GO WEST
East European Migrants in Sweden

Jenny Olofsson
Acknowledgements

My time as a PhD student has finally come to an end and I have experienced many exciting, challenging, fruitful and funny moments. I do have many people to thank for making this period of my life unforgettable, and in the end for making this thesis possible.

First of all I would like to express my gratitude to my team of supervisors. You have always kept the door open and contributed with important insights into my work. Thank you, Kerstin Westin, for your thoroughness, guidance and patience when reading and commenting on my work. You have always been there to answer late e-mails and questions, supplied me with candy and made me understand that there is a life beyond work. Thank you, Gunnar Malmberg, for your enriching discussions and for pushing me to be even better. I really appreciate your valuable advice and comments, which improved this thesis significantly. Thank you, Olof Stjernström, for your endless support and for your encouraging pep talks – they have really meant a lot to me. Your rich knowledge of our neighbouring countries in the East has been of great importance for my research on East-West migration.

Thank you also, Charlotta Hedberg, for reading and commenting on the first draft of this thesis; you have made an important contribution. Many thanks also to Rikard Eriksson and Emma Lundholm, for your thorough readings and valuable comments on my thesis.

Life at work as well as outside the workplace would not have been so wonderful without my dear friends Erika, Linda, Katarina, Madeleine and Cecilia. Thanks for being there for me and for all our nice time together having dinner, drinking wine, travelling, visiting theatres and other cultural events, and just hanging out. It has really been invaluable.

I would also like to thank all my colleagues at the Department of Geography and Economic History, for making this workplace such a pleasant and inspiring place to work at. A special thanks to all other fellow PhD students, for the fruitful discussions and fun activities throughout the years. I really appreciate and enjoy your company. I am also more than grateful for all the administrative and technical help over the years from Lotta Brännlund, Margit Salbjörg-Söderberg, Erik Bäckström, Fredrik Gärling and Ylva Linghult. Thank You!

The research this thesis is based upon was partly funded by the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS) (dnr 2005-0547). I have
also had the opportunity to present my research at international conferences and workshops, with financial support from the Gösta Skoglunds foundation, the Kempe Foundation, the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation and the Helge Ax:son Johnsons Foundation. A special thanks to the Graduate School in Population Dynamics and Public Policy at Umeå University for its financial support and for being an important environment for meetings and discussions with PhD students from other departments and disciplines.

I would also like to thank all the respondents who took the time to answer my questionnaire. Without you this thesis would have been impossible to carry through, so thank you!

Finally, I would like to express my love and gratitude to my families: thanks to my parents Ann-Gerd and Bosse, my parents-in-law Kerstin and Roland, my brother Daniel and sister Emma and their respective families, and my sister-in-law Kristin for always believing in me and supporting me no matter what. I could not have done this without you! Closest to my heart is my partner Fredrik and my sweet baby Ester – you mean everything to me!

Jenny Olofsson
Umeå, October 2012
# Table of Contents

**Introduction**
- Aim
- Outline of the thesis
- Definitions
  - *Defining migration*
  - *Defining integration*
- Delimitations
- Setting the scene – Migration from East Europe to Sweden
  - *Post-war migration in a Swedish context*

**Theoretical perspectives and previous research**
- Migration motives – the diverse migration rationalities among immigrants
- Social networks, migration systems and transnational social spaces
- Economic integration – Labour market outcome and working income
- Social integration – Well being and belonging

**Methods and data**
- Methodological considerations
  - *Statistical methods*
- Sources of data
- Methodological delimitations

**Paper Summaries**
- Paper II: East-Central European migrants in Sweden – Migration motives and migration outcome
- Paper III: A Sense of Belonging – Social Integration among East European Immigrants in Sweden

**Discussion and conclusions**
- Limited migration flows
- Immigrants as strong or weak bridgeheads
- Future development of migration systems and transnational social spaces

**Sammanfattning (Summary in Swedish)**

**References**
Appendices


Appendix: Survey Questionnaire: Moving to Sweden
Introduction

In recent decades Europe has become one of the main destination regions for migration globally (Bengtsson et al., 2005), and in 2010 the number of international migrants in Europe was estimated at approximately 70 million (UN DESA, 2011). For each of these millions of people, the act of moving was a major event in their life and did not end with the crossing of a border. The migrants’ daily life – their motives, integration, perceived outcome and belonging – is significant not only for the migrants themselves, but also for the sending and receiving countries, prior migrants, those left behind, and in the long run potential future migrants (Castles, 2000; King, 2002; Faist, 2000). King (2002), among others, stresses that in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of international migration there is a need to explore migration as a process, including the daily life of the migrant in the new country of living, and not as a single event. The present thesis links the integration processes with migration from the East European 1 countries: Russia, Poland and the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) to Sweden after 1989. This is done by exploring the individual migrants’ preferences and motives, the way they handle and perceive successes and failures in the new country of residence, and not least the way they contribute to establishing a transnational social space linking countries in East and West Europe.

The restructuring of Europe’s political and economic map in recent decades has altered the preconditions for international migration in many ways. A political barrier has fallen, and previously separated countries have been integrated into one economic union. In relation to these transitions with their new political and economic conditions, the migration patterns have changed dramatically and the outcome has in many ways been unexpected. To begin with, public and scholarly debates predicted a massive inflow of people from East Europe to West European countries as a consequence of the elimination of political and structural migration obstacles resulting from the Soviet collapse (Koser and Lutz, 1998; Zlotnik, 1999; Okólski, 2004a; Salt, 2005). The same xenophobic debate arose in 2004 and 20072 when the European Union (EU) extended its boundary towards the countries in the

---

1 The term ‘East Europe’, as used in this thesis, designates Russia, the Baltic States and Poland as East European countries. This is based primarily on the geographical and historical construction of East and West Europe (see Górny and Ruspini, 2004). However, many migrants from, e.g., Poland prefer to call themselves Central Europeans as this implies “the ongoing process of redefinition and blurring of the frontiers of East and West Europe” (Górny and Ruspini, 2004: 7). In this study, ‘East Europe’ is used interchangeably with ‘Central and Eastern Europe’ and ‘East-Central Europe’.

2 The East European countries entering the EU on May 1, 2004 were the Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia (EU-8), along with Malta and Cyprus (EU-10). On January 1, 2007 two additional countries, Romania and Bulgaria, entered the EU.
eastern part of Europe (Okólski, 2004a; Tamas and Münz, 2006; Doyle et al., 2006). These geopolitical changes have had far-reaching consequences on the attention directed at East-West migration flows. Thus, this “new” mobility across the borders has gained particular importance in the EU’s political agenda, and has been described as a threat or as a possibility for most European countries. The most pessimistic positions emphasize a scenario whereby the West European migration space would collapse as a result of the flooding of migrants from East to West, utilizing the labour markets and straining the welfare systems of the original EU-15 countries. In a Swedish context, the threat from the East was manifested in a fear of a “welfare tourism”, whereby the immigrants would take advantage of the system and exploit the social benefits offered in Sweden (Tamaz and Münz, 2006: p.30; Doyle et al., 2006). However, the anticipated migration flows did not occur, either at the beginning of the 90s or after the EU enlargements.

