation of the two different migration streams used by the cohort in relation to their achievement life strategies. Men dominate the skilled professional group in this cohort and all family reunion migration (marriage) were women. Despite the gender differences between the two streams, both are used by Ukrainians from the professional class. The achievement life strategy in this sense is not gender-specific and is implemented by female and male ‘dividend migrants’, but using different means, which are reflected in the gender-specific immigration streams.
Drawing on a case study of IT ‘dividend migrants’ this chapter first sets out the importance of agency in combination with the structural conditions that existed in the labour markets in Ukraine and Australia between 2004 and 2013 when the ‘dividend migrants’ were developing and enacting their life strategies. The second part of the chapter analyses this same global economic situation, but this time in relation to female migration. As with the earlier case study of the IT professionals, the individual life strategies of female ‘dividend migrants’ are linked to global structural phenomena. In this case, it is the international mail-order bride industry (Bowes, 2011; Villapando 1989; Chun, 1996). The female ‘dividend migrants’ who often used the family reunion stream had to deal with the stereotyping of their migration as part of a gendered phenomenon that was often sexist and demeaning (Cullen, 2002; Mirkinson 1997), when in fact they were a highly-educated and professionally successful cohort. It will be argued that their marriage is better characterised as “marriage for achievement”, instead of “marriage for migration” (Kim, 2010, p. 721). The achievement life strategies of the two groups—skilled and marriage migrants—arguably mimics the achievement experiences of one another, because they are both linked to the global order and processes.

9.2 Main immigration streams

9.2.1 Skilled migration

As noted earlier, the narratives of the ‘dividend migrants’ have shown that the character of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia changed significantly after 2004. The majority of the ‘dividend migrant’ cohort (13 out of 20) implementing life strategies of achievement arrived in Australia through the skilled migration stream. In this context, ‘skilled migrants’ refers to highly-skilled people (professionals) who immigrated to Australia with permanent residency status to look for work or self-employment opportunities and to live in Australia permanently. As was discussed in Chapter Four, the flow of skilled migrants is carefully regulated and responds significantly to the needs of the Australian labour market. The group of skilled migrants in the ‘dividend migrant’ cohort exists in a global space and economy that is made up of emerging industries, different market segments (onshore/offshore), migration policies and job opportunities.

The narratives of the skilled migrants in the dividend cohort have some similarities. Overall their narratives reflect, firstly, that this group has high levels of education. All the
skilled respondents hold university degrees in the field in which they are employed. For example, there are eight IT professionals who hold Masters degrees in computer engineering or computer science. Second, the cohort is dominated by male migrants; the third point to note is the youthfulness of the cohort, all the men and women are aged between 28 and 32. Fourth, IT professionals dominate and they mostly came from Central and Eastern Ukraine. Out of thirteen skilled migrants in the ‘dividend migrant’ cohort who arrived through the general skilled migration (GSM) program, eight are IT professionals (Borys, Marko, Fedir, Panas, Tamara, Maksym, Anatolyi, and Mykola), three are academics (Bohdan, Andryi, and Simon), one is an interpreter (Kateryna) and one is an accountant (Zoryana).

9.2.1.1 The IT crowd

The IT professionals had particularly favourable conditions for immigration to Australia and unfavourable conditions if they had stayed in Ukraine. In this section, the narratives of the skilled migrants are used to describe the individual and structural ways in which their life strategies of achievement were enacted with the help of migration.

Drawing on the eight stories of the IT-skilled migrants the following factors, found in the narratives of all eight participants, are key to their experiences in the skilled migration stream: (1) the growing competition among IT professionals in Ukraine resulting from the rapid growth of the IT market since 2003; (2) a desire to be developing, innovating, and growing as employees and professionals; (3) a desire to change from being outsourced labour (available cheaply to developed countries) into well-paid professionals who manage IT projects from the heart of an IT hub; (4) being a well-paid cohort in Ukraine, the awareness that they can earn more Australia; and (5) the stable growth of the Australian IT market, employment shortages in the IT Australian industry and the easy conditions for their skilled immigration. Before getting to the analysis of these factors in the section 9.2.1.3, the context of the emergence of the IT industry in Ukraine during the early 2000s and the growth of offshoring (outsourcing) in Ukraine after 2003 will be established.

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15 General Skilled Migrant (GSM) program is a scheme that was designed to allow highly skilled people to immigrate into Australia to live and to look for work or self-employment opportunities.
9.2.1.2 The emergence of the IT industry in Ukraine

Before 2003 the IT industry in Ukraine reflected a population, which was passive and lethargic in its use of the Internet. After 2002–2003 this switched significantly to a culture of dot-com start-ups, and an orientation to offshore projects took place. Offshoring or outsourcing is the practice of hiring external labour to perform necessary business functions in a country other than the one where the products or services are actually being sold. In the case of Ukrainian IT professionals, the offshoring (outsourcing) means a situation in which an organisation from overseas moves its IT development to Ukraine. As Marko said, a “global downturn and an orientation to offshore customers” caused the Ukrainian IT market slowdown and a series of individual bankruptcies of Ukrainian-based corporations delivering IT services onshore. After 2003, the IT industry in Ukraine found its way and is still growing. Over the last nine years (since 2003) the value of Ukrainian-made software development and IT outsourcing services has increased tenfold (Ukrainian Hi-Tech Initiative, 2012) (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11. The value of IT outsourcing services provided by Ukraine during 2003–2011**

![Bar chart showing the value of IT outsourcing services provided by Ukraine from 2003 to 2011.](image)

*Source: “Exploring Ukraine. IT outsourcing industry”, Ukrainian Hi-Tech Initiative*

Today Ukrainian IT professionals have proved their competence in a global market. The number of IT professionals in Ukraine is estimated to range from 200,000 to 215,000 people. In 2012, Ukraine was ranked 4th globally, after the United States, India and Russia, in having the most certified IT specialists in the IT outsourcing industry (Ukrainian Hi-Tech Initiative, 2012). Each year over 16,000 Ukrainian IT specialists graduate. As a result, in 2013 Ukraine was the most dynamic and the leading IT outsourcing market and...
IT talent pool in Central and Eastern Europe (Intellias, 2013). In terms of the countries that import Ukrainian IT services, Australia is in 16th place, drawing on 8 per cent of the available Ukrainian-made services (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Key regions for exported services

Source: “Exploring Ukraine. IT outsourcing industry”, Ukrainian Hi-Tech Initiative

9.2.1.3 Migration of IT workers to Australia

It was in these structural circumstances that the IT professionals in the ‘dividend migrants’ cohort made their decisions and plans to move. Given the increasing number of trained IT specialists, it is perhaps not surprising that growing competition among IT professionals in Ukraine was the first reason the IT workers gave for why they chose to migrate. Marko, Fedir and Maksym all mentioned this as the reason they applied for permanent residence in Australia through the skilled migration stream. For example, Marko said:

Since Ukraine became well-known for skilled IT professionals, the competition in the Ukrainian ICT industry has started to grow. I think it happened somewhere around 2003 when the outsourcing orders flooded Ukraine. I took another degree at that time to develop more skills, but then I realised it was better to migrate.

Similar to Marko, Maksym also noted the competition from an ever-increasing group of new IT specialists as a result of the expansion of the IT market in Ukraine. However, he
also noted that along with a national glut of IT workers there was an “increase in the global value of the Ukrainian IT talent pool”. Participants said that before migrating they were aware that their IT skills had global resonance, thus the national glut was not a problem for them, but rather a factor that shaped their decision to leave Ukraine.

However, the issue for the IT group was not just about job competition, but their desire to be developing, innovating, and growing as employees and professionals, which was the second factor motivating IT-skilled migration to Australia. The participants listed individual characteristics that suggested they wanted a particular type of work experience with room for growth and innovation. Borys said he was “always following new trends and self-education” in his profession. Fedir noted he had “skills and a strong self-awareness [of himself] as a professional and a desire to innovate”. Marko said “I aim to be an expert in what I do and always search for opportunities to grow as a professional and employee”. The aim of professional growth and development, as drawn from the IT migrants’ narratives, was found to originate from the feeling of technological backwardness or having been left behind in terms of technological development in Ukraine. This feeling motivated participants’ migration from, as Anatolyi put, “the world’s peripheral Ukrainian IT hub” (which Marko, Fedir, and Panas defined as Ukraine, Russia, Poland and India) to the West in terms of work (which Panas defined as the United States, Western Europe and Australia).

Marko, Panas, and Anatolyi expressed the feeling of technological abandonment in Ukraine and a desire for global engagement with the mainstream and cutting-edge IT industry. As, Marko said: “being in IT in Ukraine makes you feel abandoned by the world. Technologically Ukraine is laid-back. There is a lack of inspiration for innovations and keeping up with global cutting-edge trends”. Panas and Anatolyi also used the word “abandoned” to describe their feelings while working in the IT sector in Ukraine. These insights reflected their strong sense of agency, values and aims that made them choose migration to more developed, technologically-advanced and growth-encouraging countries to implement their aspirations for achievement. Marko concluded his explanation of the motives behind his skilled migration with the following: “Australia offers an innovation-friendly environment, hype vibes and enormous possibilities for career development”.

255
The third factor that participants said facilitated their skilled migration was their desire to change from being outsourced labour (available cheaply to developed countries) into well-paid professionals who manage IT projects from the heart of an IT hub. Maksym put it well when he reflected that he wanted to shift from “being part of a low-cost outsourcing labour force in Ukraine, to being part of the well-paid cohort of IT professionals in Australia”. Interestingly, the experience of all eight IT professionals was that they had always been linked to global orders, services and corporations. Panas said: “I worked for different international IT companies in Ukraine, travelled to the US and London for some project work. I was always a part of global corporations”—but as Panas noted when he finished this sentence: “however, it was always outsourced labour”.

Participants tended to implement their achievement strategies by adopting migration as a tool for global engagement. Maksym said of his professional achievement of moving from being an outsourced programmer in Ukraine to the IT manager of outsourced projects in Australia, “in fact I moved from outsourced programmer to the manager of outsourced projects. I have even done some offshore works with several programmers in Ukraine”. In another words, IT professionals are the best example of ‘achievers’ who have a bundle of experience and skills and who know their value and how to trade their skills with the aim of professional and economic mobility.

The dissatisfaction of participants with their position as outsourced labour in Ukraine was also motivated by the awareness that their good pay in Ukraine is low compared to the rest of the world. The fourth factor that made participants come to Australia as skilled migrants was their desire to earn more in Australia. Panas said: “I was very well paid in Ukraine, but I knew I could earn more in Australia for the same job”. Similar to Panas, Borys said the following about his financial situation back in Ukraine:

*In L---, as a programmer, I earned $2,000 per month. That is the money that my father earned in two years. In economic terms, IT programmers in Ukraine walk like gods; our status was high. We had everything in Ukraine—a car, constant travelling, and savings.*

Participants said they acquired sufficient economic capital through employment in the IT industry in Ukraine to turn their work in Ukraine (which was typically programming and
product support) into well-paid work as part of a cohort of professionals in a developed country such as Australia. Marko, Panas, Borys, Fedir, and Maksym all explained that they possessed suitable financial freedom and economic capital to improve their lives by migrating. They were not worried that they would have to downgrade to survival strategies in Australia after migration. Borys’ case is a good illustration of how well paid IT professionals in Ukraine could accrue sufficient capital for migrating and spending time finding a “proper and decent job” with better income:

*We could afford to pay big money to a migration lawyer to prepare our documents for skilled migration to Australia and pay the application fee. We came to Australia with money, so we could afford to spend three months looking for a proper and decent IT job in Sydney. Some Ukrainians suggested to us that we take low-skilled jobs just for the sake of making money, but we refused.*

Borys and other interviewed skilled IT migrants who arrived in Australia during 2004–2013 did not opt for a professional downgrade with the purpose of making quick money. Borys used the word “decent” to describe his idea of a suitable job for his skills and experience in the IT industry in Australia. As Fedir said: “*it took time to find a proper job, but I would never go for easy and downgrading ways*”. As Maksym’s and Marko’s narratives demonstrated, the participants just saw that professionally they could do better outside Ukraine, where there were more opportunities for higher incomes and better standards of living. For example, Borys said: “*Sydney offers relatively high incomes and high living standards for professionals*”.

Comparing the two cohorts in this study the ‘dividend migrants’ cohort has higher self-esteem than the ‘transition migrants’ cohort. This is most likely linked to the social, cultural, employment and economic capital they utilised to achieve their aims and needs, and to act according to their values, which direct their achievement life strategies. They had time and money to invest in the migration process, paying migration agents and lawyers to prepare their migration documents. Anatolyi, Borys, Panas, Mykola and Maksym mentioned that they had suitable cultural capital to implement their achievement life strategies through migration to Australia—for example, they had experience of working overseas and were exposed to a Western lifestyle and values. Panas said he
travelled abroad “very often for work, to the US, Norway and the UK”; Marko said he worked for three months in the United States and that his values has changed when he returned to Ukraine:

I reconsidered my life philosophy and values. I see demand for my skills and value the opportunity to develop my personal and professional skills, and the freedom to live as I like and be able to earn decent money for my hard work.

Indeed, these IT professionals were motivated by their externally acknowledged economic ability. For example, Panas described the “experience of being ‘headhunted’ by IT companies in Ukraine and internationally”. Marko said he had experience “of living and working in the West”. All of these experiences built up their economic, cultural and social capital that served as a platform for the implementation of their achievement life strategy through migration.

For the fifth factor, participants explained that they were interested in coming to Australia through the skilled migration stream because of the stable growth of the Australian IT market, employment shortages in the Australian IT industry, and the easy conditions for their skilled immigration. The Australian IT industry matched the emergence of the IT industry in Ukraine. The Australian IT industry has demonstrated stable growth over the eight years since 2000 (Australian Trade Commission, 2008). Indeed, the IT sector is one of the most dynamic and progressive industries in Australia. The IT sector contributes about $42 billion to the nation’s economy every year (Smail, 2013).

All eight IT professionals were aware that Australia is a fast-growing and highly-advanced digital economy. Fedir said: “Before migrating I read and was impressed that Australia’s ICT industry is one of the fastest growing and most innovative sectors of the Australian economy”. Borys said that the fact that “onshore IT projects dominate over offshore imported services in Australia” encouraged his migration. From the analysis of trends in Australian migration policy shifts (presented in Chapter Four), the dynamics of the Australian IT market led to an increase in the intake of IT-skilled migrants. As discussed in Chapter Four, from the late 1990s Australia’s migration policies evolved from focusing on attracting migrants for the purpose of increasing Australia’s population, to attracting
workers, temporary and permanent (skilled) migrants in order to meet the needs of the economy.

The shift in immigration policy from a demand for low-skilled workers to one focused on highly-skilled professionals, specifically for workers from a wide range of fields in the information technology sector, attracted professionals from Ukraine. While in Ukraine, IT professionals had gained, as Panas said, “all the necessary qualifications and skills to easily receive permanent residency status in Australia through the skilled stream”. It indicates that there was a good fit between Ukraine’s IT skills supply and the demands of the Australian economy. This condition and a perfect supply/demand match set Australia apart from other possible immigration destinations.