Whilst some countries have experienced quite high levels of immigration from East Europe, immigration to other countries has remained low. During the 21st century, migration flows involving East and Central European countries can be summarized into two diverse patterns (Mansoor and Quillin, 2006). The first is mainly characterized by intra-regional migration flows from countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) with Russia as the main destination country. However, regarding migration flows from the entire Central and East European region, nearly half of the flows are directed to West European countries (Mansoor and Quillin, 2006: 35). The most important destination within West Europe has been Germany, although the enlargement of the EU in 2004 has contributed to a more disperse pattern, with UK and Ireland as new main destinations for many emigrants (Kielyte and d’Artis, 2002; Zimmermann, 2005; Mansoor and Quillin, 2006; Burrell, 2010; Barrell et al., 2010). Only a minor share of the East European migrants choose Sweden as a destination; however, the migration has increased during the 2000s, particularly from Poland. In 2010 8,424 immigrants came from Poland, Russia and the Baltic States, which is equivalent to 8.5 per cent of the total immigration flow to Sweden (Statistics Sweden, 2012). Of these, over half originate from Poland, a third from the Baltic States and approximately 15 per cent from Russia. The EU enlargement has also facilitated an increase in short-term (i.e. movements lasting less than three months) labour migration, e.g. construction workers, to Sweden. With an awareness of a high number of unrecorded cases, Doyle et al. (2006:38) estimate that these flows have doubled after 2004. Although

---

3 The CIS consists of the former Soviet Union (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania excluded).
this is an interesting development, this thesis is delimited to focusing on more long-term migrants and thus excludes the short-term ones.

Accordingly, Sweden is one of the European countries that have registered a rather moderate inflow of migrants from the neighbouring East European countries, despite geographical proximity and the free access to the labour market new EU member states received in 2004. However, these countries are nevertheless important new origins of immigration, not least against the background of decreasing fertility rates during the 1900s and increasing life expectancies, resulting in an ageing population and a threatening lack of labour supply in many European countries (Rauhut, 2002; Görny and Ruspini, 2004). The influx of foreign labour from the new EU member states has been discussed as one solution for securing the labour supply in the old member states. At the same time, many East European countries themselves have to manage an ageing population that is further reinforced by emigration to the Western part of Europe. A further issue that has been raised is whether this emigration constitutes a brain drain/waste or a brain gain/exchange for the sending and receiving countries. Salt et al. (2004: 39) assert that many East European countries have experienced a loss of well trained and educated labourers, and that up to 14 per cent of post-1989 emigrants are highly skilled. However, findings by Tamas and Münz (2006) and Pollard et al. (2008) suggest that a majority of the EU-84 migrants in the UK, for example, end up in low-skilled employment, resulting in a brain waste of these highly skilled migrants. Moreover, short-term migration between East and West can also result in a brain exchange, with the circulation of highly skilled migrants between specific countries in Europe. Nevertheless, these processes will have an important effect on the labour market and society in both receiving and sending countries in Europe in the future.

Obviously, structural changes have developed and shaped new migration patterns in Europe in recent decades. And as a consequence, many individuals and particularly young people have moved from East to West European countries, not only to find better job opportunities and education possibilities, but also in hopes of improving their living environment or due to love: to marry, move in with or find a new partner. Against the background of the debates at the beginning of the 1990s and in the 2000s, the primary focus of this thesis is not the effect on Swedish society but rather on those immigrants who finally decided to move and settle down in Sweden. What were their motives for leaving their homes, and what are their

---

4 The eight countries that joined the EU in 2004 were the Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.
experiences in their new country of living? And in the end, will these migration events cause further migration to occur and develop or not?

Furthermore, in most studies of international migration (see for instance Massey and Espinosa, 1997; Roberts et al., 1999; Favell, 2008) the attention is on the dynamics of large or already established migration systems that involve flows and circulations of migrants over time (e.g. Mexico-US migration), although a large share of contemporary migration consists of smaller flows between geographically adjacent countries or places. Favell (2008) regards East-West migration, in the light of the EU enlargement, as a potential source for developing existing theories and models of migratory processes that are originally based on US-Mexico migration scenarios. In the literature it is argued that migration often generates additional moves (Gurak and Caces, 1992; Massey et al., 1993; 1998; Castles and Miller, 2003), but in many cases the flows of people do not transform into established migration systems (de Haas, 2009). Possible explanations for why migration becomes moderate or even ceases can be found in, for example, macro-structural and political factors, the motivations for migrating, social networks in the places of origin and destination, and integration into the new society. Against this background, it is relevant in several respects to analyse East-West migration: to look at why the number of immigrants varies between countries, and to focus on the cases with rather limited flows, like the case of migration to Sweden from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland.

Although the number of migrants in this case may have been smaller than many experts have anticipated, today there are many young people moving from East Europe to Sweden. They are the agents of the migration process, and their decisions and attitudes as well as how they extend their networks are vital for how the migration patterns develop. The migration acts shape not only the lives of the movers, but also the living conditions of the relatives and friends left behind and the demographic and socio-economic conditions at the places of origin and destination. By establishing links between the places of origin and destination, migrants alter the preconditions for others to follow. And their failure or success, the way they are received, and their long-term plans are decisive not only for their own life trajectories but also for the development of transnational social spaces and for the long-term development of international migration patterns.
Aim

This thesis deals with the interaction between integration and migration, and how this affects international migration processes in general. Taking the migration from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States to Sweden as a case, the aim is to scrutinize how the economic and social integration of immigrants, social networks, motives and migration interact and vary between migrants from the respective countries, as well as between men and women. In relation to this aim, the following research questions are derived:

a) How do East European immigrants integrate - economically and socially - into Swedish society?

b) Is there a relationship between motives for migration and integration?

c) How do the immigrants from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States perceive their outcome in the destination country?

d) How do immigrants’ place attachment and sense of belonging affect their integration into Swedish society?

e) To what extent, and how, do migrants’ integration processes and social networks facilitate and trigger further migration?

Within this framework, the contribution of this thesis extends beyond the economic dimension by drawing on the individual migrants’ self-perceived experiences of their migration from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland to Sweden. A successful integration includes more than high wages and employment; it is also about how the migrants themselves perceive the outcome of the migration decision. Thus, the focus is on the individual migrant and the importance of social networks.

East-West migration is fruitful to study when analysing international migration processes, since it represents cases in which the migration flows have not been as extensive as the overarching expectations predicted. In the context of migration from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States to Sweden, these countries are geographically close to Sweden, which facilitates migration flows. However, they are distinguished by different prerequisites to migrate. Russia was not included in the EU enlargement of 2004, and does not have the same opportunities to migrate and work in other EU countries as do Poland and the Baltic States. Nevertheless, Russia is part of the changing Eastern Europe since the fall of the Iron Curtain, enhancing new migration flows across borders.

The questions are answered through a combination of (a) register data, for examining the flows and composition of migrants and integration on the labour market, and (b) a representative survey questionnaire to facilitate
analyses of softer variables such as motives, perceived outcome and self-reported sense of belonging among immigrants in Sweden.

Outline of the thesis

This thesis comprises an introductory section and three research papers. The introductory section starts with a brief overview of migration from East to West Europe and Sweden since the fall of the Iron Curtain. This is followed by a theoretical discussion on international migration framing the three papers. This section includes issues relating to migration motives, social networks, migration systems, transnational social spaces and integration. The following two sections present methodological considerations and empirical data used in the studies, and summaries of the three research papers. Thereafter, results and conclusions are drawn from the papers and related to the theoretical framework of this thesis. Finally, a Swedish summary of the thesis is presented.

Paper I: When Will the Russians Come? On Post-Soviet Immigration and Integration in Sweden. This paper is based on register data and aims to analyse aspects of transnational social spaces between the former Soviet republics and Sweden, in terms of labour market integration, family situation, intermarriage, population circulation and the spatial clustering of immigrants.