A good university education, a knowledge of English and the skills to work in a high priority Australian profession allowed the IT professionals to successfully pass through the restrictive Australian point-base skilled migration system. Fedir, when asked the question “Why Australia?”, explained that it was the easiest country to migrate to:

*Australia had the easiest immigration conditions when I was applying. I considered New Zealand and Canada, but they didn’t have my IT specialisation on the list. Australia did. If you are a programmer and your specialisation and experience is needed in Australia, you get a permanent visa automatically. Other countries didn’t have this, you could go on a temporary working visa or you needed to have an employer. It creates difficulties. Many IT workers from Ukraine went to the US, but Australia is better!*

In his narrative, Fedir used expressions such as “easiest immigration conditions”, “on the list”, “permanent visa automatically”, “Australia is better” when describing his straightforward migration pathway to Australia as an IT-skilled migrant. He drew a comparison with New Zealand, Canada and the US to explain that the Australian migration system was the easiest for professionals with similar skills and profession to his. A similar immigration story was outlined by Borys and Panas, who emphasised the suitability of their skills and experience for migration through the skilled migration stream to Australia.
Another issue that arises when analysing the cohort of the skilled IT workers who were part of the ‘dividend migrant’ cohort, is the ‘brain drain’ to developed economies. These migrants, who are classified as ‘achievers’ in terms of their values, aims, needs and sense of agency, are part of the phenomenon of the Ukrainian brain drain and the Australian ‘brain gain’ (Docquier and Rapoport, 2012; Beine et al., 2008; Straubhaar, 2000).

Increasing economic globalisation, a growth in Ukrainian migration flows to Australia and growing global interdependence of national, regional and local economies through an intensification of cross-border movement of goods, services, technologies and capital, is what created the completely different circumstances in which ‘dividend migrants’ and ‘transition migrants’ found themselves. This changing global order reshaped the life strategies of Ukrainian migrants from survival life strategies, dominant among ‘transition migrants’, into achievement life strategies that dominated the later ‘dividend migrants’.

For those ‘transition migrants’ implementing life strategies of survival through the humanitarian and family reunion streams, the situation was that they had no skills or capital to trade for migration. Their migration pathways are threaded through with precarity, and result in the continuation of a survival lifestyle after migration. This can be seen reflected in the downgrading of their social status, accompanied by an occupational downgrade. The cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ are bright representatives of the ‘achiever’ type. Their choice of migration pathway is well-informed and to an extent, rational. It demonstrates a strong self-awareness of their own power over their lives. As noted earlier, their choice of migration stream is defined by their location in a global economic space and by being part of an emerging global industry. They have skills in a profession that, though made up of differently valued trade segments (onshore and offshore), qualifies them in relation to a series of different national migration policies. Furthermore, the IT group of the dividend cohort is characterised by the global industry and their transferable skills, along with the desire to get out of a job situation shaped in Ukraine by a glut of workers and a dominant outsourced labour force, intertwined with the feeling of technological abandonment and low wages compared to the rest of the world. Through migration they became globally engaged in a space where they have opportunities and a technologically-advanced environment in which to develop, innovate, and grow as employees or professionals.
The difference in the life strategies between the ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’ lies in the fact that the latter cohort, who had achievement life strategies, indicated that they had undertaken additional education or training in an attempt to improve their chances of migration. They invested effort and time to make migration happen in the way they liked it and as per their aims, needs, and values, and in accordance with their agency. For example, Marko, Borys and Panas all said they took English classes before migration. They also tried to get more years of IT industry experience before they left Ukraine. Therefore, as skilled migrants who wanted to improve their skills and experience, they brought to Australia additional knowledge and skills, reinforcing the process of an Australian ‘brain gain’. Furthermore, they remained active in obtaining additional skills after migration, multiplying the brain gain effect. The lives of ‘dividend migrants’ after migration are explored in Chapter Ten.

9.2.2 Marriage migration: an alternative way of professional and family self-realisation for women

As has been demonstrated so far in this chapter the aims and motives of the ‘dividend migrants’ were very different to those of the ‘transition migrants’. The former cohort mostly organised their plans via families and they arrived through the family reunion and humanitarian migration streams. By way of contrast, in the latter cohort there was a prevalence of individual skilled-migration. However, the ‘dividend migrants’ also made use of the family reunion migration stream, and a significant number of the women in this cohort came to Australia as wives or brides. The sub-category of marriage migration was the dominant form of reunion in the family migration stream for the ‘dividend migrants’. As with the previous section, this section will draw on the stories of a group of six participants (Anastasiya, Oksana, Ruslana, Svitlana, Alla and Daryna) to explore the ways they implemented their achievement life strategies through marriage migration. Furthermore, this section determines gender as a factor that not only shapes the choice of the migration visa stream, but also shapes the lives of participants before and after migration, shedding light on the junctures at which the female participants from Ukraine found themselves when coming to Australia through the marriage migration stream.
9.2.2.1 Gender and migration from Ukraine

In recent decades, research on international migration has included recognition of gender as being associated with differences in the motivation and means for migration. This newer works has indicated that different factors control the movement of male and female migrants and their assimilation in the host countries, as well as the various consequences of the migration experience for men and women (Curran and Saguy, 2011; Carling, 2005; Piper, 2005; Brennan, 2002, Mix and Piper, 2003; Donato et al., 2006). Drawing on this scholarship and agreeing that gender is an important perspective, this section argues that gender is not simply a factor in immigration, but also a factor in life that determines different ways of implementing the life strategies of achievement.

Relevant to all aspects of migration, gender is a crucial factor in understanding the immigration streams and pathways of Ukrainian migrants who implemented an achievement life strategy during 2004 and 2013. The gendered specificity of the way Ukrainians arrive in Australia is revealed in the difference in the popularity of migration streams among men and women. The interview data captured the fact that in the study’s sample, the skilled migration stream was dominated by men, while the women utilised the family migration stream (through marriage) in order to achieve their aims of professional self-realisation and emotional fulfilment and harmony. Before moving to the analysis of the lives of the women-participants in terms of marriage before migration, it is important to briefly outline the structural situation influencing female migration from Ukraine.

Research by other scholars (Tolstokorova 2008; Iglicka et al., 2011; Cassidy 2013) has shown that the new forms of transnational mobility that arose in the Ukraine after the collapse of the socialist system, were not gender neutral. Thus, in the early 1990s men’s migration mobility exceeded women’s by 5–7 promille points\(^\text{16}\) (Tolstokorova, 2013). However, during the period 1994–1999, a period characterised by the strongest deterioration in the financial position of the Ukrainian population, the immigration mobility of women decreased by 1.8 times less than that of men. As a result, across the entire period, the migration activity of Ukrainians of working age of both genders turned out to be almost equal (Dragunova, 2009). Thus, there has been a gradual feminisation of migration outflows from Ukraine, which corresponds to statistical data by the State

\(^{16}\) Promille—a unit of measurement of migration processes, which characterises the performance per 1,000 of population.
Statistics Service of Ukraine on female international migrations in 2001 and in 2009. In 2001 only 24 per cent of the female Ukrainian population was actively involved in international migration (Lebanova, 2002, p. 84); in 2009 this figure reached 33 per cent (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2009).

The phenomenon of marriage migration from Ukraine and other East European countries, as represented in the global North by sexualised and nationalised women, is certainly not new. However, before the 2000s its scale was so small that it did not cause any resonance in society (Svetlitsky, 2011). Marriage migration from Ukraine coincides with the rapid development and growth of the international marriage business since the beginning of the 21st century. The democratisation of social life in Ukraine and the increasing possibility of making international contacts, has increased the visibility of marriage migration in Ukrainian society. In fact, today Ukraine is one of the leading exporters of brides in the international marriage market (Parfan, 2013). The result has been that it has gained a negative reputation. Ukrainian women-migrants being portrayed by the world as ‘mail-order brides’, faced new challenges related to violence and stereotyping. Along with the stigmatised Ukrainian female migrants, the first to feel the consequences were the governments in the developed capitalist countries, the migration policies of which were not ready for a new category of migrant inflows.

The Government of the United States had to respond to a series of outbreaks of domestic violence, the worst of which concerned Ukrainian citizen and ‘mail-order bride’, Alla Barney from New Jersey, whose husband cut her throat in front of their 4 year-old son (Kummer, 2005). After several such cases, and through the efforts of the American feminist movement of the 1970s which fought against gendered violence, the United States introduced the “International Marriage Broker Regulation Act” (IMBRA)—which protects the rights of ‘mail-order brides’ by requiring background checks of all marriage visa sponsors. Since 2006, marriage agencies are obliged to inform clients about the real age, marital status, and criminal record of foreign men before they start to communicate, and to explain the legal rights of women in situations of violence. Marriage migrations from Ukraine have become stigmatised and stereotyped, even for women who are educated, empowered and from highly-skilled professions.
Across the two cohorts of ‘transition’ and ‘dividend migrants’ it was the latter which used marriage to come to Australia to implement their aims, needs, values and strong sense of agency guided by achievement, not survival. As mentioned above, there were six participants in the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ who received permanent residency in Australia through the marriage migration stream: Anastasiya, Oksana, Ruslana, Svitlana, Alla and Daryna. Their stories suggest that women in Ukraine are still presumed to be living a life that will lead to marriage and children, which signposts that women in Ukraine experience more pressure than men.

The narratives of the marriage migrants reflected, firstly, that these participants had high educational levels. All six respondents hold university degrees. Anastasiya, Oksana, Svitlana, Daryna and Alla have Masters degrees, and Ruslana holds a PhD. This is an unusually high standard for this type of migration (Tolstokorova, 2012) and provides insight into the character of marriage migration from Ukraine to Australia. Education in Ukraine has become equally available and encouraged, so more and more women have qualifications that enables them to obtain well-paid professional work. Second, the occupational composition of the interviewed marriage migrants also speaks to the fact that such migration has a rather elite character—Oksana was a medical researcher, Alla a professional artist, Anastasiya a librarian, Ruslana was a lawyer, Svitlana a chief accountant, and Daryna a fashion designer. Therefore, it means that the women had good and highly-skilled jobs in Ukraine.

Despite the fact that more and more women in Ukraine are in the labour force, there are still differences in family duties. Daryna and Alla said that it is still the norm in Ukraine for women to have the double burden of paid employment and unpaid family work. Third, the interviewed marriage migrants were mainly middle-aged, in their 30s and 40s; only one respondent was in her late 20s (Daryna). The average marriage age in Ukraine is 30 for men and 27 for women (Butkevych, 2012). Therefore, it is very hard for a woman in her 30s and 40s to find a good husband. Furthermore, the discrimination towards women in their late 30s and 40s in the Ukraine labour market often makes women move from full-time paid employment to a second marriage in this period. Of the six interviewed marriage migrants, four have been divorced and their marriage in Australia was their second marriage.
Participants’ narratives suggest that women are fashioning achievement life strategies that need to have marriage (and babies) and work carefully balanced. They negotiated their career in Ukraine, romance and dating, and a family - a husband and children – in order, to achieve fulfillment and harmony in life as well as professional development and self-realisation in Australia. Similar to the male skilled migrants analysed in the previous section who were concerned about being part of the outsourced labour force in Ukraine, the interviewed female marriage migrants value a progression from lack of engagement to engagement in a space where they can do the job they like and organise their lives around a combination of family and work, which brings them sense of achievement and self-realisation.

9.2.2.2 Meeting and marrying Australian

According to the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection, marriage migration is a part of the family migration stream (DIBP, 2014). Migrants who arrive in Australia and are either already married to an Australian or who come with the intention to marry their fiancé usually enter Australia on a partner visa. According to Khoo’s (2001) classification there are four types of marriage migrations in Australia: (1) recent immigrants (e.g. refugees) sponsoring spouses left behind; (2) Australian residents sponsoring spouses/prospective spouses whom they married/formed a relationship with while overseas or when the foreign partner was in Australia; (3) Australian residents using an introduction agency to seek marriage partners from overseas; and (4) co-ethnic marriages when immigrants or their children sponsor a spouse they met while visiting their homeland with the intention of finding a marriage partner.

Applying this classification to the stories of the interviewed marriage migrants, this study’s sample of six participants falls into the first three groups. Svitlana came to Australia on a sponsored spouse visa, sponsored by her husband who was a recent immigrant from Ukraine through the refugee stream. Anastasiya met her future husband in Australia through work after meeting at workplace where she was conducting her work on a visiting fellowship. They got married and she received a sponsored spouse visa to stay permanently in Australia. Daryna, Ruslana and Oksana also fall into the second category of marriage migrants who were sponsored by Australian residents to whom they got married when they were studying in Australia. Alla’s marriage falls into the third group. Alla met her Australian husband through a dating website. Alla was against the idea, so her friend
created a profile for Alla and responded to enquires in her name. With her friend’s assistance, Alla fell in love with an Australian and received a prospective marriage visa to come to Australia to build the relationship.

The cohort of marriage migrants tended to have wide social networks through which they met their future Australian husbands. Alla said she had wide communication and extensive contact with foreign citizens through her work and travels before coming to Australia. Ruslana, Daryna and Oksana said they met their future husbands in Australia through friends. Therefore, this type of ‘dividend migrants’—marriage migrants—is typically exposed to Western culture and has a good knowledge of English prior to marriage. All of the participants, except Svitlana who reunited with her Ukrainian husband in Australia, demonstrated an excellent knowledge of English which they acquired in Ukraine and polished after they arrived in Australia.

9.2.2.3 Mail-order bride identity issues

When talking about their experiences of arriving in Australia through the family reunion stream, the six marriage migrants all said that they had been stereotyped as ‘mail-order brides’. The idea of the ‘mail-order brides’ derives from popular and academic discourses since the early 1980s around international marriage (Villapando 1989), which appealed to two contrary images: “either vulnerable victims of mail operated international trades, or manipulative opportunists who marry solely for economic security” (Glodava and Onizuka 1994; Sciachitano, 2000 in Kim, 2010, p. 10). These two images are typically represented in terms of sexualised women from specific nationalities. Such an intersection of sexuality and nationality shaped the juncture at which the interviewed marriage migrants from Ukraine found themselves.

The interviewed women did not find the allusion flattering. Alla said that it presumed she “looked for a better life by listing herself in catalogues and been selected by a man for marriage”. Similarly, Anastasiya and Daryna said they felt that being stereotyped as ‘mail-order brides’ suggested they held low positions or were of low status in their home country, and that they did work that earned them less respect and low wages. Anastasiya said:
Some of the Australians, friends of my husband, had several times talked of my marriage as an arrangement motivated by horrible life conditions in Ukraine, low-paid job and my opportunism. It always deeply offends me, as I am a highly-educated woman with my own plans for life and aspirations.

Anastasiya’s story and the stories of the other women show a struggle with gender stereotyping and negativism in Australia towards them because of the stream of migration they used and the image of the ‘mail-order bride’ as an opportunist desiring economic security and lacking personal identity and any of her own aspirations, culture and plans.

An interesting incident Alla mentioned in her narrative when talking about the stereotyping of Ukrainian women marriage migrants as ‘mail-order brides’, was a radio competition she had heard about in New Zealand. In this competition the radio station promised the winner of the competition a romantic trip to Ukraine and a bride who the winner could select from an assortment of local marriage agencies. Alla’s story does not cover all the nuances of the episode, so this additional information about the competition sets out the way in which it contributed to “the commodification of Ukrainian women in the developed world and the labelling of all Ukrainian women as ‘mail-order-brides’” (Ruslana).

In winter 2011, the news about the contest on New Zealand Radio Rock FM flew around the world. The conditions of the competition outraged New Zealand women’s rights movement, the Ukrainian community of New Zealand, as well as the Ukrainian women’s movement “Femen”, which at that time was already well-known internationally (Parfan, 2013). In the protest, the activists of “Femen” gathered in front of the famous Kyiv registry office, popularly known as the “Bermuda Triangle”. They were bare-chested wearing elements of wedding dresses and holding signs with the slogans “Welcome to Hell”, “Ukraine is not a brothel” and “Bride for Wildman” (Svetlitsky, 2011). After a while, the story died down and only a few news sites mentioned the incident. They reported that the winner went to Ukraine and had a romance with a Ukrainian woman, but that it did not get to a wedding.

Alla used this story as an example of the media discourse that exists around Ukrainian women, and she emphasised several times that “it is offensive as it has nothing to do with my case or many other Ukrainian marriage migrants who I know in Sydney”. Ruslana,
who also said she felt the stigma attached to her for being a ‘mail-order bride’ from Ukraine in Australia, noticed the input of the media in portraying Ukrainian women as such, and said:

*It is interesting that TV shows, news and TV serials both in Ukraine and some in Australia related to female migrants from Eastern Europe—in some cases specifically Ukrainian female migrants—are dominated by generally negative images, especially of those who arrived through marriage.*

The abuse the participants experienced in Australia was clearly linked to the broad perception that Ukrainian women, as ‘mail-order brides’, ‘do not speak proper English, want to take all the money from their husbands with only one intention—to stay in Australia’ (Anastasiya). Then Anastasiya added: “I heard from many Australian men that they are scared of Russian and Ukrainian women and try to stay away from them”. Being stereotyped and being seen as a danger to Australian men, the participants suggested that as soon as people heard their background and realised they were from Ukraine, they were straight away assumed to not speak the language of their new destination, not have access to a social support system, not have personal financial resources or the ability to obtain them, not be able to support themselves, and not know much about their partners’ interpersonal behaviours, and were therefore assumed to be entering into an abusive relationship (Crandall et al., 2005; Post, 2000). Ruslana said:

*It is particularly offensive, because when I tell them that I have several degrees, that I’ve worked in highly-skilled jobs, make money by myself and fluently speak English with some accent, it doesn’t change much because they have labelled me and assigned me to a group in their mind. I can feel it with men especially.*

Another participant, Oksana, also expressed the negative feelings of being stereotyped as a ‘mail-order bride’:

*It happened a couple of times ... when I told people in Australia that I am from Ukraine, they felt OK making some jokes about Ukrainian women and their accessibility. They typically start commenting about my appearance and*
body and then even allow themselves some general offensive jokes about Ukrainian prostitutes and ‘mail-order brides’. Sometimes I am lost for words and do not know how to react politely.

The negative feelings experienced among the participants because of such labelling was caused by the contradiction of the comments with their professional background, their financial security before migration, their high level of education and good knowledge of English, and the excellent and stable relationship with their husbands in Australia. Oksana said:

*I married my husband because I love him very much. I had a decent life back in Ukraine. I am from a middle-class family and I was never in need. I have a university education and worked as a medical researcher. I want my case to be the one to break the negative labelling of Ukrainian women.*

Alla said:

*I do not even want to think about what people say. I know my case is different. But it always happens that people like to generalise. Negative and controversial cases are always catchy. But in relation to me and all the other highly-educated and financially independent married Ukrainian women, it is not fair.*

Ruslana said in relation to Ukrainian marriage migrants and her own experience, “the status of marriage migrants should be determined by the meaning and motives the woman had when coming to Australia for marriage, not by some media or rumours”. Furthermore, the labelling attached to marriage migrants with respect to professional downgrading and deskilling as a result of their migration was not reflected in the narratives of Ukrainian marriage migrants in Australia.

**9.2.2.4 Motivations and achievements in Australia**

As mentioned above, the life strategies of marriage migrants were much more carefully plotted than those of skilled migrants. The women aimed not only for professional success and development, but for self-realisation in family life, work and leisure. They were
looking for a family/work balance and self-realisation, which was not possible in Ukraine. Alla said she aimed for “life/work balance”; Ruslana said she aimed “to get a global professional engagement by getting an Australian diploma in law, and aimed to create a strong family” to develop herself both in career and family life. Oksana, Daryna and Alla emphasised that they aimed for and needed to be engaged with a job that brought them self-realisation and gave them room to enjoy family life. Therefore, similar to the cohort of skilled ‘dividend migrants’ marriage migrants also experienced a lack of engagement in Ukraine, but not in the sense of global technological trends, but in the sense of engagement in their work and the ability to combine it with family life. As a result, marriage migrants, as with many other ‘dividend migrants’, tend to “paint” an idealized picture of their lives in Australia and envision the gains and achievements in exaggeratedly bright colours.

Applying the dichotomy of achievement life strategies analysed in Chapter Eight, marriage migrants demonstrate a combination of aims, values, needs and sense of agency that suggests they use marriage migration to implement the two types of achievement life strategy—to achieve professional and family success, as well as to achieve self-realisation. Furthermore, participants demonstrated they had a certain idea of progression from lack of engagement to engagement in a space where they do the job they like and organise their lives around a combination of family and work in a way which brings them moral satisfaction. Such aspirations in combination with love, sympathy or respect for their partner/husband, guided and informed their achievement life strategies. The marriage ‘dividend migrants’ sought migration as a way to achieve their aims, needs, and values. The decision to marry, as a general matter, was found in the narratives to be motivated by a number of equally important factors.

The motivation for professional self-realisation occupies a rather important place in the hierarchy of motives. Oksana said: “I thought Australia had better conditions to realise my professional skills and to start doing what I really like. Then I met Harry and my life improved; I moved to Australia”. When talking about her motivations for marriage migration, Oksana used words such as “better conditions” “realise my professional skills”, and “doing what I really like”. This suggests that Oksana is someone in control of her life who seeks better conditions to explore her professional preferences and feel complete in realising what she feels like doing. She expresses a strong sense of agency in relation to her professional choices, which has to be not only sufficient in performing the job, but also
in bringing her a feeling of professional self-realisation. The importance of professional self-realisation was also voiced by Daryna: “I wanted to stop doing things out of necessity, I sought ways to realise myself in what I like”. Daryna’s word “necessity” expresses the suffering and the wish to free herself from the burden of performing work which does not bring her joy and self-realisation in what she likes. These extracts suggest that as achievers, these women used marriage as a part of their strategy for professional self-realisation.

Another very important motivation voiced by the six marriage migrants was the possibility of a work/family balance in Australia. As Ruslana said: “I am developing my career further in Australia. I feel much freer in Australia to combine work and family”. Before migration, Ruslana worked as a lawyer in top Ukrainian companies and had “a very successful career”. She arrived in Australia on a student visa to do a degree in law, but got married and obtained permanent residency in Australia. She said she always wanted to be successful not only in her career, but in family life too—“Migration to Australia made it happen”, she said, “I feel my wish to succeed in family life and in my career came true”. These participants, except Anastasiya who arrived in her late 40s and had no career aspirations and was family-oriented, reported that their migration was a step forward in their professional careers. As Alla said, “I wanted to have a baby and family before migrating. But the Australian lifestyle and my husband’s support encouraged me to create my own business. I feel complete and happy to combine work and family”.

Empowerment and the progression from lack of engagement to engagement with what participants liked to do in terms of career in Ukraine was another reason for their migration. Participants emphasised that with the help of migration they had begun to be engaged in business and things which brought them moral satisfaction, fun and a feeling of completeness and comfort. Ruslana said: “In emotional terms I feel great, in my profession I do what I feel like doing”. Alla said: “I started my own business and I feel empowered. It brings me moral satisfaction and self-realisation”. From this standpoint, the marriage of participants served as the extension of the field of choice of behavioural models for women. Alla further said: “I have now a completely different life and the power to adjust my behaviour in relation to my aspirations and future business achievements”. Alla, who started her own art therapy business after migration, expressed that she gained a new behavioural model to follow and feels she has the power to adjust it accordingly.
Drawing on the participants’ stories, it can also be noted that the unfavourable structural conditions for women in Ukraine also motivated and facilitated the participants’ migration to Australia and/or their choice to stay permanently by using the marriage stream. Anastasiya said:

*Ukraine had no future when I decided to move to Australia; there were particularly unfavourable prospects for me, as a woman, in Ukraine. I was getting older and started to feel the discrimination in the labour market. I am sure if I lost my job then, I would have stayed unemployed.*

Anastasiya’s vision of Ukraine and the reality for women in Ukraine suggests that discrimination in the labour market and the feminisation of unemployment in Ukraine (Grushetsky and Kharchenko, 2009) motivated her choice to move to Australia. As Anastasiya explained in the interviews, the choice to marry Harry and to move to Australia “was not an easy one”; she had to evaluate the advantages and all possible risks associated with migration. Anastasiya gave up her job at the library and went to Australia motivated by “*the decent conditions for retirement in Australia, by the freedom to do what I feel like, and by the kindness, care and respect towards women in Australia*”. One of the crucial factors that Anastaisya emphasised was the difference in the way Ukrainian and Australian men treated women. She said:

*Men in Australia are better than in Ukraine. They treat women as equal, they can babysit, do housework, and share all the responsibilities equally. In Ukraine, women do all the housework, plus work full-time and provide psychological support for men. This is why I divorced my Ukrainian husband and went to Australia in search of women’s happiness.*

When asked what she meant by “women’s happiness”, she answered “*it means having a family where both take care of each other and support each other’s life*”.

An interesting fact voiced by all the respondents was their complete satisfaction with their marriage and migration to Australia. When asked about the changes in their lives after migration, all interviewees unanimously reported that their lives definitely changed for the better and significantly improved in professional, social and psychological terms. For
example, Svitlana said: “My life improved after migration; I enjoy every day in Australia, take care of my family, have a great circle of friends and build my career now”. Anastasiya said she is happy that she looks for employment “not for the sake of money, but for self-realisation in my professional and social life”. Alla said she is “simply happy”. The satisfaction of the participants with migration was driven by their good family relationship, career development and self-realisation. Ruslana said “I am very happy in my marriage and feel blessed to find my second half in Australia and to have such a good family relationship”. Alla said “I can say that I have succeeded professionally in Australia” and Anastasiya said “I am on the way to self-realisation, still discovering what I like and searching for inspiration”. The analysis of participants’ lives after migration is analysed in detail in Chapter Ten.

9.3 Conclusion

In this Chapter the experiences of the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ who arrived through the skilled and family migration streams are examined. Both streams are framed in terms of the link to global orders and processes and by the lack of opportunities for development and professional self-realisation in Ukraine.

Skilled migration during the period 2003-2014 was found to be structurally framed by IT market growth both in Australia and Ukraine, and the international exposure of Ukrainian professionals, linked to global orders, services and corporations, to parts of the IT industry outside their country. The skilled migration stream was used by highly educated people (mostly male) in their field of employment, predominantly from central and east Ukraine. This group of achievers used the skilled migration stream as a means to negotiate their way into Australia in order to implement their achievement life strategies.

Marriage migration, as the second most popular migration stream through which ‘dividend migrants’ implement their achievement life strategies, was associated with professional and emotional fulfilment and self-realisation in women. Marriage migration in the cohort of the ‘dividend migrants’ is characterised by the involvement of highly-educated (Masters degree and PhD), middle-aged (in their 30s–40s) women in highly-skilled professions such as lawyers, bankers and researchers. Despite the elite character of the participants’ marriage migration, this cohort expressed their suffering from being stereotyped as ‘mail-order brides’. The set of motivations for professional self-realisation, family/work balance,
empowerment and for the progression from a lack of engagement to engagement with what participants liked to do in terms of career, presents them as a cohort of achievers. Aiming for more than just development and professional self-realisation as skilled migrants do, female participants used marriage to implement their life strategies and express their complete satisfaction with family and professional life after migration.
CHAPTER TEN

AFTER MIGRATION: ADJUSTMENT TO NEW LIFE

10.1 Introduction

Chapter Eight and Nine focused on the retrospectively-oriented components of a life strategy, reflecting the ‘dividend migrants’ evaluation of their lives before leaving Ukraine, and exploring the way they came to Australia. This chapter examines the present, analysing issues of adaptation and identification in their lives in Australia. It considers the achievement life strategy in relation to the internalisation of the new reality the participants had to master in their lives after migration. Firstly, it sheds light on what the ‘dividends migrants’ gained from migration; second, it considers their new occupational trajectories, and third, it examines the features of their achievement life strategies after migration. Finally, it explores their achievement life strategy in terms of their future plans.

10.2 Dividends from migration

‘Dividend migrants’ were named for the way they framed their migration with the intention of receiving benefits in the form of dividends from their investment in migration. Interestingly, the dividends, as discussed by participants, were profession-specific and determined by the nature of work primarily in the area of information technologies. Marko, Panas, Tamara, Mykola, and Maksym accumulated specific working experience as IT system administrators, QA testers, programmers and IT business analysts. Apart from the better incomes, varied jobs and opportunities for professional development (described in Chapter Eight), participants also experienced the following ‘dividends’ after migration: (1) non-material and cultural dividends; (2) health and lifestyle dividends and (3) gender equality dividends. It is worth mentioning that these ‘dividends’ are envisioned by a number of respondents in this cohort in an idealized way. The narratives they construct present the subjective estimations of the informants of the benefits from migration. This narrative optimism should be taken into account when assessing the informants’ satisfaction with their migration decision as described in the later chapters of Part 2.

The socio-cultural context in which the participants were brought up played a significant role in their evaluation of the cultural and non-material dividends from migration. IT
professionals Panas, Borys, Fedir, Maksym, Tamara, and Marko, who worked in America, Canada, the UK, Sweden, Norway and Finland, said that for them, an instructive aspect of the work abroad was the opportunity to experience new patterns of work/life balance and new ways of living. Borys said he “tried different cuisines and it was exciting to find ways of cooking it, which helped me to master the new healthier and modern food trends”.

In relation to his discoveries of Australian food culture, Borys said:

**I worked in several countries before migration. It is striking that food in Australia is much lighter than everywhere else. In Ukraine, salad can be chicken and potato; here salad is made from salad leaves, pieces of pear, pieces of avocado and nuts. One Ukrainian portion of salad is enough for two Australians. I learned a new style and my cooking and eating habits have become healthier. I love it.**

Borys suggests his cooking and eating habits have changed since he moved to Australia. He evaluates this as a positive and healthier change, which he enjoys and loves.

In terms of non-material dividends, without exception, all respondents focused on the opportunities for outdoor recreation as a cultural dividend from migration. Anatolyi said that he finally implemented his “long-held dream to experience the natural beauty of Australia”, and regularly goes “camping, climbing, hiking or surfing”. Borys, whose migration was driven by what he saw as the benefits of the natural beauty of Australia, has a love of professional climbing and used every opportunity to go to the mountains near Sydney. During the interview, he enthusiastically shared his impressions about Australian nature and his favourite places to climb and hike. Two other participants, Oksana and Lyudmyla, indicated that one of the non-material dividends of migration to Australia was “the possibility of escaping winter” (Oksana) and “living in the most comfortable climate zone, in Sydney” (Lyudmyla).

Alla and Anastasiya indicated that their exposure to a culture with a less materialistic focus than Ukraine was a non-materialistic dividend and personal gain that came from migrating. Anastasiya said: “Australia facilitated a kind of spiritual insight; I started to do some creative work and developed new hobbies”. Alla said: “the desire and inspiration to create, emerged in Australia”, while in Ukraine she explained that “everyone feels
stressed and under pressure from pursuing the material things”. Several other migrants (Borys, Fedir and Tamara) said that in Ukraine their lives did not leave them enough time “for spiritual relief by creation” (Tamara), whereas after migration they had enough time for themselves.

In terms of cultural dividends, some of the participants said that since they came to Australia they had learnt to be more careful and respectful towards people. Fedir said: “I pay more attention to family values”; Maksym noted: “I am more aware of the specific interests and needs of my family members”. Another example is Anastasiya, a librarian by profession who came to Australia through the family stream (marriage), was impressed, as she said, by “the ability of Australians to stay friendly and respect the views of others, which can be completely opposite to theirs”. “Being humble” is what participants learnt from their first months in Australia and they successfully adopted this dividend in their everyday lives. As Marko said: “I learned how to be humble and it’s fantastic; I see it as one of my very important new benefits from migration”.

The second dividend that the Andryi, Bohdan, Alla, Anatolyi, Borys, Mykola, Marko, Daryna, Tamara, and Zoya mentioned was the shift in lifestyle to a healthier diet and a more active sports life following their exposure to Australian culture (the health and lifestyle dividend). As Fedir mentioned: “Ukrainians are not very active in sport, they focus on the problem of earning money or improving their flats, etc. They do not think about anything else, they don’t have time for sport and health”.