Paper II: East-Central European migrants in Sweden - Migration motives and migration outcome. This paper is based on a questionnaire survey conducted in Sweden in March 2009. The focus is to examine the primary motives for migration and the outcome of the migration in terms of employment, family status and satisfaction with the migration decision for people moving to Sweden from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland.

Paper III: A Sense of Belonging – Social Integration among East European Immigrants in Sweden. This paper addresses East European immigrants’ social integration in terms of perceived sense of belonging in Swedish society. The data used are also drawn from the above mentioned survey among immigrants from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland in Sweden.

Definitions

Defining migration

In the literature, migration is a complex and broad concept embracing various definitions. However, it is generally defined spatially, as a movement
of individuals across space, with flows crossing a national border referred to as international migration (Boyle et al., 1998). Furthermore, a time aspect is often included in the definition, and distinctions are made between more temporary and permanent migratory movements. The different forms of migration range from short-term, practiced by e.g. shuttle migrants who stay abroad for no more than three months, to the form practiced by individuals who intend to take up long-term residence in the receiving country and do not want to return home on a continuous basis (Bauböck, 1994; Boyle et al., 1998; Iglicka, 2000, Pinger, 2009).

In the present thesis the focus is directed at more permanent movements across national borders, whereas migration for a period shorter than one year is not included. Accordingly, the attention is on those who have settled abroad legally. Furthermore, migration is not regarded as a discrete event but rather, in line with Castles (2000), King (2002) and Faist (2000), as a process that includes aspects beyond the move itself such as the migrants’ daily life in their new country of living and their contacts back home.

**Defining integration**

Integration is a widely used concept in migration studies, and there is no explicit and uniform definition. In this thesis it is seen as a process rather than an isolated event, and is conceptualized as a process whereby the migrant becomes an accepted part of society (Penninx 2005, Mansoor and Quillin, 2006). Furthermore, in line with Mansoor and Quillin’s (2006: 157) definition, integration refers to a multitude of physical and sociocultural processes which help the migrant settle down and adopt new ways of living in the host society, involving activities such as finding a job and housing, learning a new language, and engaging in other activities in everyday life. Thus, integration implies that immigrants retain their cultural and ethnic identity and character, but have the possibility to fully participate in the social, economic and political life of the receiving society (Kurthen and Heisler, 2009; Castles and Miller, 2009; Hedberg 2004).

Moreover, economic and social integration are distinguished between in the studies included in the thesis. Economic integration is defined in terms of labour market performance: measuring the employment rate among the immigrants and their working income (*Papers I, II*). Social integration is defined in terms of how the immigrants adapt to daily life beyond work, analysing factors such as language proficiency, social networks, place attachment and perceived sense of belonging in Swedish society (*Papers II, III*). In the context of the thesis, sense of belonging refers to the immigrants’ self-perceived sense of belonging to Sweden as their new country of living.
The immigrants were not provided with a clear definition of belonging, but were rather asked the question (see Appendix) and left to answer it based on their own understanding of the term.

**Delimitations**

There are, as mentioned, different definitions and degrees of temporariness of migration, ranging from a few months to more permanent (see for example definitions by Iglicka, 2000). The immigrants included in this thesis have a duration of stay of at least one year in the new country. This is due to the empirical data containing only registered immigrants residing in Sweden, which further excludes non-registered immigrants such as undocumented workers. This implies that those individuals who choose to stay in Sweden for only a couple of months are excluded from the analyses.

Furthermore, this thesis cannot say anything about the extent or characteristics of the people left behind (those who decided to stay in their country of origin), those who chose to move to a country other than Sweden, or those who have returned to their country of origin or moved on to another country. Although the results of this thesis show a rather successful story regarding the integration of East European immigrants into Swedish society, one has to bear in mind that this is the story of those who at the time of the surveys were residing in Sweden. Hence, this research provides no insight into the integration of those individuals who are not included in the official statistics, with different prerequisites than those studied in this thesis.

Another essential delimitation is that the migration motives are analysed in retrospect, and the individual’s interpretations and perceptions may have changed by the time they answered the questionnaire. Thus, answers in a survey need to be interpreted with caution. Furthermore, the results based on the survey in Papers II and III give an indication of why the respondents immigrated to Sweden and how they perceive their outcome in their new society, and also the importance of local and transnational social networks. To gain further and more in-depth knowledge of, for example, the importance of social relations in the migration process, a qualitative study is more appropriate.

Finally, this thesis analyses international migration from the perspective of the destination country, i.e. Sweden, and only includes analyses based on Swedish empirical data.
Setting the scene – Migration from East Europe to Sweden

Migration from East to West Europe is very much a “new” phenomenon in the modern era, made possible by the removal of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and later by the entrance of several East European countries into the EU in 2004 and 2007, respectively. In the past, from the late 1940s until the beginning of the 1990s, international movements of East European citizens were tightly controlled and regulated in the eastern part of Europe, and with the removal of some of the most substantial mobility barriers a new phase in East-West migration took place (Okólski, 2004b; Krassinets and Tiuriukanova, 2001; Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2009; Mansoor and Quillin, 2006). The changed preconditions for migration resulted in an increase of westward migration, although not in the volumes initially anticipated (Malačič, 2002). According to an EU Commission report (2006), the overall increase in immigration to old EU member states after 2004 was rather limited, and Iglicka (2005), for instance, further shows that the cross-border mobility of Poles was lower in 2004 compared to the year before. In total, during the period from 1998 until 2009 approximately 1.2 million people migrated from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States to West Europe (Eurostat, 2011). The migration flows steadily increased between 1990 and 2003, and have since then decreased. This can be partly attributed to restrictions on migration from the ten new member states in the East imposed in 2004 by the former EU-15 countries (excluding Ireland, the UK and Sweden) (MPI, 2010). Nevertheless, there has been a change from a more diverse migration flow from East European countries, and recent international migrations are much more complex, with for example more temporary and highly skilled migrants (Koser and Lutz, 1998; Wallace and Stola, 2001; Wallace, 2002; Slany, 2008).

Looking at migration from the study areas of Russia, Poland and the Baltic States to the former EU-15, Germany receives the largest number of migrants, followed by the UK and Austria (Eurostat, 2011). Receiving capacity in terms of e.g. employment opportunities, and also the potential for community formations, is of course larger in more populated countries, and could thus be argued to make migration more attractive. When migration is related to population in the receiving country, the pattern is somewhat mixed: Germany has about 20 per cent of the EU-15 population but receives almost 90 per cent of the migrants from the study countries (Table 1). The UK, with 16 per cent of the population, receives about 5 per cent of the migrants. The migration ratio to Spain, France and Italy is lower than to low-population countries such as Austria and Denmark. Sweden, located on the other side of the Baltic Sea from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States (Figure 1), is the destination country for about 0.5 per cent of the migrants from the
study area, while constituting 2.4 per cent of the EU population. Barrell et al. (2007) further confirm the minor impact the EU enlargement had on the immigration flows from the new member states to Sweden. In their study on EU enlargement and migration, they found that Sweden has experienced a rather low change in the number of immigrants from the new member states present in the total working age population (0.14%), compared to Ireland (2.17%) and the UK (0.72%) (Barrell et al., 2007: pp. 3-4).