After several months in Sydney, 29 year-old Fedir and his 25 year-old wife made positive shifts as Fedir said, “towards a pro-sport life position”. Anatolyi and Panas said that under the influence of the social environment of their host countries, they started avoiding harmful habits. As Panas explained, life in Australia “tends to be more demanding in matters of physical health and the quality of life compared to Ukraine”. These participants see Australia as a country where a healthy lifestyle has become a priority. They expressed that they felt the positive pressure of the environment in terms of the need to care for their body. For example, Borys, who jogged once in a while in Ukraine, voiced the positive change:
Everyone in Australia is obsessed with sport, healthy eating and not smoking. The brightest memory of my first days in Sydney is huge numbers of people running not only in parks but also in the CBD. I remember when I was running once in a while next to my house in Ukraine, groups of young people were looking at me as they would an alien. They would chat and drink instead.

Further in the interview, Borys explained that practicing a healthy lifestyle helped him to integrate into Australian society more quickly. He said: “After arriving, in addition to running, I decided to join the Sydney climbing club, which went camping and hiking every weekend. It helped me to find my first Australian friends and to start feeling that Australia is my new home”. Sport activities and other healthy practices bring people together (Green, 2008) and for the participants become a way of building a stronger connection to the new environment of the host society by adopting the best qualities of Australian life.

The third dividend demonstrated in the narratives is that of gender equality, which was particularly strongly expressed in the stories of the female “dividend migrants” (Ruslana, Oksana, Svitlana, Alla and Kateryna). The narratives of these women showed a changing mentality and transformation in their gender identity. Their deep dive into a new social space, with a more democratic social and gender culture, helped them, “to gain economic independence” (Kateryna) and an “awareness of their position of power on the labour market and in the family” (Svitlana).

The difference between Ukraine and Australia in terms of gender equality is significant. It is revealed in the lack of equal employment opportunities for women in Ukraine and occupational segregation, both vertical and horizontal. Ukrainian women suffer from lower wages and a lack of representation in higher positions in the public and private sector. Women’s average wages in 2007 were only 73 per cent of those of men (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2007). As many as 75 per cent of Ukrainian women experience physical, economic, sexual or psychological violence in their families (International Labour Office, 2010). In the labour market, these problems become more obvious with

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17 In recent decades women in Australia have made significant strides towards achieving equality with men, however Australia’s performance in terms of gendered equality in the world is not the best. According to the latest release of gender gap rankings by The World Economic Forum (WEF) Australia was not even in the top 20 among the 142 global economies (countries) assessed. Coming in at a paltry 24th, Australia placed behind all of the Nordic countries, the United States, the Philippines, and Rwanda.
female migrants when compared to the gender equality in Australia, parental leave for both sexes, sexual discrimination legislation. Being in the more progressive nation of Australia led to a change in these women’s perceptions of their social roles and status, and as individuals they benefitted from the structural framework that emphasised gender equality.

One of the positive effects of the migration experience for these women is that Australia’s development of a more democratic gender code was a mechanism for the transformation of their identity. This observation is demonstrated in the narrative of Svitlana, the accountant, who came to Australia to join her husband who had arrived a couple of years earlier:

*I feel in Australia women are more independent. In Ukraine women usually work hard, do all the housework, and sometimes feed the whole family, and this is normal. Here, a man can babysit and take care of the child if the family so desires. Also, women are less disadvantaged in the workplace because of their gender and age. I feel more independent and equal here.*

Svitlana reflects on the situation in Ukraine, where women are expected to combine housework with full time employment and feed the whole family as well. She gives an example of the different Australian style by describing the fact that it is socially acceptable for men to babysit their kids.

*One of our family friends, a man, enjoys babysitting his daughter. His wife works and provides for the family. When asked if he is bored and whether he wants to return to full-time employment, he always smiles and says that he is the happiest Dad ever because he can afford to see how his daughter grows. He jokes that it is we who are strange for asking such questions”, said Svitlana.*

It is after this anecdote that she made the comment about feeling more independent and equal.

A very good example of the changes in the gender code is raised by Kateryna, a 34 year-old skilled migrant who arrived in Australia from Britain with her British husband and two children. Today she is a single mother in Australia; she divorced her husband in the first
year after migration. In relation to her life after divorce and the differences in attitudes towards single mothers in Ukraine and Australia she said:

I saw that women should not renounce their inner selves, their interests. Women should not put the interests of men first. We should not reject ourselves, and we should be happy. I saw that Australia provides for this. In Ukraine, if a woman has children and she is single, such a woman is considered being a “secondary product”. One month ago some Ukrainian athletes said to me: “poor thing, you have two children and you are single”, and I said: “In Australia it is an advantage”. If a woman has children and she also works, it gives her even more status, compared to those who don’t have kids.

Kateryna used the expression “secondary product” when describing attitudes to single mothers in Ukraine, and said that in Australia it is completely the opposite and seen as a sign of strength and competence. The reason that a woman is seen as a “secondary product” is that in Ukrainian families the men’s interests tend to come before women’s, which can result in women being unhappy with their lives (Hrycak, 2001). Further in the interview Kateryna admitted that she had changed her attitude that women “should be there for the family”. She confessed that before migration she even condemned women who had full-time careers. Now in Australia, she says she has “more balance”. Further, Kateryna expresses the very positive experience of being a single mother in Australia, because having children does not detract from the social status of women, as it does back in Ukraine. She said that “there is no social judgement and welfare policy is very friendly towards single mothers”. The State provides financial support and services for utilities and transportation, which was stressed several times by Kateryna during the interview as being “an enormous advantage of life in Australia”. She said she feels she is “being cared for” in Australia.

This change in mindset about gender relations affected not only the women participants, but also the men. For example, Fedir shared his experience of the lack of pressure on women and men to have children and get married in Australia:
Women here want to be treated equally and they are treated equally. They have children later here and they get married later. It is closer to the type of life I want. All our acquaintances of our age in Ukraine have children. Why should we do it if we don’t feel that we want it? Our parents were always nagging at us as if there was something wrong with us, because we had no children.

Fedir sums up that together with his wife they feel comfortable in Australia, as no one, including parents and friends, judges them for not being married or for not having children. In his interview Fedir emphasised that there is less judgement of women than in Ukraine. He said his wife likes the Australian style more.

An additional interesting fact is that practically all the male participants (Andryi, Simon, Maksym, Borys, Panas, Mykola, and Fedir) responded to the question about shifts in family roles after migration, that in their families there was no division based on gender-specific responsibilities. They noted that even in Ukraine, if there had been a slight division, then it has been completely erased. As Maksym said: “I used to share the housework with my wife since we got married. Nothing changed after we moved to Australia, the equality stayed”.

10.3 Occupational experiences in Australia

In terms of their skills and education the ‘dividend migrants’ are strongly associated with good labour market outcomes. As a group they tended to be employed after migration in occupations for which they were qualified. This section describes the occupational careers of the participants. In addition to using the narrative data, Mrozowicki’s (2011) occupational careers descriptors are applied (a similar framework was used in Chapter Seven to describe the occupational careers of the “transition migrants” as “patchwork” and “dead-end”). The data shows that a common story found in the narratives of ‘dividend migrants’ is the experience of choosing an exact (Maksym, Panas, Fedir, and Anatolyi) or even better career match for their educational and professional background (Marko, Mykola, Daryna, Tamara, Lyudmyla, Simon, Andryi, Kateryna, Zoryana, and Oksana). Two types of careers, described by Mrozowicki (2011)—anchor and bricolage—are useful tools to understand the occupational patterns of the ‘dividend migrants’.
According to Mrozowicki, an anchor career is an “intentionally shaped single-track pattern, based on lasting employment in a particular work organization in a particular field” (2011, p. 160). A career is described as “anchoring” when participants, while still in Ukraine, have already established and guaranteed their employment in the same company in Australia, and is only achieved by Anatolyi and Panas. The case of Anatolyi is a perfect example of the anchor career pattern. Anatolyi, who trained as a specialist in applied mathematics, moved to Kiev from his small town in the L----- area (Eastern Ukraine), attracted by the higher incomes and professional development. After being employed for a couple of years as a programmer in one of the international insurance companies in Kiev, he applied for emigration to Australia. He explained that he experienced a smooth career transition into the Australian labour market:

*I had a very cool boss in Kiev. He wrote a letter to Australia—“good dude flies to you, do you want him?” They said: “Yes!” That's how I found my job in Australia. The job found me. I didn’t have to work as a cleaner or a loader. I arrived and continued to work for the same company, organised in the way I am used to. I got an excellent salary, just an awesome one—$120,000 per year. For me everything stayed the same, safe and stable. I'm a programmer for the same company, but in a better country with better pay.*

In some sense, anchoring is similar to, as Anatolyi said later in his narrative, “life-long employment typical of State socialism”. Drawing on this comparison with the State socialism of Soviet times, Anatolyi refers to the security and stability of his occupational trajectory. In his case, anchoring played a securing function and guaranteed income in the first days after arrival, which as he pointed out, “sped up my successful integration”.

Panas is the other participant with an anchoring career. He also found a job in Australia through his boss in Kyiv before migrating, and also talked about his “secure transition between the two labour markets of two different countries”, which meant “walking straight into the same position and into the same company upon migration”. Typical for achievement migrants performing anchoring career patterns is the “intentionally protected continuity of action context” (Mrozowicki, 2011, p. 161). This means that when a worker gets a new job it is in the same occupational area for relatively the same rewards. The labour transitions by Panas and Anatolyi were agentially co-determined, meaning that their
bosses’ references from Ukraine and their contacts in Australia were important. Panas and Anatolyi had to perform excellent work while still in Ukraine to prove to their bosses that they were competent and worth “guaranteeing” to a Human Resources unit in an Australian office. As Anatolyi said: “It took some time for me to prove to my boss in Ukraine that I am a great professional. Then he put a word in for me to get a job in Australia”.

Mrozowicki (2011) suggests that maintaining an anchor career may demand a reduction in a career position or even an economic reduction for the sake of guaranteeing employment. This was the case for Panas in Australia after migration. As he said: “I could have earned more for the same job in Ukraine or the US, but as a start I thought it was good enough and secure”. Having a guaranteed position in the same company in Australia before arrival is, unsurprisingly, a rare occurrence among the participants. The Australian and Ukrainian economies are not interdependent, imports and exports are minor—thus there are only a few firms covering both markets. They are predominantly IT companies, where Anatolyi and Panas worked.

The second career pattern described by Mrozowicki (2011) discovered in the narratives of the ‘dividend migrants’ was bricolage. Bricolage careers were found in the narratives of the majority of the interviewed ‘dividend migrants’ (Marko, Mykola, Maksym, Bohdan, Daryna, Tamara, Lyudmyla, Simon, Andryi, Kateryna, Zoryana, and Oksana). Bricolage careers are slightly different from anchor careers in that they are more oriented towards family goals, which demand high flexibility and job mobility, and exclude the emphasis on workplace continuity.

As a multi-track occupational choice, the bricolage careers of the participants involved a high level of responsiveness to institutional and structural challenges in the new environment. For example, in order to improve his individual and family’s economic situation, Maksym, who arrived in Australia with his family, had to slightly reshape his occupational choice and job preference in his search for the best job opportunities. He said: “I worked as a programmer in Ukraine; after migration it took me two and a half months to find a job in the IT sector, but in a different position. I took it as I needed to provide for my family”. Bricolage occupational choice is influenced by family concerns, both present and anticipated.
In a bricolage scenario participants aim to match their strengths, weaknesses, values and preferred lifestyle with the requirements and advantages of a range of different occupations in their sphere of expertise and in terms of the availability of resources. The narratives of Lyudmyla and Kateryna bring to the fore the discontinuity that can mark the bricolage careers. This discontinuity, however, is a response to the unfamiliar structural organisation of the labour market in the new country and is a short-term experience, after which migrants perform even better than they did in Ukraine.

Lyudmyla, who worked as chief accountant for her and her husband’s company in Ukraine, started her employment in Australia as a junior accountant, because she said she realised that her “life had zeroed and she had to start everything from the beginning”. She said she has no regrets about this choice, as “after one month in this role I was promoted”. Lyudmyla is motivated and has high hopes for further professional advancement.

Kateryna worked as interpreter before her migration and has a university degree in journalism. She had to make compromises because of her family commitments. In Australia she found a job in her profession and is employed as a journalist. Furthermore, she started her own publishing business. Bricolage is the dominant logic among the stories of participants who came to Australia for professional and social advancement. Based on the level of education and skills of this cohort of migrants revealed through interview data and observation, it would seem that skilled and family ‘dividend migrants’ tended to upgrade when they found work in Australia.

The broad bricolage occupational patterns developed by Mrozowicki (2011) can be more carefully divided into two further categories—the entrepreneurial and the educational. The entrepreneurial patterns were demonstrated by Panas, Mykola and Kateryna, and involve starting one’s own business. Decisions in this pattern are based on the availability of resources, skills, experiences, opportunities and labour market niches in Australia. As Kateryna said: “I realised that I had all the skills and resources to start a publishing company to produce Ukrainian books for Ukrainian-speaking children living outside Ukraine. There was a market niche for it”. Kateryna’s quote literally covers each of the components of the entrepreneurial pattern. Similar to Kateryna, Panas, who worked upon arrival in Australia as a programmer for a big international company, created his own start-up providing IT services, for which he had an excellent set of expertise and skills. He said:
“while being employed by a big enterprise, I did research and as soon as I found a niche in the Australian IT market which was not occupied, I took this opportunity”. The entrepreneurial patterns of these two ‘dividend migrants’ are built on the combination of different economic and occupational activities involving the match of their skills and resources with the availability of a niche in the market.

Zoryana, Bohdan and Marko were younger participants and they entered Australia on temporary student visas and then stayed permanently in Australia through the skilled migration stream. In this group, an educational bricolage pattern is visible. The pattern of these three highly-skilled migrants showed that they gained new skills at university level, with the aim of becoming well-paid Australian professionals. In order to do this, they discontinued their professional careers in Ukraine for study purposes and chose to migrate to the place that offered the best study programs in their desired occupations. The courses were for a period of one to two years. For example, Zoryana came to Australia to study accounting in order to get a well-paid job which was in demand in Australia, Marko quit his job at a mining company in D---- to come to study in Australia as an IT manager, and Bohdan quit his job at a physics research institute in K----- and received a grant for his studies in Australia.

These participants realised that their professional skills would need to be reshaped in the post-educational period in order to find a perfect match for the Australian market. Thus, these participants started their employment while simultaneously continuing their studies. This was the case with Zoryana, an accountant, and Marko, an IT manager and business analyst. While studying, they worked hard, even “after hours”, to bring their professional skills to a higher level as quickly as possible in order to achieve outstanding professional results. Marko said: “I worked during my studies and then obtained a well-paid job in Sydney”.

Marko’s and Zoryana’s occupational approach can be described as a “hybrid action pattern” (Mrozowicki, 2011), which is typical for an achievement life strategy (Resnik, 1995). Marko and Zoryana strengthened their main occupation through Australian education and the simultaneous development of alternative occupational pursuits. They were closely related to their previous occupations or to the desired occupations (profitable occupational jobs during study). Marko had two Masters degrees from Ukraine in
computer engineering and economics, and prior to migration had worked full-time as an IT business analyst for a mining company. He came to Australia to strengthen his IT skills. He enrolled to study for a Masters degree in IT management, which improved his profile as an IT professional and facilitated his access to a better paid career in Australia. He got a job as an IT insights and business analyst. As he said: “IT managers are in demand in Australia. I found my first full-time job very quickly. However, I had to get an additional diploma and work part-time at the same time. It was tough, but rewarding.”

### 10.4 Migration outcome: successful integration and Australian identity

The participants’ narratives revealed that from their first days in the country, those who came to Australia for any type of achievement life strategy, either professional success or self-realisation, immersed themselves intensively in Australian society, aiming for quick adaptation. In comparison with the ‘transition migrants’ the ‘dividend migrants’ were successful not only in adapting socially to their new environment, but also in integration. Integration is a process by which immigrants become an integral part of society both as individuals and as a group (Pennix, 2003). According to Taran (2007), the indicators of successful integration are the possession of the professional, language and social skills necessary for an effective work and social life in the host society, and the adequate protection of the immigrants’ interests and rights by the new society, including the right to preserve the essential elements of their ethnic identity. The success of integration depends on the capabilities and limitations of the host society (i.e. general economic and social conditions in the country and migration policy), as well as the attitudes and life strategies set by migrants long before migration (Reznik and Reznik, 1996). It also should be kept in mind, that structural factors, especially age, class and regional origin, of participants had an effect on the formation of their life strategy of achievement. These factors helped the informants to integrate faster compared with the cohort of ‘transition migrants’. Given the fact that the majority of the informants in the cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ (1) grew up in big Ukrainian cities that are the centres in terms of the accumulation of national wealth, (2) come from white-collar working class families and class of scientific and cultural intelligentsia, (3) are of a young age; these cohort were quicker in their language learning, quicker in their formation of social networks, career achievements and in the growth of their wealth.
The ‘dividend migrants’ after migration sought integration in terms of professional and social success. They expressed in their narratives a strong desire to become “locals” in the most efficient way possible. As Fedir said: “I already feel Australian and I want to become local in the eyes of Australians as soon as possible, which I feel will move my career forward and let me have a complete social life here”. Further in the interview, Fedir clarified that by being local he meant being perceived as equal in the professional sphere, where he can communicate without barriers and show initiative that is supported by Australian colleagues.

Similar to Fedir, Mykola, Zoryana and Bohdan emphasised their wish and understanding that they needed to integrate. Indeed Mykola, Zoryana and Bohdan used the word “local” to describe what integration was. They said that being “local” would improve their careers. Mykola said: “being seen as local will definitely move my career forward”. When other participants were asked: “What, in your opinion, is an important factor to achieve success in one’s career in Australia?”, the common response was “integration”. Bohdan, a 26 year-old academic in physics, emphasised the importance of identifying with Australians as an important factor for professional success, which he thought would lead to complete integration:

*If you don’t reinforce your ethnic identity and you say, “I’m Australian”, it’s enough to pave your way to the top. If you demonstrate your national identity as Ukrainian, it won’t boost your career promotion. Will it prevent promotion? Probably yes. If you say, “I’m Australian” they don’t care whether you are an Australian from Ukraine, Bangladesh or India, they will consider you as equal and a local.*

Bohdan’s “recipe” for being treated as equal and as a local in Australia was strongly present in the stories of the majority of the other ‘dividend migrants’. The rationale behind their desire for integration is the socio-economic upgrade it achieves, which brings with it expanded social and professional networks and jobs. This socio-economic upgrade also implies more free time to enjoy life.

Several participants said that their way to integrate is to ignore Ukrainian family and social restrictions—as Fedir said “they hold you back and tie you to culture, setting rules”. By
avoiding such restrictions within the host society, migrants who came to Australia for achievement quickly found success. For example, Tamara said:

I enjoy my life with no obligations to my family or partner. In less than a month after my arrival I found a great job. I am happy where I am at now. I am surrounded by great and inspirational people.

Another participant, Marko, explained that his desire for integration was motivated by the attitude: “I agree with one Australian saying ‘one has to unpack one’s bags to be successful in Australia’. This is what I am doing now”. In other words, these attitudes voiced by Fedir, Tamara and Marko, as well as other participants (Alla, Zoryana, Zoya, Daryna, Simon, and Andryi) signposts that they realise they have to settle and become part of the new environment; otherwise they would not be able to achieve the realisation of their aims, needs and values set before migration.

Represented by skilled migrants and highly-qualified marriage migrants whose aim is socio-economic advancement, this cohort is ambitious and works hard to reach their desired position in society. This contrasts with the ‘transition migrants’, demonstrating that the adaptation and integration mechanisms performed by ‘dividend migrants’ are happening under more complicated conditions in which they face fierce competition in the labour market, and possess aspirations for well-paid jobs in their professions and a strong aim to succeed in social and economic terms. Maksym said:

I believe the group of migrants that arrived recently around the same time as I did, are challenged by harsher conditions than in the 1990s in terms of competition in the Australian labour market to get a well-paid job, the higher cost of living and a constant need to get new skills and study. Not much time is left for socialising, especially within the Ukrainian community.

As a result, similar to Maksym, other ‘dividend migrants’ do not seek contact with other Ukrainian members of their ethnic community. Anatolyi said: “I came to Australia to start a new life outside Ukraine. Why would I want to join the Ukrainian community? I want to be different and be Australian now”. Anatolyi’s story suggests his first priority is to build a new life and career (or advance his career) with no affiliation to the community and their
past. This is similar for Marko who said: “the Ukrainian community in Australia is a cultural unit. I do not have much time for leisure. I need to build my professional and social life in Australia, not in the community”. Marko’s attitude is not unique and is found in the stories of other ‘dividend migrants’ who see the Ukrainian community as being of no use to their professional development, and even an inhibiting factor.

The ‘dividend migrants’ tended not to settle in enclaves in the Ukrainian neighbourhood, as was the case with the majority of the survival life strategy ‘transition migrants’. These participants’ residential addresses show that they are spread across the Sydney wealthier eastern and northern suburbs where they rent apartments with the aim of building their social and professional network to integrate faster. “We rent an apartment in N----”, said Fedir, “so we can have interesting upper middle-class neighbours and expand our networks”. Furthermore, these participants are more involved in secondary groups, unlike the ‘transition migrants’ for whom their primary group was a source of survival. Borys said: “I am a member of several tourist and professional societies in Sydney. I am more involved with Australian groups than with Ukrainians”. Building ties to the dominant group of Australians who are best equipped to provide the participants with the information they need about predominant cultural codes, was important said Borys, Marko, Zoryana, Daryna, Mykola, and Ruslana.

For example, Marko said that this way he received information about how he should behave to receive opportunities and resources:

My neighbour told me that it is important not to be pushy in Australia and not to tell people how hard I work. He advised me not to show off; to be modest and pretend that your achievement came to you with not much effort. He also suggested some good channels to look for jobs, and shared some of his contacts.

Zoryana said: “My Australian boyfriend helped me to get a decent job”. Thus, for the ‘dividend migrants’ inter-ethnic ties with members of the host society have considerable positive effects on their labour market outcomes (Kalter, 2006; Lancee, 2012; McPherson et al., 2001).
The second feature of the ‘dividend migrants’ focused on achievement life strategy was the national self-identification of the participants as cosmopolitans or Australians. A life strategy in this sense is a principle that when realised in different life conditions, is marked by the actor’s ability to mix his or her identity with new living conditions. In these conditions the actor is able to reproduce and even develop the strategy (Zlobina, 2003). On the one hand, each individual has her/his own (unique) way of life and way of structuring and organising that life. On the other hand, evaluation and reflection provided by others, especially in the new environment, has power over the identification.

Participants tend to adopt cosmopolitan, and in some cases, Australian identities (Fedir and Bohdan). As Zoryana said: “I value freedom and particularly freedom of self-identification. I feel I am a world citizen now”. The ‘dividend migrants’ value freedom and are active transnational agents in the face of any kind of social change, both in Ukraine and in Australia. As Ruslana said: “I wish I could have changed my life in Ukraine. I transfer money to Ukraine and consult my friends on professional matters, sharing my Australian experience. Being Australian, I have much more to share than I used to before”. Another one (Panas) said: “I wish that one day I am able to organise a business between Ukraine and Australia that will raise Ukraine’s profile globally. I feel I am a global person now”. The ‘dividend migrants’ identification with Ukraine is weaker compared to the ‘transition migrants’. The national self-identification with Australia, or the world, signalises the success of the ‘dividend migrants’ integration.

The third characteristic of the achievement life strategy adopted by the ‘dividend migrants’ is reciprocity and a strong sense of agency (i.e. a desire to have a positive impact on the recipient society). This differentiates the ‘dividend migrants’ from the ‘transition migrants’. These migrants remain active agents after migration (the sense of agency of participants before migration is analysed in Chapter Eight), significantly impacting institutional dynamics in Australian society. A positive example is Panas, the 27 year-old IT-skilled migrant who wants to improve the medical system in Australia by adding a “home doctor service”:

I want to change something. I come across such problems in Australia when I want to change people a bit, I want to influence the system somehow. I think the Medicare system can be improved and the investment system can be more
transparent. Let’s take, for example, the Medicare system and private health insurance in Australia. When you buy medical insurance in Ukraine, you may stay at home and a doctor will come to your house when you are sick and bring you medications. Literally, he treats you at home. I could have been as ill as I wanted. I’m afraid to get sick here. I have to wait in a queue, even if I have a severe pain and it’s an emergency. We bought vitamins and cod-liver oil pills, started pouring cold water over ourselves and exercising.

This quote from the interview with Panas reveals his strong sense of agency and his desire to contribute to the betterment of the public and private systems in Australia.

Similarly, many other migrants identified that they would want to share and contribute their positive experiences from Ukraine and overseas to make the Australia system function more efficiently. For example, Marko said he wanted to develop some recommendations for the Government around migration policy. Mykola said he wants to bring innovations and progress into Australia by working on his new social business. Borys said he wanted to make the life of migrants in Australia easier and shared his plans to create some societies of interests, which would provide migrants with the necessary connections and networks. The narratives of the ‘dividend migrants’ suggest that they are not indifferent to Australian political, social and economic life. This quote from Alla summarises this attitude perfectly: “I see Australia as my new home ... how can I stand aside. I want to contribute to its improvement and to make it a better place”.

The fourth feature of the achievement life strategy of the participants is their high level of English proficiency. It should be noted that linguistic adaptation for the ‘dividend migrants’ occurs in the integration period without any loss of knowledge of their native language. They acquire a high competency in English and still aim to improve their language skills in the future. Tamara, Marko, Borys, Panas, Alla, Anastasiya, Zoryana, Daryna, Simon, Andryi, Bohdan, Oksana, Ruslana, Maksym, and Svitalan all mentioned this as a goal or achievement. Fedir, whose migration story was mentioned in Chapters Eight and Nine, said that he is taking classes to get rid of his accent; he explained he wants “to sound completely native”. Svitlana said: “My English level is good, but I am constantly learning new words. Learning English is a never-ending process”; Zoya noted: “I feel no language barriers. Some people think I am native. It helps a lot”. For this group, language
adaptation is related to inclusion in secondary groups—workmates, sports clubs and new Australian friends. For example, Zoya said she learned English at language schools and in the streets with her Australian friends. This made it easier for her to get quickly involved in other kinds of adaptation processes.

It should be noted that in cultural and social life the ‘dividend migrants’ tended to successfully integrate, although in some areas of public life they still experienced isolation. Two key areas of isolation were family relations and religious life. Fedir, Borys, Maksym, Kateryna, Svitlana, Oksana, and Andryi practiced Orthodox Christianity and celebrated the national and religious holidays as they did in Ukraine. Borys said: “We always celebrate our Orthodox Easter after their Catholic one. We go to church and do the same rituals we used to in Ukraine”. Fedir said: “I always celebrate the Ukrainian national holidays and will keep doing it, as I feel it’s still part of my identity”. In terms of family life, the majority of the ‘dividend migrants’ are married to Ukrainians, which helps them to remember the Ukrainian and Russian languages. Alla said: “we keep talking Russian at home and speak to our Australian-born daughter in Russian too. We want her to be bilingual”. Alla’s wish for her daughter to speak Russian and Ukrainian, along with English, indicates that her integration is not complete, and she wants her daughter to be, as she said “an Australian who remembers her roots”.

Advancement in social and economic status is the next feature of the achievement life strategy. Comparing the pre- and post-migration labour market outcomes and the horizontal mobility of participants shows that the ‘dividend migrants’ tend not to downshift to a survival life strategy by taking jobs for which they are over-qualified. For example, Borys said:

*We came to Australia with money, so we could afford to spend three months looking for a decent IT job in Sydney. Some Ukrainians suggested to us that we take low-skilled jobs just for the sake of making money, but we refused. We did not want to downgrade our professional status and de-skill ourselves.*

As is the case with Borys, other participants (Fedir, Panas, Marko, Mykola, Alla, Bohdan, and Tamara) knew exactly what kind of jobs they were looking for in Australia, and so they preferred to stay unemployed longer and search for a job that would satisfy their
demands rather than, as Fedir puts it, “taking the first opportunity to make money”. Usually these “first opportunities” were low-skilled occupations which were, in the majority of cases, unacceptable for ‘achievers’ whose migration was driven by a desire for development and professional advancement. The young age of the majority of the participants in the ‘dividend cohort’ (average age of the cohort is 30 y.o.) and the fact that they were highly-skilled and had professional qualifications from Ukraine impacted the formation of their achievement life strategy and their life trajectory after migration.

This cohort of migrants was found to do well after migration compared to ‘transition migrants’: they are now spread throughout the white-collar jobs and professions in the Australian labour market. Following the logic suggested by Turukanova (1996) who used the match or mismatch of professions of migrants at home with post-migration employment as an indirect indicator of status upgrade or downgrade, the ‘dividend migrants’ managed an exact match in their careers before and after migration. Moreover, they tended to get higher positions and/or promotion faster than ‘transition migrants’ in their new jobs in Australia. As Marko said: “My first job in Australia was at the same level as in Ukraine. After one year I was promoted from an IT data and insights analysts role into a TV marketing director, which would hardly have happened in Ukraine”.

The ‘dividend migrants’ were more likely to upgrade their career compared to the ‘transition migrants’. In their narratives they spoke of the improvement in their social position and their life chances—this type of story was not found to a similar extent in the stories of ‘transition migrants’. For the ‘transition migrants’ the survival life strategy was the most common one they talked about.

The last characteristic of the achievement life strategy is satisfaction with migration. Vasileva and Demchenko (2001) argued that “the key performance indicators of a successful life strategy are life satisfaction and mental health” (p. 74). The interview question about satisfaction with their position in the new society is close to the type of question about social and economic status measured by Vasileva and Demchenko (2001). However, there are some nuances here. It is not clear if, when they refer to “mental health”, they are talking about some objective indicators (albeit given through subjective evaluation). However, their first indicator—“satisfaction”—is definitely a subjective assessment. Satisfaction, though closely connected with social status, is still not fully
correlated with it. One can feel satisfied despite assessing one’s status as not high enough. A person may not want the risks that achieving a high status often entails.

The interview data demonstrated that it was often the case that the answers to the question about social and economic status, and the question about satisfaction with their current social position in the host society, were similar. Those who were unsatisfied with their current social and economic status (including their financial situation, employment/marriage/education, social life) tended to narrate their migration experience in terms of a deterioration in their lives and say they felt uncomfortable. Such attitudes were dominant among the ‘transition migrants’ and common for survival life strategy. By way of contrast, the responses of ‘dividend migrants’ shared a feeling of satisfaction with their social and economic status.

They told a story of their migration as a move that improved their life overall. For example, Alla said: “My life has improved since I moved to Australia”; Marko said: “I have upgraded my career” and Tamara said: “I am satisfied, I see where to grow in Australia”. Above all, this satisfaction is attributed by the ‘dividend migrants’ to their use of the individual resources of intellect, skills and education. As Marko said: “Yes, there were people who supported me, but everything that I have achieved in Australia is only because of my skills, enthusiasm, education and intellect”. Alla also pointed out that her individual resources, such as skills, education and hard work helped her to establish a successful business. By way of contrast, the ‘transition migrants’ told stories where they placed their hopes in the external resources of relatives, friends and wealthy parents and a skill to move behind the law (see Chapter Six). In their stories, this did not lead to social and economic success in the host society after migration.