Table 1. Percentage of EU-15 population and immigration from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States in respective EU-15 country. Source: Statistics adapted from Eurostat, 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EU-15 population (%)</th>
<th>Immigration (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>21.87</td>
<td>87.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>16.64</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>15.91</td>
<td>4.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>15.49</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>11.41</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Post-war migration in a Swedish context

International migration is not a new phenomenon in Sweden; various ethnic groups have migrated to Sweden for centuries. In correlation with the decreasing emigration wave to America in the late 1920s Sweden was transformed from an emigrant country into an immigrant country, and has experienced a net immigration throughout the post-war period, with one exception at the beginning of the 1970s (Svanberg and Tydén, 1992; Lundh and Ohlsson, 1994; Bengtsson et al., 2005). The net emigration in 1972/73 was a result of prevailing economic crises during that time, which led to a considerable re-emigration of especially Finnish immigrants. This has been the only time emigration has exceeded immigration in post-war Sweden (Lundh and Ohlsson, 1994; Bengtsson et al., 2005). Figure 2 illustrates the immigration and emigration patterns in Sweden from the 1940s until today.
The immigration in Sweden during the post-war period can be explained in economic and social terms, whereby the differences in standard of living, the Swedish immigration policy and established migration networks have affected the migration flows and the composition of immigrants (Bengtsson et al., 2005; Bevelander, 2010). During the post-war period the patterns of immigration can be divided into two phases: the first stretches from the mid-1940s to the early 1970s, and the second from the early 1970s and onwards (Bengtsson et al., 2005; Lundh and Ohlsson, 1994). During the first phase, labour migration predominated and there was only a smaller proportion of refugee immigration. Sweden was characterized by rapid economic and industrial growth, and therefore also by a shortage of labour. Due to this, the Swedish immigration policy was liberalized and central authorities recommended a net immigration to compensate for this lack of labour. This liberalization of legislation and the labour market allowed foreigners to enter, settle and work in Sweden (Lundh and Ohlsson, 1994; Bengtsson et al., 2005; Svanberg and Tydén, 1992). Characteristic of the immigration to Sweden during the first part of the post-war period (the late 1940s) was that a significant number of migrants came from East European countries, and were mostly refugee immigrants. Lundh and Ohlsson (1994) note that approximately a quarter of the immigrants came from East Europe, mainly from the Baltic States, Poland, the former Czechoslovakia and the former Soviet Union.
Throughout the 1960s there was a drastic increase in labour migration, particularly from Finland, the former Yugoslavia and Greece, and a debate about immigration arose in the Swedish mass media (Lundh and Ohlsson, 1994; Bengtsson et al., 2005). The rapid increase in labour migration, together with a recession in the Swedish economy in the early 1970s, led to a radical change in migration policy, with the aim of restricting immigration from non-Nordic countries (Svanberg and Tydén, 1992; Bengtsson et al., 2005). As a result of this change, non-Nordic labour migration nearly stopped in the early 1970s and there was a shift from labour immigration to refugee and family-reunion migration (Svanberg and Tydén, 1992; Bengtsson et al., 2005). Accordingly, there is a clear correlation between immigration policy and economic development in Sweden: during periods of economic growth the policy has been more liberal (1945-1970), and during the period from the 1970s and onwards the policy has been more restrictive and immigrants have been forced to apply for a work permit in their home country before entering Sweden (see for example Bengtsson et al., 2005).

At the beginning of the 1990s non-Nordic immigration to Sweden increased, mainly due to the wars in the former Yugoslavia, which led to massive refugee migration to Sweden (Bengtsson et al., 2005; Bevelander, 2000). Bevelander (2000) points out that this significant increase in refugee immigration resulted in further restrictions on non-Nordic immigrants to Sweden (Bevelander, 2000). During the same period, Sweden started to facilitate labour migration between EU countries through joining the Common European Labour Market. However, the entrance of Sweden into the EU in 1995 did not notably affect the non-Nordic immigration to Sweden (Bengtsson et al., 2005). Instead, it facilitated a net emigration of Swedish citizens to other EEA/EU countries (Bengtsson et al., 2005; Hedberg and Malmberg, 2008). Moreover, the EU accession in 2004 further opened the borders in Europe, this time towards countries in the central and eastern parts. Sweden, the UK and Ireland were the only old EU countries that did not introduce any transitional rules for immigrants coming from these new member states (Gerdes and Wadensjö, 2008).

The inflow of migrants from East Europe to Sweden is rather moderate (Figure 3). Tamas and Münz (2006) and Gerdes and Wadensjö (2008) assert that the relatively small inflow of labour migrants to Sweden, despite no restriction on access to the labour market with the enlargement of the EU in 2004, can be due to a number of factors including a weak labour market, disadvantages associated with the Swedish language and a lack of other insider knowledge or advantages, or a lower than expected propensity to emigrate from these new member states. In Sweden, labour migration has been most dominant from the EU-8 countries (Tamas and Münz, 2006;
Doyle et al., 2006), while migration from East European countries outside the EU, such as Russia, is moderate and mostly consists of marriage migration (Rauhut, 2004; Paper I).

The rise in the number of women participating in waged labour has increased migration among women and contributed to an intensified feminization of migration during the past two decades (Phizacklea, 1998; 2004). This trend is also observed among many East European countries, where the percentage of migrant women is higher than that of men (Slany 2008). The same migration pattern can be found in Sweden, where the inflow of migrants from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland each year has been characterized by a female predominance (Figure 4). However, since the EU enlargement in 2004 the immigration of men from Poland and Lithuania has increased significantly, with the result that the yearly immigration changed towards a flow consisting of more men than women between 2005 and 2011 (Statistics Sweden, 2012). A similar pattern can be found for Estonia and Latvia for 2009-2011. The opposite is true for Russian migrants, whereby the steady inflow of women has continued over time, with more than 60 per cent of the immigrant population being female. Gerdes and Wadensjö (2008) further show that the return rate is higher among male than among female migrants. That female migrants from Central and East European countries tend to become long-term migrants to a higher degree is
also a characteristic that holds true across the rest of Western Europe (Slany, 2008).

![Figure 4. Share of female immigrants to Sweden during the 21st century. Source: Statistics adapted from Statistics Sweden, 2012.]

Another distinctive characteristic of these immigrants is that they are mainly constituted of young and highly educated migrants (Tamas and Münz, 2004; Gerdes and Wadensjö, 2008). In line with the results of the study on labour market integration in the Baltic Sea Region by Heikkilä et al. (2004), this thesis shows that in comparison with native Swedes, immigrants from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland have on average higher educational qualifications (Paper I). Studies on labour market integration further state that these immigrants often possess low-skilled jobs, despite being highly educated (Drinkwater et al., 2009; Paper I; Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2009). However, in the Swedish context there are also examples of migrants in more highly skilled occupations (Tamas and Münz, 2004), and Apsite et al. (2012) highlight a difference between the UK and Sweden whereby immigrants from the Baltic States residing in Sweden are more often employed in highly skilled professions.

Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that East European immigrants shown in the official population statistics in Sweden exclude temporary and undocumented migration flows. The characteristics and motives of these
individuals may be different than those included in the official statistics and the present thesis. Vertovec (2007) argues that many migrants are not ‘first movers’, but have rather made multiple trips back and forth during shorter time periods to, e.g., work or study, thereby have established cross-border social networks that facilitate further migration. Thus, permanent migration may have been preceded by more temporary migration and may hence have been affected by it, without appearing in the official population statistics. In the case of East European immigrants in Sweden, Papers II and III reveal that social networks do exist but are at present still quite undeveloped, and that the majority of immigrants intend to stay in Sweden for the near future.
Theoretical perspectives and previous research

Contemporary research on international migration emphasizes the importance of analysing both migration acts and post-migration processes in order to frame our understanding of why (and where) people move (or do not move) across national borders (Faist, 2000; Castles, 2000; King, 2002). Castles (2000: 15-16) and King (2002:91-92) argue that the disintegration of migration research into separate fields has failed to embrace “the lived reality of migrants”, which encompasses all events in the migrants’ experiences. Thus, there is a need to analyse the interrelation between immigrant integration and migration to grasp the internal dynamics of international migration processes.

Nevertheless, traditional theoretical perspectives developed within the migration field function as important constituents for understanding the extent and causes of migration flows (Hammar et al., 1997; Arango, 2000). However, these theories have been exposed to criticism by many migration researchers as a result of their narrow focus and an inability to analyse and explain various types of migration and actual migration experiences (Massey et al., 1998; 2008, Faist, 2000; Arango, 2000; de Haas, 2008, Castles, 2000; 2010). Traditional macro-analyses of international migration focus on constraints and opportunities, including income and labour differences, between sending and receiving countries, as well as legal-institutional settings regulating in- and out-migration (Greenwood, 1993; Massey et al., 1993; Fischer et al., 1997; de Haas, 2008; Faist, 2000). As a result of the uneven geographical distribution of capital and labour, workers tend to move from countries, or regions, where wages and employment opportunities are low and to high-wage countries, or regions, where the labour force is scarce (Massey et al., 1993; Faist, 2000; Arango, 2004). Since migration is also both costly and risky, emigration from very poor countries is expected to remain low and increase when the economic opportunities for the potential migrants improve and migration becomes a more readily available mean to increase the income (Todaro, 1981; Faini and Venturini, 1994). In so doing, the movement of labour contributes to the redistribution of the factors of production and the elimination of wage differentials between countries, or regions, in the long run. According to this theoretical argument, migration will increase until income differentials are marginal.

Although the promise of improved economic position is a major incentive for emigration, several authors have pointed to the fact that international migration between high- and low-income countries often remains quite
limited (see for example Hammar et al., 1997; Fischer, 1999; Faist, 2000). In addition, previous research has emphasized, among other factors, the impact of political regulations in explaining the relative and selective international immobility (Hammar et al., 1997; Ahmed, 1997). From a European perspective this was evident in the presence of the Iron Curtain, which restrained people’s mobility between East and West Europe during the second half of the 1900s. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a new barrier to migration was erected through the establishment of the European Union, dividing EU member states from non-EU member states (King, 2002; Wallace, 2002; Verwiebe, 2011). King (2002), among others, terms this new barrier towards the East “Fortress Europe”, controlling migratory movements across the borderline of the European Union.

Macro-structural opportunities and determinants are of importance in explaining why migration systems arise (Massey et al., 1993). However, they fail to provide adequate explanation for the immobility paradox: the non-migration choice (the decision to stay) and why migration flows often do not increase but rather remain at a low level (Hammar et al., 1997; Faist, 2000; Arango, 2004; de Haas, 2009). Thus, to understand contemporary processes of international migration, other factors have to be considered. Determinants of migration can be found not only on a structural level; various non-economic factors have to be examined as well, such as kin, family and friend networks, migration decision-making, integration, social relations, outcome of migration etc. (Bailey et al., 2004; Haug, 2008; Nauck and Settles, 2001; Lundholm, 2007). Obviously, individual decisions are made within and limited by macro-structural contexts, yet they are also influenced by individuals' involvement in social networks in both country of origin and destination (Boyd, 1989).

In the context of European migration, explanations anchored in economic theories have dominated the research, although other non-economic factors such as family circumstances, social networks and life outside work have attracted attention in more recent studies (Burrell, 2010; Kurekova, 2010). However, the majority of these studies have focused on immigration to Germany (e.g. Haug, 2005; Verwiebe, 2011; Dietz, 2000) or the UK, particularly London (e.g. Cook et al., 2011; Burrell, 2010; Parutis, 2011), and few are directed towards other places or contexts. In Sweden, focus has mainly been on the economic integration of immigrants and effects on the labour market (Rauhut, 2002; Bevelander, 2000; Paper I; Bengtsson et al., 2005), rather than on the immigrants' self-perceived experience of the migration outcome.
This thesis focuses on the individual migrant perspective: analysing migrants who move across a national border and take up residence in a new country. The focus is on how migration and integration into the new society are shaped by different socio-economic factors, and how this in turn affects the development of migration systems between places or regions. The migratory process does not end with a person’s arrival in the new country, but instead continues with the migrant’s daily life in the new society and through links back home (Faist, 2000; Castles, 2000; King, 2002; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). Thus, the theoretical starting point in this thesis is based on Faist’s (1997; 2000) theory on transnational social spaces, which has the advantage of combining micro-perspectives with macro-perspectives, and in addition including a social relational perspective, to explain why people move from one place to another. In order to further extend the knowledge regarding the dynamics of international migration, this thesis applies a macro- and micro-perspective, measuring socioeconomic characteristics in relation to migration flows (Paper I), and in addition, a micro- and meso-perspective, analysing individual experiences of the migration process and the importance of social networks (Papers II, III).

Migration motives – the diverse migration rationalities among immigrants

In micro-oriented theories, explanations for migration are sought in the behaviour of and decisions made by individuals (Massey et al., 1993; Faist, 2000; Malmberg, 1997). The decision to leave one’s current location and move to a new country is an immense social action undertaking that affects a person’s situation and everyday life. Although migration decision-making is a complex process embracing various aspects, in the literature economic explanations have been suggested to be the most prominent motive for migration (Fischer et al., 1997; Arango, 2004; Burrell, 2010). However, the motives and expectations for migration differ between individuals, and all aspects such as gender, socio-economic factors and family circumstances are of importance.

Yet, migration motives are often assumed to be economically driven, and individual migrants are analysed as rational actors seeking to improve their well being by estimating the costs and benefits of moving (Massey et al., 1993; Arango, 2004). In international migration studies in general, the main explanations for migration between East and West Europe can be found within the economic sphere, whereby economic hardship in the country of origin and large income differentials have been the main drivers for migration (Mansoor and Quillin, 2006; Blanchflower et al., 2007; Cizkowicz et al., 2007; Bonin et al., 2008). One example is Cizkowicz et al. (2007: 8),
who points out that over half of the Polish immigrants in the UK and Ireland have stated that their financial situation was the main reason for emigrating from Poland after the enlargement of the EU in 2004. Furthermore, results show that the most important reason is the desire to raise one’s wages rather than the actual situation on the labour market (Blanchflower et al., 2007; Ciżkowicz et al., 2007). This wage-differential motive is expected to continue to be one of the most important key reasons among, e.g., Polish migrants in the immediate post-accession period (Ciżkowicz et al., 2007).

The neo-classical approach is challenged by the new economics of migration, which claim that migration decisions are not taken by isolated individuals but rather within the family or the household union (Stark, 1991; Massey et al., 1993; Arango, 2004). However, the migration decision is still based on a rational choice, and the basic assumption is that the economic utility will be enhanced (Massey et al., 1993). Kofman (2004) points out that less attention has been directed towards studies on family-related migration, and emphasizes the importance of family ties as the predominant reason why people move. The decision to migrate is a product which is closely related to the lifecycle of the family and other important events in the life course, such as education, marriage, divorce etc. (Nauck and Settles, 2001; Kofman, 2004; Haug, 2008).