10.5 Future plans aimed at achievement

As discussed in Chapter Two, when determining the process of the formation and consolidation of a life strategy in the structure-agency dichotomy, one of the fundamental categories is that of time (Reznik and Reznik, 1996; Naumova, 1995; Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1991; Golovakha, 2006). This section considers the plans of participants for the near and distant future.
The narratives of fourteen migrants (Marko, Borys, Mykola, Panas, Maksym, Ruslana, Lyudmyla, Anatolyi, Fedir, Tamara, Zoryana, Bohdan, Kateryna, and Andryi) demonstrate that their life strategies of achievement involve planning and strategy that are both directed at the present and the future. For example, when talking about their present life arrangements, Zoryana, Marko and Ruslana refer to their aims, needs and values as changing and suggest they are aiming to reconsider and adjust them in the future. Marko said: “My life is dynamic, I never stand still. I always plan for the future and re-evaluate my goals, needs and priorities on the go”. Marko noted that he “always plans for the future”, which fits with the argument by Reznik and Reznik (1996) that the “strategic orientation” (planning) of an individual extends to future life events and largely determines the nature and content of the achievement life strategy.

The fact that ‘dividend migrants’ narratives showed that they tend to write a list of desirable goals elucidates that their lives are planned and driven by an orientation towards the long-term future and sometimes even unrealistic goals. Borys said:

Before coming to Australia I had a small text file with a list of my aims. This text file contained ten aims, the first five of which seemed unrealistic to me. I set a salary limit, which was ten times bigger than I earned. Then I forgot about this file. I discovered it only after three years in Australia, and four of my points were achieved. For ten seconds I ticked them off as achieved and set new ones for the long-term future. The main thing here is that I have achieved these four aims even though they appeared so unrealistic to me at the beginning. I did not even tell anyone about them, because people just laughed at me at that time.

Borys’ phrases “list of my aims”, and “the long-term future” suggest a future orientation. Such phrases as “unrealistic”, “ten times bigger” “just laughed” all suggest big ambitious goals. And the process of setting them, ticking them off and setting new ones suggests an achievement life strategy. Similar to Borys, Anatolyi and Marko had noted in their narratives that they always set future oriented goals and “step-by-step, work towards sometimes unrealistic plans at work” (Anatolyi). The usage of the phrase “unrealistic” by a couple of participants suggests that they have shared ambitions in relation to their work and salary.
Furthermore, this group expressed the shared aspiration to increase their cultural and social capital in order to continuously improve their career options and self-development. Ruslana emphasised that to improve her career achievement she planned to get new law degrees and grow her friendship circles. Fedir outlined his plans to improve his language skills to achieve better social integration. Importantly, no one from the ‘dividend migrants’ expressed any hesitation or ambiguity in response to the question about their plans for the near and distant future. As Panas said: “I do not hesitate and have no fears about the future. I simply make a plan and follow it before I achieve the result, and there is no other way”.

It is possible to group the plans that define and guide the achievement life strategies according to their professional aspirations, and in particular, their career achievements and promotions. The main aspirations are articulated by participants through: 1) plans to get new skills and/or education to build a successful career in Australia; and 2) plans to go overseas for professional experience in order to be promoted in their current occupation in Australia after they return; and 3) plans to start their own business to build entrepreneurial careers.

Firstly, regarding the plans to get new skills and further education, it should be noted that the ‘dividend migrants’ (Marko, Fedir, Panas, Tamara, Ruslana, and Zoryana), realised upon arrival that they had to improve their language skills. For example, Fedir said he paid for language classes “to get rid of his accent and sound Australian”, and Marko said he immersed himself “in an English-speaking environment to polish his language skills by making Australian friends”.

Furthermore, participants said they felt the need to improve their professional skills or retrain. For example, Panas, Ruslana, Marko, Zoryana and Daryna said that they decided to get another tertiary qualification. Ruslana said she enrolled at university in the same field of expertise as in Ukraine, Zoryana decided to undertake university study in a completely different field to make a positive shift in her career. Marko and Daryna had recently enrolled in university and at the time of the interview, Panas was considering enrolling in the next semester.
An interesting fact is that female participants who had received their permanent residence status in Australia through marriage, mentioned education as a strategy for their professional success more often than male participants mentioned it. For example, Ruslana, a 34 year-old lawyer with a PhD in law from Ukraine, and a member of the cultural and scientific intelligentsia, decided to enrol in a Bachelor of Commonwealth Law “to make positive progress in her career of international law”. After a couple of years of study she married and gave birth to a son. Given her new social roles as wife and mother she put her study on hold, but not for long. She described herself as “being career-oriented and an ‘achiever’ by nature”, and she explained that her plans for the near future were to get a tertiary qualification and start practicing law in Australia.

Even with a small baby she started to work part-time as a migration lawyer. This is how she expressed her plans for the future:

Finish, and finally get the certificate. Yet, I haven’t succeeded only in my career. Before coming to Australia I studied very intensively, then I worked and was simultaneously writing my PhD dissertation. But here, in Australia, it turned out differently; I have developed myself more as a wife and mother. And now I am lacking some kind of work drive. I want my brain to somehow work now.

Ruslana migrated to Australia for professional development purposes and to advance her career. In this extract from her narrative she described herself as a woman who is not satisfied with only having the roles of a (house)wife and mother; she strives to rebuild a career and, as she puts it, to make “my brain somehow work”. For Ruslana, her achievement life strategy relates to professional and family success. Her story echoes the narratives of Kateryna and Lyudmyla, who also had children and family commitments, but who were also actively building their careers in Australia.

The second aspiration involves plans to go overseas in order to obtain professional experience, and then to be promoted on return to their current occupation in Australia. This aspiration was expressed by the IT professionals Borys and Fedir, and the academics Andryi and Bohdan. They explained that in Australia, in order to move up to the next level on the occupational ladder and get better income opportunities, employees are encouraged
to go overseas once in a while for short-term work in order to expand the professional experience. As Andryi said, it brings “valuable experience from overseas to Australia”. He explained:

*I plan to change countries, but not for a lifetime. For work I have to pass this phase 100 per cent. My academic career demands overseas experience in order to be promoted and get higher positions. It can be Europe, America, Asia. In general, I do not look at these countries as somewhere to live, I look at these countries as somewhere where work is better.*

Borys expressed a similar plan and said: “I would consider going to Japan, to Asia, for work and for new exciting experiences, to meet other people, see different nature and to get new skills. At work I am encouraged to develop myself”. Both these narratives illustrate how future migration is considered by participants to be possible, and even needed, for successful careers.

The third aspiration entails the participants’ plans to start their own businesses, and was expressed by five participants: Mykola, a technical engineer; Kateryna, a journalist; Panas and Marko, two IT professionals, and Alla, a creative art therapist. Mykola, Kateryna, Panas, Alla and Marko, all young skilled migrants in their late 20s and early 30s, are aiming high in terms of their incomes and professional experience. They explained that as soon as they started their employment for one of the Australian companies they felt there was a springboard for development in Australia. At the end of the interview, Panas, Mykola and Marko shared their ideas about start-ups related to international companies providing ICT services. Mykola, a technical engineer, who worked as an IT systems administrator for some time in Ukraine, expressed his business ideas in the following way:

*In Australia I saw a lot of opportunities, many small niches towards which I can work. I am thinking of something social and useful. For example, an application for mobile phones that would allow people to simplify their lives, to make it more comfortable, to give them some benefits. My thoughts are going this way...*
Mykola expressed his start-up ideas with passion and a strong motivation to fill what he saw as “niches” in the Australian IT service market. He said he was at the market research stage, building a network and gathering capital to invest in his business project. Marko and Panas also said that they plan to create their own start-ups, but had no solid idea yet.

Kateryna is another example of an empowered woman from Ukraine who came to Australia through the skilled migration stream with aspirations to build a career in the art and publishing industry, and to realise her journalistic talent. A motivation in her case is the desire for financial independence from the welfare state, through which she receives single-mother payments at the moment:

*I plan to keep working for my mother’s publishing house and produce more books. I want to bring our books to English readers; it means I want to move our publishing activities to a higher and more serious level. I feel I am doing it not only for my personal success, but also for financial independence from the State.*

Similar to Kateryna, Alla is another empowered female migrant. She came to Australia through the family migration stream and expressed aspirations to extend her already established business in Sydney. As mentioned in the previous chapter, she delivers art therapy classes to dementia patients in nursing homes across Sydney. She said: “I was very lucky to discover the market gap and to be able to do arts in Australia. My business is growing and I feel happy and inspired”.

The narratives of the ‘dividend migrants’ elucidated that that they are implementing their achievement life strategies by setting goals and planning and organizing their lives around what they see as a desirable future. This is unlike the 'transition migrants', for whom a retrospective type of life orientation is typical. This backwards-looking orientation reflects a tendency to focus on events in the past—even though they were accomplished some time ago, they remain, for whatever reason, the focus of the attention of ‘transition migrants’ (see the section on future plans in Chapter Seven). However, the ‘dividend migrants’ see their lives, in Golovakha’s (2000) words, as a “holistic picture of the future complex and contradictory relationship between programmable and anticipated events, to which the individual connects a social value and also individual needs and senses” (pp. 226–227).
The ‘dividend migrants’ narratives indicate that their achievement life strategy is formed through a strong sense of confidence, belief in their capacities to achieve, a desire for professional improvement, and a capacity to bring about positive changes, both for themselves and society.

10.6 Conclusion

The main focus of this chapter has been the post-migration life of the ‘dividend migrants’ whose dominant life strategy is achievement. These migrants’ adjustment to the new life in Australia was seen as successful at present, and demonstrated plans for continued achievements in the future. The participants’ personalities and their preferences for quick integration were important aspects that helped them to continue their achievement life strategy after migration. The majority of the participants improved their lives after migration in terms of positive labour market outcomes and shifts in identity towards a more open and empowered life.

The narratives of their achievement life strategy after migration involved an expression of satisfaction with their migration. Unlike the mostly retrospectively oriented plans of the ‘transition migrants’, the ‘dividend migrants’ engaged in plans oriented to their future. Their plans were driven by aspirations to succeed in terms of professional self-realisation, in both economic and social terms. Subsequently, the narratives of the ‘dividend migrants’ form a collective story of well-integrated members of Australian society. As active agents of social and economic life in Australia, and demonstrating a successful adaptation to their changed environment, they exhibit a high and effective usage of the new opportunities emerging in the recipient environment. Given their capacity to successfully maintain their social status after migration, they are the group of migrants who are positively contributing to Australian society in terms of social cohesion, innovation and economic production.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Introduction

This thesis has examined the life strategies of post-independence Ukrainian migrants in Australia. It offers a number of insights and new findings that shed light on the current understanding of the process of constructing life strategies through migration, and a better understanding of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia (1991–2013). The findings of this research can be divided into two categories as per the impact areas—practical and theoretical.

The practical finding was that post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia has significantly changed over the years following the collapse of the Soviet system in the early 1990s. The post-independence Ukrainian migration wave (1991–2013) itself has undergone shifts and changes in its character. Contextual, structural and individual differences played a role in shaping the different life strategies adopted by the participants, which created and impacted on the different migration experiences of the participants. These experiences fell into two opposite categories of “survival life strategy” and “achievement life strategy”. More precisely, what the study found was that there are systemic differences in the way life strategies were shaped before migration, enacted during the actual act of migration, and changed after migration, depending on the period in which these Ukrainians began to leave post-independence Ukraine and arrive in Australia.

It was found that after 2004, the character of Ukrainian post-independence migration to Australia changed. Based on qualitative interview data, and complemented by secondary data analysis, two distinct periods of Ukrainian post-independence migration emerged, and two cohorts of migrants were identified: (1) ‘transition migrants’ (1991–2003) and (2) ‘dividend migrants’ (2004–2013). These two migration periods were found to correspond to the two types of life strategy—survival life strategy and achievement life strategy. The complexity of each participant’s individual life strategy and their experiences of post-Soviet transition while in Ukraine and during their migration, arose because of the interplay of individual factors, such as the micro-components of life strategy—values, aims, needs and sense of agency. It was also due to a set of Ukraine/Australia-specific...
structural macro-factors that emerged from the economic, political and demographic constraints in post-independence Ukraine, as well as the shifts in Australia’s migration policy from the 1990s.

In making sense of these varying contexts, the types of life strategies and the way participants enacted them were far from static, being instead dynamic in the spatial and temporal sense. Life strategies shifted and changed as individual circumstances and environments evolved, and the length of stay in Australia increased. Importantly, it was found that migrants over time have become more integrated and contribute more to Australian social and economic life, while at the same time becoming less active in the Ukrainian community. In the light of the research findings, the cohort of 2004–2013 migrants who had implemented achievement life strategies were found to be more successful migrants in terms of their integration and professional and social self-realisation in Australia compared to the cohort of 1991 – 2003 arrivals. On the other hand, the 1991–2003 arrivals who implemented survival life strategies, formed a cohort that needed assistance and support from the Australian Government to help them better integrate and contribute to Australian society.

The differences in the life strategies of the informants was found to be determined not only by the set of individual characteristics, framed as values, needs, aims and agency, but also by such structural characteristics as class, age and the place of origin. The majority of those interviewed, who arrived in Australia during 1991-2003, migrated at later age (around their 40s), were born into the class of blue-collar working families and were part of a class of new entrepreneurs who emerged in the 1990s in Ukraine. Their demographic data suggests that the majority of the interviewed ‘transition migrants’ originated from Western Ukrainian regions and came from rural areas and small cities. The demographic data of the cohort that arrived during 2004-2013, shows that the background of the majority of the interviewed ‘dividend migrants’ is different. The average age of this cohort of informants is 30 y.o., the majority of participants come from the white-collar working class families and the class of scientific and cultural intelligentsia, and they came to Australia from big industrial Ukrainian cities (mostly from Eastern and Central Ukraine). This difference in the social characteristics of the two groups predetermined differences in the life strategies they developed and used.
In theoretical terms, this thesis has contributed to the field of Life Strategy Studies as it has developed and empirically tested a new conceptual research framework to study the survival and achievement life strategies of migrants across time and space. The theoretical originality of this thesis is two-fold—firstly, the manner in which it brings out the interplay between Eastern European and Western (Western European and North American) approaches to post-Soviet transition, and secondly, as noted above, the re-conceptualisation of the idea that life strategy is a part of the modified life strategy research framework to study lives of migrants. Using a two-fold methodological approach, empirical data to be tested by the modified life strategy research framework were collected. The key data were the qualitative data gathered from 51 Ukrainian migrants in Australia (NSW). The profiles of the “survival” and “achievement” migrants were then developed. However, this work is experimental and the model needs further testing and validation on a larger dataset and on other groups of migrants in Australia and worldwide. Furthermore, another finding was the two subtypes of the achievement life strategy in the migration stories of the cohort of 2004–2013 migrants. The first subset describes a strategy to achieve success (professional, family or cultural), and the second type, a life strategy to achieve self-realisation.

In the following sections, the main research findings are discussed. Significant insights and conclusions are summarised, highlighting where the research makes a theoretical contribution to the sociology of life strategy and suggests new research paths. Section 11.2 relates to the two life strategy types found in the stories of Ukrainian post-independence migrants in Australia during the two migration periods (1991–2003 and 2004–2013). Section 11.3 discusses the dynamics and trends of the life strategies of post-independence Ukrainian migrants in Australia in the context of the hypothesis that drives this research, and suggests some avenues for future research.

11.2 Two life strategy profiles of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia

The main value of this research is its contribution to knowledge on post-independence Ukrainian migrants, about whom not much was known prior to this study. The research has shared their migration experiences, attitudes and perceptions of the post-Soviet transition in Ukraine and their new home Australia. The empirical fieldwork revealed rich qualitative data that were used to investigate the life strategies of migrants from Ukraine and their bifurcation into two different life strategies of achievement and survival.
The main finding and argument of this study is that there are two waves of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia, the life strategy profiles of which vary depending on the immigration period. A key contribution is the discovery that Ukrainian migration to Australia has gained new features since 2004, when the representatives of the class of professionals and the class of cultural and scientific intelligentsia began coming to Australia through the skilled and marriage migration stream. At this point, immigrants in this group outnumbered arrivals of the blue-collar working class and entrepreneurs of the 1990s who had arrived through the humanitarian and family reunion migration streams. In 2004, for the first time in the overall history of Ukrainian migration to Australia (including that prior to World War I and the waves of post-World War II migrations), the number of skilled arrivals outnumbered those who arrived using the family reunion and humanitarian stream. The profile of Ukrainian migration has changed (see Table 5).

Table 5. Profiles of post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia
(1991–2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>(1) Material values</td>
<td>Set of non-material values: prospects and opportunities for self-realisation; favourable environment for developing initiative, freedom, and independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Values of traditionalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Family welfare and well-being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4) Conformity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs</td>
<td>(1) Security needs (order and stability, life in a safe environment, avoiding threats)</td>
<td>(1) Socially-oriented needs for professional and cultural success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Environmental needs (healthy environment)</td>
<td>(2) Individually-oriented needs for creative self-expression and professional self-realisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Social needs (integrity of social and individual values).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aims</td>
<td>Short-term and maximum available aims:</td>
<td>Large-scale and long-term aims:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) escape poverty and starvation</td>
<td>(1) professional success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) regain job status</td>
<td>(2) self-realisation, oriented at opening new opportunities (extensive goals) and extended recreation of social and economic status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of agency</td>
<td>Weak sense of agency and behavioural passivity.</td>
<td>Strong sense of agency expressed through:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) active life position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) the internal capacity to take responsibility rather than rely on external circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3) young age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision to migrate</td>
<td>Decision-making is reactionary rather than strategic, panicked rather than considered, irrational rather than rational, and hastily-made rather than methodically produced.</td>
<td>Mixture of methodically and hastily made decisions associated with rationality and reflexivity, but not deprived of emotional component.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale behind migration</td>
<td>Strong push factors: (1) unemployment (2) lack of occupational work (3) low wages and arrears (4) the suppression of entrepreneurial activity.</td>
<td>Strong pull factors—dividend: (1) non-material and cultural dividends (2) health and lifestyle dividends (3) gender equality dividends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background for post-independence Ukrainian migrations to Australia</td>
<td>In Ukraine: the collapse of the Soviet Union and industrial decline; emergence of informal (shadow) economy and unemployment; corruption and nepotism; poverty and anomie. In Australia: the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games—gateway for illegal migration—overstaying sportsmen and tourists, and asylum seekers; the onset of recession and a reduction in migration targets by the Australian Government; rapid growth of temporary migration in Australia.</td>
<td>In Ukraine: the 2004 “Orange Revolution”; the deepening of the political crisis and the collapse of “Orange” government; Global Financial Crisis, deepening of the industrial decline, unemployment increase, changing social and political order; democratic rollback; the increase since 2003 in the volume of Ukrainian software development and IT outsourcing services; shifts in Ukrainian emigration dynamics to Asian countries. In Australia: demand for highly-skilled migrants (attracts IT specialists and engineers from Ukraine); decrease in the Australia’s assessment level for Ukraine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration stream</td>
<td>Humanitarian and family (reunion with parents).</td>
<td>Skilled and family (marriage).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration tactics</td>
<td>Conspiracy and manoeuvring tactics to get permanent residency in Australia.</td>
<td>Arrived with permanent residency or obtained permanent residency through skilled or marriage visa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional sphere</td>
<td>Dominance of negative emotions: • disappointment, guilt, nostalgic depression and homesickness. • precarity, emotional insecurity, opportunism. • partial satisfaction with migration.</td>
<td>Positive emotions oriented towards future professional and personal self-realisation and development. Progression from “local abandonment” in terms of having few opportunities to develop professionally and spiritually, to “global engagement” through migration. Satisfaction with migration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations</td>
<td>(1) Dead-end and patchwork careers. (2) Low-skilled professional competence.</td>
<td>(1) Bricolage and anchor careers (2) High professional competence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Identity** | Strong Ukrainian identity | Australian and/or cosmopolitan identity
---|---|---
**Lifestyle** | Maximising income, minimising integration:  
(1) economic integration faster than social integration  
(secondary role of socio-cultural adaptation).  
(2) class mobility—from marginal into Australian middle class.  
(3) upgrading of economic status combined with downgrade in social and professional status. | (1) Integration for professional and social success.  
(2) Reciprocity and strong agency (desire to improve the institutional dynamics in Australia).  
(3) Upgrade of social, professional and economic status.  
**Settlement** | Compact settlement and involvement in primary groups. | Settlement in wealthy suburbs to build a social and professional network and to integrate faster; involvement in secondary groups.  
**English language proficiency** | Low level of English proficiency | High level of English proficiency  
**Future plans** | Retrospective orientation of plans:  
(1) to return to Ukraine for retirement.  
(2) to invest in Ukrainian real estate. | Prospective orientation of plans:  
(1) to get new skills and/or education to build a successful career in Australia.  
(2) to go overseas for professional experience to be promoted in their current occupations in Australia after they return.  
(3) to start own business to build entrepreneurial careers.  

In Chapters Five and Eight an examination of the micro-components of the development of a life strategy before leaving Ukraine (values, needs, aims and sense of agency) for the ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’ was set out. The particular ways in which migration actually took place was presented for the two cohorts in Chapters Six and Nine respectively. The labour market outcomes, language, national identity shifts, and peculiarities of integration in the recipient society were outlined in Chapters Seven and Ten respectively. A number of conclusions were drawn regarding the allocation of migrants into the two types of life strategies—survival and achievement.

Firstly, the content and focus of migrants’ life strategies on the one hand depended on the personal set of micro-components of the life strategy as well as structural factors associated with their social background, and on the other hand, on the structural economic and social conditions of a migrant’s life before and after migration. For the ‘transition migrants’ who arrived in Australia during 1991–2003, analysis of their emotional, occupational, and class characteristics as well as professional, identity and emotional shifts
after migration, suggested they created a set of personal and social characteristics which reflected a survival life strategy. This survival-oriented strategy was found to be made up of a combination of the following sets of characteristics: (1) aim to escape poverty and starvation, and regain job status; (2) material values, values of traditionalism, family well-being and comfort and conformity; (3) need for security (order and stability, living in a safe environment, avoiding threats), environmental needs (healthy environment) and social needs (integrity of social and individual values); and (4) weak agency. These characteristics were shaped in Ukraine before departure and they are what defines and reinforces the survival life strategy in the post-migration stages. As mentioned above, the group were not very young age (the average age in the group of ‘transition migrants’ is 50 y.o.), they are from the blue-collar class, they came from Western Ukrainian rural regions and small towns. These factors also affected the formation of life strategy of survival after immigration into Australia. Further, it is worth mentioning that the ‘transition migrants’ choices are dominated by migration push factors.

Humanitarian and family migration streams were found to be the pathways that ‘transition migrants’ used to implement their life strategy of survival. The blue-collar workers and suppressed entrepreneurs formed a particular group of humanitarian ‘transition migrants’ comprised of regular and irregular short-term arrivals who tended to obtain their permanent residency in Australia by claiming asylum. Depending on how their strategies were realised, the ‘transition migrants’ were identified as using “conspiracy” and “manoeuvring” tactics to enable their permanent migration. These tactics grew out of explicit social networks and proved effective. Social networks were crucial for the group of short-term arrivals as they assisted them in managing the different types of precarity associated with a lack of life and work predictability and security, while they tried to get a visa to Australia and find ways to stay permanently. This precarity affected their financial or psychological welfare.

Another popular way that the interviewed ‘transition migrants’ implemented their survival life strategy was through the family reunion migration stream. An economic rationale, in the form of a plan to escape from poverty and unemployment in Ukraine, was the main driving force behind the participants’ choice of family reunion. A connection to family and dependency on the resources that the family provided was found in many cases to encourage dependency on the Australian welfare system. It also tended to create a type of
comfort zone that favoured the continuation of survival life patterns after migration. Hence, the use of a survival life strategy was found to be somewhat stable for this group from their time in the sending country and then in the receiving country.

Their lives were marked by forms of stagnation. The emotional storehouse of the survival migrants was ‘poisoned’ in a sense by the social conditions arising from post-Soviet unrest. This directly affected the ‘transition migrants’ and resulted in the dominance of negative emotions after migration. The majority of ‘transition migrants’ showed emotions such as disappointment, guilt, nostalgic depression and homesickness caused by their separation from home and those they left behind. These emotions were an obstacle to the success of their integration into and adaptation to Australia. The ‘transition migrants’ become carriers of a virus of melancholy and stagnation, sometimes without even knowing it.

Influenced by occupational insecurity and “structural disempowerment” (Mrozowicki, 2011), a typical occupational experience found in the stories of the survival ‘transition migrants’ was an occupational downgrade alongside an economic upgrade. Using Mrozowicki’s (2011) terminology of “dead-end careers”, the occupational experiences of the majority of ‘transition migrants’ proved to be shaped by structurally forced employment in non-professional jobs (dead-end careers) which was associated with the absence of occupational mobility in the new, changed environment. The survival life strategy for those ‘transition migrants’ who were skilled migrants and orginated from white-collar working class families and cultural and scientific intelligentsia (who are minority among the interviewed migrants) was reflected in their experience of a sharp downgrade of professional and social status after migration.

The cohort of ‘transition migrants’ demonstrated a low level of English proficiency and a strong national identification with Ukraine, which, it is argued, created barriers for successful social adaptation and integration into Australian society. As the most powerful and important motivation to work, material orientation facilitated their quick economic adaptation to life in Australia. This cohort tended to start their employment in the first available job, typically a manual job in construction, as painters, or teaching Ukrainian at the Ukrainian school in Lidcombe. Material values guided their behaviours and consumption practices. Being born into blue-collar working-class families and having secondary education, the majority of the interviewed ‘transition migrants’ do not attach
much importance to professional growth and self-development. They considered that they needed jobs to bring in an income. However, all of them mentioned that back in Ukraine they would never have believed that they would have had to wake up at 4 am and work as hard as they did in the construction industry, as the majority of them did, with only short breaks for holidays. Furthermore, the future plans for the ‘transition migrants’ tended to be retrospectively oriented towards their past life in Ukraine. It was found that it was common for the interviewed ‘transition migrants’ to plan to return to Ukraine for their retirement and that they continued to invest money in Ukraine.

In the light of the interview data gathered from ‘dividend migrants’, it appears that this cohort was shaped by an intrinsic achievement-oriented life strategy compared to the ‘transition migrants’’ survival orientation. Twenty of the 25 participants implemented their achievement life strategies through migration and continued their achievement life strategies after migration: they catered for interesting work and professional growth and self-realisation, wanted to earn better money and to improve their living conditions and quality of life. The social and economic structural conditions they faced in Ukraine and their varied responses to micro-components meant that the ‘dividend migrants’ focused on different types of achievement. The field data suggests that there are two subtypes of achievement life strategies: the first type being the strategy to achieve success (professional, family or cultural), and the second type being the life strategy to achieve self-realisation.

About two-thirds of the ‘dividend migrants’ implemented the first achievement subtype and were noted to have significant socially-oriented needs for cultural understanding and professional recognition. This cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ implementing their strategies to achieve success (professional, family or cultural), steered their lives and pursued migration to achieve large-scale external aims oriented towards opening up new opportunities for extended recreation of socio-economic status. They valued the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills in their professional field and had a strong sense of agency focused on improving Australia and the people around them.

Furthermore, the subtype trying to achieve success (professional, family or cultural) is characterised by an active life position, a focus on high performance, and the ability to live and work in conditions of uncertainty and risk associated with migration and career
mobility. They valued originality and having access to a variety of choices of cultural styles and ways to implement them. They had a strong orientation towards external recognition and sought the approval of others. Their choice of strategy to achieve success was found to be preconditioned by an aspiration for growth in terms of technical expertise and self-realisation in work, and a desire to develop professional and social skills. The young IT-skilled migrants who made up this group and who had had few opportunities to develop professionally, chose to be “globally engaged” through migration, and use this strategy to achieve their aims of better pay, professional development and future alternative employment opportunities.

For about one-third of participants, the second subtype of achievement life strategy (achieving self-realisation) applied. The second subtype targeted creative change and emphasised the importance of an individual-oriented set of needs for professional and family self-realisation, and the need for creative self-expression in a safe environment with economic, social and political stability. This strategy was found in the stories of the marriage migrants. Their life strategies were characterised by a conscious and practical orientation focused on creative personal change, and personal self-improvement and self-development. As the participants’ stories demonstrated, the implementation of the strategy to achieve self-realisation depended on self-awareness and the success of integration, a factor not usually associated with career growth, but with self-realisation in career. For those informants following this subtype of achievement life strategy, the achievements and successes, which lead to a better chance of obtaining a higher occupational position, are not as important as striving to realise their improve their skills and grow professionally that prevail over the desire to ensure career prospects.

Both subtypes of achievement life strategies are characterised by successful adaptation and social and professional integration, an Australian and/or cosmopolitan national identity, a high level of English proficiency, subjective satisfaction with migration and an idealized vision of their life after migration, future plans to succeed in terms of professional self-realisation, career growth and personal development. Secondly, the formation and implementation of the life strategies of ‘transition’ and ‘dividend’ Ukrainian migrants were found not to be gender specific. However, the ways the ‘dividend migrants’ arrived in Australia to implement their achievement life strategies reflect gender-specific migration streams. Men tended to arrive through the male-dominated skilled stream, women
Participants through the female-dominated family migration streams (predominantly marriage).

Thirdly, a desire to have a better life and a sense of agency are not sufficient to shape life strategies. As has been demonstrated social or structural characteristics such as class, age and place of origin had an impact on the formation of the two different life strategies in the two cohorts of the interviewed Ukrainians in Australia. The cohort of ‘dividend migrants’ implementing achievement life strategies was dominated by migrants under the age of 32 from the class of professionals and cultural and scientific intelligentsia originating from Eastern and Central Ukrainian big cities, who had plans to implement career and family plans in Australia and overseas. By comparison, the cohort of ‘transition migrants’, whose average age at the time of the interview was 50 and migrated on average in their 40s, originated predominantly from the class of blue-collar workers and suppressed entrepreneurs from Western Ukrainian regional areas and small towns, and aimed to escape economic hardship with the help of migration and plan a future return to Ukraine for retirement.

11.3 Life strategy dynamics and trends, hypothesis and future research paths

In this thesis I have coined two terms ‘transition migrants’ and ‘dividend migrants’ to provide the analytical framework and categories through which I investigated two different life strategies. In this respect, the main research finding that comes from the qualitative data is that across the 20 years of Ukraine’s independence, the life strategy that dominates amongst the newly arrived migrants from Ukraine, shifts from survival to achievement. This dynamic indicates the following and suggests a range of hypotheses that need to be further tested and researched:

(1) The decrease in the number of migrants implementing a survival life strategy among Ukrainians in Australia after 2004 implies that up until 2013, Ukraine was starting to emerge from the post-Soviet economic, political and social crisis of the first decade of independence and as a result, survival mechanisms are no longer relevant for social actors. The change suggests that survival conditions in Ukraine changed for the better, at least before the war in Ukraine that started in 2014, creating preconditions that enabled migrants to focus more on achievement. It also suggests that until 2013 life in Ukraine was improving and people were no longer
forced to go abroad for employment in order to survive in the truest sense of the word. From this, it follows that the incidence of a particular life strategy in the country (Ukraine) is determined by the level of socio-economic and cultural development of the society. In the light of the field findings and looking through the prism of migration and migrants’ individual experiences, it is possible to talk about the sending society and argue that a particular type of life strategy was shaped by the type of production, the level and quality of life, the existence of legal regulation of economic and social life, the degree of participation by Ukrainian citizens in state governance, and the influence of traditions and beliefs.