Although economic hardship in the country of origin and a wish to improve one’s economic situation are important motives for emigrating, other rationales such as changes in everyday life expressed in, for instance, improved housing, education and security, are also significant determinants of migration (Malmberg, 1997; Burrell, 2010; Hazans, 2003; Halfacree, 2004). Migration decisions are affected by a complex mix of different social, economic, cultural and political push and pull factors that “hold, attract or repel people” (Pedraza, 1991:306). Thus, there is a combination of factors that plays a role in the migration decision, and it is reasonable to assume that migrants are affected both by the situation in their country of origin and by expectations of and opportunities in the country of destination. It is also argued, by de Haas (2008:10), that push and pull factors are migrants’ perceptions of the differences between “here” and “there”. Several recent studies emphasize a more complex picture of why people migrate, and highlight non-economic aspects such as the social and the cultural (Lundholm, 2007; Verwiebe, 2011; Kofman, 2004; Halfacree, 2004; Paper II).

However, the importance of looking beyond predominantly economic factors as determinants of migration is shown in more recent studies on migration motives among East European emigrants (Cook et al., 2011; Verwiebe, 2011;
Parutis, 2011). For example, Cook et al. (2011) claim that although the desire to find work still plays an important role, other motivations have become more evident among EU-8 migrants. Similar results are found by Verwiebe in his study on Polish migrants in Berlin, which reveals that social reasons are stated as the main motive by one out of three migrants, while economic reasons are only mentioned by 14 per cent of the migrants (Verwiebe, 2011: 13). Emphasized social reasons are especially the function of social networks and family-related reasons, such as marriage migration or joining a partner or other family member(s) who previously emigrated alone (Cook et al., 2011; Verwiebe, 2011). Parutis (2011), in her study on Polish and Lithuanian migrants in the UK, further points out that even though many immigrants have been classified as economic migrants, several express a motivation based on a longing to live abroad and to learn English. Thus, migration rationales among migrants in contemporary Europe have become more diverse, and there is a need to embrace a more complex picture by including a broader set of motives in the analyses (King, 2002; Burrell, 2009; Verwiebe, 2011).

In light of increased attention to the importance of the household union in migration decision, women’s central role in the migration process has started to be more recognized (see for example King, 2002; Kofman, 2004; Cook et al., 2011; Haug, 2005; Passerini et al., 2010). Studies on migration behaviour indicate that migration motives are gendered. Although both men’s and women’s migration decisions are driven by economic and non-economic factors, women are more likely than men to move for solely social reasons (Kofman et al., 2000; Kofman, 2004; Verwiebe, 2011). However, women are not only passive followers but also individual decision-makers who migrate due to a variety of factors, including a need to improve their economic and social situation (Laliotou, 2010). For example, Kofman stresses that in some contexts marriage migration “may be a means of gaining a degree of freedom”, especially for migrants from patriarchal societies (Kofman, 2004: 251-252). Kofman (2004:256) further argues that “women entering through family-related migrations are not just the followers of the male primary migrants, whilst familial considerations, even if unacknowledged, also apply to men”. This implies that the incentives for migration cannot be analysed separately but rather have to be linked to broader structural determinants such as social networks, family situation and formal agencies, to reveal hidden motivations and strategies among female migrants (Kofman et al., 2000). For example, norms about gender roles affect not only the migration intention in women and men (de Jong, 2000; Pedraza, 1991) but also how they express themselves, or are expected to express themselves. The rise of the number of women participating in waged labour has increased migration among women, not least from the eastern part of Europe (Phizacklea, 1998;
Passerini et al., 2010). Hence, it is important to recognize women’s motives and position in the migration process. How migration motives differ among male and female migrants from East Europe, and how this affects the outcome of migration in Sweden, are emphasized in Papers II and III in this thesis.

Social networks, migration systems and transnational social spaces

As emphasized above, most decisions are taken within the family unit and many migrants move to where previous migrants to whom they are connected have already moved (Boyd, 1989; Arango, 2004; Haug, 2008). Social networks shape the character and outcome of the migration by connecting migrants and non-migrants at origins and destinations, and by functioning as important information channels (Boyd, 1989; Castles and Miller, 2009: Castles, 2010; Haug, 2008). Hence, network theories emphasize the personal linkages between movers and stayers (Massey et al., 1993; de Haas, 2008). Massey et al. (1993:448) defines migrant networks as:

“[...] sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and nonmigrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin”.

These networks can be regarded as a form of social capital, which can reduce the costs and risks for new migrants by providing financial resources, access to employment and other valuable support (Massey et al., 1993; Fischer et al., 1997; 1998; Arango, 2004).

Closely affiliated with network theory is the migration-systems approach. While network theory only focuses on the personal ties between migrants and non-migrants, migration systems goes beyond this point and stresses the importance of all various kinds of linkages and connections between receiving and sending areas (Arango, 2004; de Haas, 2008). These linkages and connections contain flows and counterflows of people, goods, capital, information and services between a set of places, which in turn facilitates further exchange between places (Mabogunje, 1970; Kritz and Zlotnik, 1992; Gurak and Caces, 1992; Massey et al., 1993; Arango, 2004; de Haas, 2008). Within the migration-systems approach it is argued that population mobility is affected by events and activities in the past, such as historical, cultural and political linkages between specific places (Arango, 2004; Malmberg, 1997). Further migration is stimulated through processes of cumulative causation (Myrdal, 1957) and becomes self-sustaining and self-perpetuating, a process in which networks play an essential role (Massey et al., 1993; Arango, 2004;
Malmberg, 1997). Thus, when the number of immigrants has reached a certain level, the network will in itself generate the social structure that is necessary for the migration to become self-generating (Massey et al., 1993).

However, many migration flows do not become self-sustained and self-perpetuated but rather cease altogether (de Haas, 2009). This is clearly the case with e.g. Russian immigration to Sweden, which has still not developed into a large-scale migration system (Paper I). Explanations for why some migration processes do not increase can be found in the characteristics and outcome of individual migration stories.

Faist (1997; 2000) claims that the question of why migration increases in some cases but not in others is related to the development of transnational networks and to the process of social, economic and cultural integration of migrants in the destination country. Transnational ties have been shown by several researchers to be of importance in the decision to move and to adapt in the new country of living, and in the long run to enable circular or chain migration to develop and extend (Faist, 2000; Vertovec, 2007; de Haas, 2008; White and Ryan, 2008). Hence, the understanding of how migration systems develop over time should also include an analysis of migrants’ integration and of their ties to the countries of origin and destination. In this thesis the work of Faist (2000) has been used as a point of departure, and to operationalize the theory in the empirical analyses of East European migration to Sweden the concepts of bridging and adaptive functions in a transnational social space are used as a starting point. These functions determine the direction and development of further migration between specific places or regions. For example, the successful integration of immigrants and the presence of local and transnational social networks do have a bridging function that may trigger other migrants to follow. And, the inclusion of migrants in a community in the receiving country may facilitate their adaptation in the new society. However, less successful migrants may have an opposite effect and prevent further migration (Faist, 2000). Accordingly, migrants function more or less as bridgeheads in the migratory process.

Previous research has shown the importance of social networks in immigrants’ integration and the continuation and development of migration systems (Castles and Miller, 2003; Gold, 1997; de Haas, 2008; Faist, 2000). Gold (1997), for example, applies a transnational perspective when analysing the experiences of Israeli immigrants in the US, and shows the importance of community-building and links (social, cultural and economic) within and across national borders for immigrants’ existence in a foreign country. Furthermore, whilst research shows that social networks are less important
for migration to take place among West European migrants (cf. Verviebe et al., 2010), other scholars point out an opposite picture among East European migrants (Ryan et al., 2008; Ryan, 2010; White and Ryan, 2008; Verviebe, 2011). Ryan’s studies, among others, highlight the importance of local and transnational social networks among Polish migrants in the UK (Ryan et al., 2008; White and Ryan, 2008; Ryan, 2010). These studies show that many of the Polish immigrants in contemporary Europe are not first movers and that a majority have established pre-migration network in the receiving country before migrating. Furthermore, these transnational links encourage new migrants to follow, and established communities in the receiving society offer important security and support in the immigrants’ daily lives (ibid.).

Integration into the receiving society is important for the continuation of migration. Settled migrants function as bridgeheads, reducing the risk as well as the material and psychological costs of migration (Faist, 2000; de Haas, 2008). Through the assistance of friends and relatives, new migrants may more easily be able to obtain information and receive active assistance in finding employment and a place to live, or in finding a marriage partner etc. (de Haas, 2008; Vertovec, 2007; White and Ryan, 2008). It is well known that migrant networks facilitate the integration of newly arrived immigrants, but may also constrain integration if they prevent immigrants from interacting outside their community. On the one hand, strong networks and immigrant communities may be a precondition for the emergence of a transnational social space and for enabling the integration of immigrants in the receiving society; but on the other hand they may also be a constraint if migrants are weakly integrated into the labour market and social life (Faist, 2000). Thus, migrants are not necessarily only bridgeheads, but may also become restrictive gatekeepers. Faist (1997; 2000) stresses that a well developed transnational social space feeds further migration, while migration tends to remain low in cases in which such a space has still not developed.

Community-building in the place of destination and the emergence of a transnational space are identified as a key issue for successful integration (Faist, 2000). Pre established communities are significant for newcomers, and offer information about the migration process such as finding housing or job opportunities. The formation and establishment of ethnic communities serve as both bridging and adaptive functions. Settled migrants decrease the risk and cost for newcomers, and entail a collective identity among the immigrants in the destination country and thus ease the integration process (Faist, 2000; de Haas, 2009). Majka and Mullan (2002) stress that a well functioning migrant community may also increase further migration to a specific place and thereby maintain social and symbolic ties of importance.
for preserving and continuing to develop links between country of origin and destination. These links are of importance when considering long-term process of integration since they can extend beyond the first generation of immigrants (Faist, 1997; 2000).

In cases with no strong tendency of community-building in the receiving country or established networks within and across borders, links with non-migrant kin and friends might weaken over time and restrain the development of a migration system. In addition, this may affect the development of a transnational social space and future chain migration. De Haas (2009: 20) argues that extensive social networks can enable more people to migrate, but also emphasizes that strong networks as such do not trigger migration since this requires migrants to be able to mobilize resources to facilitate migration, and to be willing to help potential migrants. In the literature on international migration, there has been a lack of attention to different migration contexts where a strong ethnic community is absent and the consequences this will have on future migration between specific places. Thus, this thesis can add valuable knowledge about the migration process in contexts where such a community-building is absent.

Moreover, there are gendered experiences of men and women in networks and communities (Boyd, 1989; Averanius, 2009; Pessar and Mahler, 2003; Pedraza, 1991). Previous research shows that it is easier for women than men to overcome the social isolation within the ethnic community and form ties with the rest of the society (Averanius, 2009). As a result, women tend to more quickly adjust to their new life than men do. However, Capussotti et al. (2010) stress the importance of employment for avoiding social isolation among female migrants. Their study, Migrant Women in Work, reveals that the workplace is an important place for establishing relationships and integrating into the new country of living (Capussotti et al., 2010). The migration experiences of men and women are further explored in Papers II and III, which stress that individual characteristics, e.g. gender, are more important than the migrants’ origin for immigrants’ adaptation in the new country of living.

**Economic integration – Labour market outcome and working income**

Successful integration is not only significant for the immigrants themselves and the receiving society. The integration processes are also of importance for further migration to occur, and several authors claim that integration and migration are interrelated (King, 2002; Castles, 2000; Faist, 2000). Thus, this thesis aims to highlight East European migrants in Sweden as one
example of international migration in which the integration process affects the development of future migration between the countries involved.

The impact of migration in receiving countries and the striving for the successful integration of immigrants into the society have developed into key issues for policy-makers in contemporary Europe. Integration has been analysed in both economic and social terms, although the economic perspective has been dominant in the migration literature. There is a rich body of literature on economic integration and labour market effects of migration in Europe (e.g. Boeri and Brücker, 2000; Bevelander, 2000; Fischer and Malmberg, 1998; Heikkilä et al., 2004; Münz, 2008; Drinkwater et al., 2009; Bengtsson et al., 2005; Barrell et al., 2007; Münz et al., 2007). A successful labour market outcome among immigrants requires, among other things, that immigrants find adequate employment within a reasonable time frame after immigration to support themselves and their families. Attention has been directed at analyses of wage differences and employment activity between immigrants and natives in European countries (Cook et al., 2011; Bevelander, 2000; Drinkwater et al., 2009). However, many research findings show cases in which the integration has failed and immigrants perform worse than natives in terms of employment rate, earnings, etc. A prevalent result is, for example, that although many migrants from the new EU member states possess a relatively high education, a majority are employed in low-skilled and low-paid jobs (Drinkwater et al., 2009; Bevelander, 2000; Anderson et al., 2006; Tammaru et al., 2010). Drinkwater et al. (2009: 175-176) reveal that Polish immigrants and other EU-8 migrants in the UK earn approximately 30 per cent less than other European migrants, and those with a short duration of time in the UK perform the worst on the labour market.

Country-specific skills, such as language proficiency, are regarded by many scholars as crucial for labour market outcome, but also for the wider social integration in the new society among immigrants (Chiswick, 1991; Dustmann, 1994; Chiswick and Miller, 1995; Kurthen and Heisler, 2009). Accumulated country-specific skills and human capital are shown to have positive effects on immigrants’ earning and employment probabilities (Chiswick, 1978; Dustmann and Fabbri, 2003; Gustafsson and Zheng, 2006; Rooth and Saarela, 2007; Eriksson, 2010). Dustmann et al. (2003) further argues that language skills are one cornerstone of the human capital that facilitates the inclusion of migrants on the labour market. It has been shown that language proficiency improves the situation on the labour market among East European migrants, and that those with good knowledge of the language of the receiving country are able to negotiate their working conditions and get better work (Cook et al., 2011; Parutis, 2011). Moreover,
the duration of time in the new country is shown to be crucial for improving these skills (Chiswick, 1991; Fischer and Malmberg, 1998; Bevelander, 2000; Dribe and Lundh, 2008).

One way of facilitating the accumulation of country-specific skills is through intermarriage (Meng and Gregory, 2005; Meng and Meurs, 2009). For example, in their study from France Meng and Meurs (2009) show that intermarriage yields up to 10 per cent higher income, and that the effect is higher for women than for men. Similar studies on the effect of intermarriage on immigrant integration have been performed in a Swedish context. Dribe and Lundh (2008) show that immigrants married to Swedes have higher probabilities of obtaining employment and are more likely to have a higher income. Furthermore, Tammaru et al. (2010) found that exposure to the native population, especially having a native partner, is more important than residential exposure for predicting earnings.

The attention in Swedish studies to migration from East European countries has mainly been directed at labour migration, labour market effects and integration issues. Immigrant employment integration in Sweden has been shown to be affected by structural changes and fluctuations in the national economy, whereby the demand for immigrant labour in the latter period of the 1900s is reflected in the variations in the business cycles (Bevelander, 2002; Ekberg and Hammarstedt, 2002; Bengtsson et al., 2005). East European migrants have been regarded in some cases as more easily integrated, compared to migrants from countries located further away, due to cultural similarity and higher education levels (Rauhut, 2002; 2004). Nevertheless, other research reveals a more negative situation for East European immigrants, with great differences in employment rate and income levels in comparison with native Swedes (see for example Bevelander, 2000; Tamas and Münz, 2006; Gerdes and Wadensjö, 2008). However, the income differences appear to be quite small, which can be partly explained by the immigrants’ average high education levels (Tamas and Münz, 2006; Doyle et al., 2006).