The evolution in life strategies traced in the participants’ narratives supports the optimistic hypothesis that Ukrainian society until the war of 2014 was shifting away from the so-called marginal and transition conditions. It was typical in the transitional situation that social actors found themselves in circumstances of uncertainty and crisis. As was argued by Reznik (1995), in the transition societies, survival life strategies are prevalent. The survival life strategies admit such conditions as the low level of production and service sectors, deeper economic crisis, lack of democratic traditions, and authoritarian forms of government (Reznik, 1995). Similar scholarship suggests that achievement life strategies are typical for individualistic societies characterised by free markets and pluralism (Reznik and Smirnov, 2002). The interrelation between the incidence of survival or achievement life strategies of migrants and development back in their sending country, needs to be further tested and developed.

(2) The evolution in the type of life strategy that dominated across the 1991–2013 Ukrainian migrations, from survival into achievement, implies a second hypothesis which suggests Ukrainian migration to Australia is becoming less “risky” for Australia in terms of a growth in illegal migration and tourist-visa overstaying. Ukrainians no longer need to be opportunists, but instead create legal opportunities for themselves and contribute to the development of Australian society with their skills and experience. The risk of irregular migration into Australia was found to be low, which means Ukrainians should be seen as a “gain” for the Australian labour market and cultural diversity. Ukrainian migration was found to have evolved from the short-term arrival of blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs who tried to
permanently stay in Australia by using regular and irregular ways, into the arrival of well-educated IT professionals from Ukraine and “elite marriage migrants” who created a brain-gain in Australia. The positive post-Soviet institutional dynamics in Ukraine since 2004, which affected migration patterns, were found to fundamentally change the ways individuals earned their living, planned their future and considered social and economic investments in terms of dividends. In the light of this finding, it can be suggested that there is a positive trend in the growing value of Ukrainian migrants in Australia. This argument should be further tested on a significantly larger sample.

(3) The cohort of the interviewed ‘transition migrants’ was found to be the least integrated cohort of Ukrainian migrants in Australia. Further research on the life strategies of migrants from a range of different ethnic groups needs to be conducted in order to identify what other groups of new migrants are implementing survival life strategies in Australia. The Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection should target this cohort of ‘survivors’ and develop support programs to better integrate these members of society, as they are the ones whose English proficiency is low and whose inclusion in primary groups is high. They are more likely to be dependent on the Australian welfare system and to need assistance with integrating into the Australian labour market. This type of research on the life strategies of migrants across different ethnic groups in Australia and worldwide would benefit the cohesion and better integration of the members of multicultural societies.

11.4. Research Limitations and Future Research

It should be emphasised that the main limitation of this study is the timeframe for data collection, which only investigated the arrival of post-independence migrants into Australia up until 2013. Since 2014, the ‘Euromaidan Protests’ and the military conflict in East Ukraine have slightly changed the dynamics of Ukrainian migration into Australia and impacted the socio-economic development of Ukraine. Along with this would come changes to the life strategies of migrants. Thus, the conclusions provided above may not precisely account for the experiences of arrivals since 2014. Further, taking into account the scope of the study and the number of respondents, the data should not be regarded as exhaustive or definitive.
Reflecting on the possible research limitations coming from my Ukrainian background and my insider research status, I would conclude that there were more benefits than costs. As a qualitative researcher, I was not separate from the study, even though I had limited contact with my participants. I suggest, my Ukrainian background has helped me in the research process and I believe was essential to it. It helped in recruitment and in understanding and talking to those participants whose English was not excellent. This was especially important in terms of the discussion of personal topics and being able to understand the participants when they went into the detail of their lives. The stories of participants were immediate and real to me; their individual voices were not lost in a pool of numbers and unfamiliar words.

As a sociologist I have developed the habit of always engaging in self-reflection and analysing my conclusions with the aim to avoid bias, I continued to do so in this research project where I was working with my own national community. Furthermore, my insider status can be counted as relative when talking to participants from blue-collar working class or suppressed entrepreneurs and the class of cultural and scientific intelligentsia. My class affiliation was different to the majority of the participants and therefore, their lives where unfamiliar, which makes me an outsider in relation to their life experiences. Furthermore, my young age meant that some of the experiences of older participants were unfamiliar, which I reflected on again to avoid bias. However, I argue that any qualitative researcher cannot retreat to a distant or objective ‘researcher’ role. Just as our personality affects the analysis, so, the analysis affects our personality.

Finally, I would note that the participants constructed continuous causalities about their changing life circumstances as they faced an array of new challenges in Australia. They simultaneously had to deal with the realities of life in Ukraine which reached them through contacts with friends and relatives who had stayed in Ukraine. The research has shown that migration situations and life pathways are dynamic and tend to change as the result of changes in social circumstances for each individual person as well as structural factors in the sending and receiving country. In any further studies it would seem appropriate to widen the field of analysis by interviewing larger numbers of Ukrainian post-independence migrants in Australia about their experiences and how they coped with challenges in the receiving and sending countries. This would enable the testing and verification of the life
strategy research framework, developed in this study, and extend knowledge of the formation of different life strategies before migration and the transformations of these strategies after migration. Thus, the dominance of the different life strategies in the two different migration periods in this study could be further refined.

Further, research could be widened to include migrant family members (spouses, children, and other relatives) and to assess the application of the life strategy analysis to other ethnic groups of migrants in Sydney. This would be important as a way of determining what might be useful integration mechanisms for migrant groups who arrive as ‘survivors’. This study has shown that the group of Ukrainian ‘survival migrants’ deprived themselves of access to the social and economic benefits that are supposed to accrue to all Australian citizens. Understanding why this was the case needs more extensive sociological investigation. Extending this new, research on ‘survival’ migrants from a range of nationalities or experiences could potentially contribute to theoretical developments in the area of migration, as well as help to practically improve migration policy in Australia and other countries.


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practice of sociological analysis of society: a collection of scientific papers of Kharkiv National University], 57-64.


Yadov, V.A. (1999). Rosia kak transformirushcheesia obschestvo (rezume mnogoletnei diskusii sociologov) [Russia as a society in transition (summary of sociological discussions)]. Society and Economy, 10(11), 65-72.


APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE: INTERVIEW SCRIPT

Introduction to the first narrative part of the interview

Introductory words:

Hello, my name is Olga and I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy, The University of Sydney. I am studying lives of Ukrainians who have migrated to Australia since 1990s.

Introduction to the narrative part of the interview:

Could you please tell me about your life before and after migration to Australia?

Second part of the interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview themes, questions and sub questions</th>
<th>Aim to find out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1: Personal Background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General question:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please tell me briefly about yourself, about your family, where did you come from, what is your profession?</td>
<td>Background environment of the narrator, general features of primary socialization of the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub questions:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Where did you come from? What is this city (town, village) like?</td>
<td>Cultural and regional features of primary socialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Could you please tell about your family? Who are/were your parents?</td>
<td>Social origin (economic and social status)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was socio-economic status of your family in the city/town/village you come from?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Who are the members of your family here in Australia?</td>
<td>Marital status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Where did you finish the school?</td>
<td>Education and profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which professional skills did you obtain after school and where?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Where did you work once you completed your studies/school (if relevant)?</td>
<td>Peculiarities of employment in Ukraine, possible changes in professional identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Please, describe your life in the past six months immediately before migration</td>
<td>Motivations and expectations from migration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in terms of occupation, family, where you lived, etc.? What did you do? What were your attitudes, dreams, and aspirations?

7. What would you describe as the most important thing in your life? That is, what do you value the most?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 2: Reasons, motivations and migration decision-making</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's recall in details the period in your life when you made the decision to migrate to Australia for employment/education/marriage. Did you feel the need to improve your financial situation? What guided your decision to leave? What ways of achieving your aims, satisfying aspirations were perceived as the most relevant ones?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Why did you come to Australia? What guided your decision to migrate? Major reasons for migration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Why have you chosen Australia as destination country for migration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you move voluntary or did circumstances force you to move?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Did you plan your migration in advance or was it a spontaneous decision?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Were there any barriers for your migration to Australia? Which ones? Describe please.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What were your expectations regarding migration to Australia? Did your expectation come true?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How satisfied are you at this stage of migration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Are you satisfied with your current Motivation to migrate (aspirations, goals, needs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values of migrant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Motivation to migrate (aspirations, goals, needs)

Financial situation of the narrator at the time of departure

Acceptable strategies to achieve goals

Reasons for choosing Australia

Voluntary vs. forced migration

Rationality of choice to migrate

Barriers to migration to Australia

Hopes and expectations: illusions and realities

General satisfaction with migration

The success (failure) of migration in achieving
economic and social situation (financial situation, employment/ marriage/ education? 

9. Has your socio-economic status improved or deteriorated since coming to Australia? 

10. Do you plan to change something in your life to improve the existing situation? What? Why? 

Sub-block of questions: main features of post-independence life in Ukraine 

1. Can you please describe peculiarities of Soviet and post-independence life in Ukraine? 

2. What are advantages and disadvantages of life in the independent Ukraine? 

3. How has this political change influenced the lives of Ukrainians? How has your opinion about these changes been formed? 

4. Please recall your life in Ukraine since 1991. Did you struggle or experience difficulties that you did not experience before 1991 or did you have a more stable way of life? 

Theme 3: Arrival in Australia 

1. When did you arrive in Australia? 

2. What were your first impressions of Australia? Describe the most memorable ones. 

3. Did you migrate individually or with your family? 

4. What were the immigration rules at the time of your visa application submission regarding Ukrainian immigration? 

Year of immigration 

Perception of new environment 

Type of migration: individual vs. collective migration 

Australian immigration policy 

Changes in socio-economic status 

Reasons for dissatisfaction. Readiness to improve the situation 

Perception of post-independence Ukraine comparing to USSR period 

Perception of the results of post-Soviet transformations 

Impact of political change on people’s lives. Identify the source of historical and social memory of Ukrainians 

Lives of Ukrainians after receiving independence
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 4: Adaptation</th>
<th>Barriers for successful inclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What difficulties or barriers in general did you encounter while adapting to the new environment? (What difficulties have experienced since arrival?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you consider yourself Australian?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you remember when you started to consider yourself Australian?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Could you please tell me about your experience regarding various institutional procedures, rules and regulations (for example, migration regulation system)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Could you please tell me about your experiences concerning gender relations in the context of migrating to Australia? Has anything changed in your gender roles since coming to Australia?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What differences between Australian and Ukrainian culture did you experience? Why/how have you noticed cultural differences, if any? Did you have difficulty adapting to or understanding Australian culture? Did you have to change any of your cultural practices to integrate into Australian society, such as at work or with new friends?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Have you and do you continue to experience discrimination or unfair treatment in Australia? If yes, could you please tell me about the incident(s) when you were discriminated against or treated unfairly?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Have you experienced any difficulties or barriers because of your cultural background?</td>
<td>Success of adaptation (complete adaptation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role of immigration government structures in migrants’ adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shifts in gender roles before and after migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perception of the recipient society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ukrainians in intercultural relations, conflicts within cultural pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural barriers for integration (assimilation), cultural identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Can you please tell about Ukrainian community life in your city? Your relationship and role in the activities of Ukrainian community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 5: Future plans and prospects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General question:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you pursue certain goals while migrating?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you manage to implement them? Has anything changed in your life guidelines during your stay in Australia? If yes, was it a positive or negative change? How do you see your future now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. What do you feel are your prospects for life in Australia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are your plans for immediate future?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you plan to stay in Australia or migrate to another country? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Have you established or do you plan to establish contacts with Ukraine to use opportunities to return home? What influences your plans?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Did you have enough personal strength to achieve your goal? Have you recourse to join efforts to achieve set goals (to combat barriers to their implementation) of your countrymen in Ukraine and (or) in Australia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What changes in Ukraine can possibly influence your decision to return back home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How often in your life are there moments when you feel happy? What makes you happy the most?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Picture of Ukrainian community life, involvement of representatives of post-independence Ukrainian migration wave in the community’s activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation of the goals, the overall vision of prospects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plans for future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General outline of individual’s perspectives in Ukraine. Reasons for choosing any particular perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own capabilities and opportunities of the community members to respond to external threats, meet current needs and achieve goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation for returning home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and psychological state at the time of interview (in general)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you have any other comments regarding our interview?

Very much thank you for giving your time to participate in this interview!
APPENDIX TWO: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

POST-INDEPENDENCE UKRAINIAN MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is the study about?

The study aims to examine post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia and is particularly centred on Ukrainian migrants’ life strategies in Australia with respect to their employment, education and marriage. The study will explore the relationship between migration and life strategy realization. Of particular interest to the study are the views, perceptions and experiences of Ukrainian migrants who came to Australia from 1990s onwards.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Olga Oleinikova and will form the basis for the degree of PhD in Sociology and Social Policy at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr Catriona Elder, Associate Professor, Chair of the Department.

(3) What does the study involve?

The study will involve face-to-face interviews with Ukrainian migrants. Participants will be audio recorded during interviews in order to allow for the researcher to transcribe their responses at a later date.

Participant can feel free to be interviewed in one of the following languages: English, Ukrainian and Russian.

(4) How much time will the study take?

Interviews will take up to two hour to conduct.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with The University of Sydney.
You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

We cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from the study.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

You are free to discuss your role in the study with other people.

(9) What if I require further information?

When you have read this information, Olga Oleinikova or Dr Catriona Elder will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Olga Oleinikova on 0406479019 or Dr Catriona Elder on 02 9036 9483.

(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact The Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on +61 2 8627 8176 (Telephone); +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep
APPENDIX THREE: PARTICIPANTS CONSENT FORM

I, ......................................................, give consent to my participation in the research project.

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) or The University of Sydney now or in the future.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

5. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

7. I consent to: i) Audio-taping YES ☐ NO ☐ ii) Receiving Feedback YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answered YES to the “Receiving Feedback Question (iii)”, please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

Feedback Option
Address: …………………………………………………………………………
Email: …………………………………………………………………………..

Signed: …………………………………………………………………………
Name: …………………………………………………………………………
Date: ……………………………………………………………………………
APPENDIX FOUR
CITIZENS OF UKRAINE GRANTED REFUGEE STATUS AND RESIDING IN AUSTRALIA AND ABROAD

Table 1. Asylum applications and refugee status determination of Ukrainian residents in Australia\textsuperscript{18}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Country / territory of residence</th>
<th>Origin / Returned from</th>
<th>Total persons pending at start of year</th>
<th>Persons applied during year</th>
<th>Positive decisions (convention status)</th>
<th>Rejected</th>
<th>Otherwise closed</th>
<th>Total decisions</th>
<th>Total persons pending at end of year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
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\textsuperscript{18} UNHCR Statistical Online Population Database, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Data extracted: 18/0/2014, \url{www.unhcr.org/statistics/populationdatabase}

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APPENDIX FIVE
UKRAINIAN-BORN SETTLERS BY MIGRATION STREAM (1991–2013)

Total: Ukrainian-born Settlers by Migration Stream (1 January 1991–1 January 2014)\textsuperscript{20}

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Ukrainian-born Settlers by Migration Stream (1 January 1991–1 January 2004)

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