In studies on the integration of immigrants in Sweden, Fisher and Malmberg (1998) and Bevelander (2000) show a clear time effect whereby a longer duration of stay improves labour market outcomes among East European immigrants. And, in line with other European studies on immigrant integration, good language skills also improve labour market outcomes among immigrants in Sweden (Bevelander, 2002; Rooth and Ekberg, 2006). Rooth and Ekberg (2006: 72) show that investment in country-specific skills such as the Swedish language increased the speed of the “upward occupational-status mobility” among immigrants in Sweden.
Moreover, migration motives are of importance for integration into society: those who migrate for economic reasons are shown to integrate more quickly on the labour market (Zimmermann, 2005). This is further analysed in Paper II, where the adaptation, both economic and social, of East European immigrants in Sweden is highlighted using empirical data from a representative national survey.

Social integration – Well being and belonging

The outcome of the migration in terms of integration is crucial for how the migration process evolves over time and for the immigrants’ well being in the new country. As mentioned above, economic perspectives of integration have been predominant in migration studies (e.g. Bevelander, 2000; Fischer and Malmberg, 1998; Heikkilä et al., 2004; Drinkwater et al., 2009) and less attention has been paid to migrants’ social integration into society (e.g. Markova and Black, 2007; Penninx, 2005). One indicator of successful social integration is the migrants’ self-perceived sense of belonging in the receiving society.

People develop psychological and emotional relations to different places or settings (Relph, 1976; Tuan; 1974; Walmsey and Lewis, 1993; Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001; Lewicka, 2008). Places are not only geographical locations; they acquire meanings for people who experience them and live there (Walmsey and Lewis, 1993). Tuan (1974) uses the term topophilia to describe the emotional bonds that develop between people and places. These topophilic feelings can evolve for places where a person actual lives, “a home”, or where a person grew up, or another place where a person wants to belong (Holt-Jensen, 1999; Demuth, 2000). The bonds that arise between people and places are termed place attachment, place identity, sense of place, sense of belonging etc., and are often used interchangeably in the literature (Lewicka, 2008; 2010). However, they all refer to the self-identification, rootedness or feeling of home that people develop regarding different spatial settings, and are used to describe people’s sense of belonging to places. Furthermore, belonging does not have to be reduced to one specific country or location; many migrants have feelings of multiple belongings and claim to belong to more than one specific place in the receiving country (Alexandrova and Lyon, 2010).

The immigrants’ well being in the new country also affects their orientation and relatedness towards their country of origin. For example, it may affect how and which backward links will be maintained over time. Thus, immigrants’ integration, not only in economic but also social terms, is crucial for a continuation of the migration process, with the migrants acting as
bridgeheads or gatekeepers for triggering further migration flows (Faist, 2000). A rapid integration of immigrants with high well being in the new country of living may function as a significant incentive for other migrants to follow. However, well integrated immigrants may also have the reverse effect through discontinued contacts and links with kin, family and/or friends in the country of origin. In this thesis (Papers II, III), an attempt is made to explore how East European migrants in Sweden function as bridgeheads in the migration process through asking them, in a survey, about their self-perceived outcome in Sweden and their local and transnational social networks.

In addition, language proficiency and intermarriage are significant not only for immigrants’ employment and working income, but also for their social integration. Individuals are integrated into society through their social relationships (Averanius, 2009), and intermarriage and language skills facilitate the adaptation process of immigrants. Good language skills could also be crucial for the immigrant’s sense of belonging in the new society. Markova and Black (2007) further show that differences in sense of belonging among immigrants also can be traced to how long they have lived in the new country. Thus, it is important to emphasize the importance of social network and language proficiency for people’s well being and sense of belonging in the new society. In a Swedish context, for example, Hedberg (2004) stresses that the social network is crucial for Finnish-Swedish migration, concerning both the migrants’ perception of Sweden and their choice of where to migrate.

To summarize, this section contextualizes international migration processes and highlights the interaction between integration and migration. It embraces various issues affecting migration and future migration flows ranging from a macro-structural level to a micro-individual level, covering structural obstacles to migrate, economic issues, social networks, transnational social spaces, migration motives, adaptation to society, intermarriage and belonging.
Methods and data

Methodological considerations

“[...] migration is not a single event (i.e. the crossing of a border) but a life-long process which affects all aspects of a migrant’s experience, as well as the lives of non-migrants and communities in both sending and receiving countries” (Castles, 2000:15-16).

Migration studies have predominantly been divided into two subfields – studies on the act of migration and on the product of migration – whereby the movement of people between places and the integration and characteristics of migrants have been analysed separately (King, 2002: 91). Arguments have been asserted that there is a need of a more integrated approach to migration studies, and to encompass all aspects of the migratory process (see e.g. Castles, 2000; King, 2002; King 2012). Through adopting this perspective, by which both the migration flows and the immigrants’ outcome in their new country of living are considered, a better understanding of the migratory process can be achieved. Furthermore, there is a range of literature encompassing research on transnational spaces and migrants’ daily lives in the receiving country. A majority of the empirical studies are based on either qualitative or quantitative approaches involving migrant communities, individuals or small groups of migrants. The qualitative studies have importantly contributed to in-depth knowledge on migrants’ daily lives, but have left a gap regarding the representativeness of larger migrant groups/communities. The large quantitative studies, on the other hand, present a broader representative picture of migration patterns while missing important information about softer variables such as the migrants’ self-perceived experiences of the migration act.

This calls for further attention to these missing pieces through research on the dynamics of the migration process. The main ambition of this thesis is to contribute a piece to the puzzle of the dynamics of migration systems and to gain more knowledge on how international migration between geographically adjacent countries develops and interacts with the social and economic integration of immigrants in the receiving society. In order to capture both the process and the product of migration, a quantitative approach combining register data with a questionnaire survey has been applied.

To begin with, register data have been used to analyse aspects of transnational social spaces in the context of migration from the non-Baltic...
former Soviet republics to the country of Sweden (*Paper I*). The rich micro-data on all immigrants allows for analyses of the changes in migration volume and composition, labour market integration, family situation and intermarriage, geographical clustering of immigrants and the extent of return migration. *Paper I* enhances knowledge about some key features of migration and transnational social spaces, and serves as a necessary complement to interview studies or surveys.

In addition to the register data, a national survey was conducted to capture more ‘soft’, complex and dynamic data on migration on an individual level (Fawcett and Arnold, 1987). The survey data are used to estimate the major motives of migration from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States to Sweden and to more thoroughly examine the perceived outcome of the migration in their new place of living in terms of socio-economic situation, the condition of their current place of residence, social network etc. (*Paper II*). Furthermore, the survey provides information on the immigrants’ social integration in the new country of living and on how socio-demographic characteristics, social networks and adaptation time affect their sense of belonging in Sweden (*Paper III*). The survey adds knowledge about the importance of the migrants’ perceptions of daily life in the new country of living and their contacts back home, which are significant for understanding the emergence of migration systems and transnational social spaces. The main advantage of the survey is that it complements the register data with the migrant’s perspective and is an important contribution to the studies of East-West migration and immigration integration in Europe.

Taken together, by using a combination of comprehensive register data and survey data, valuable insights into both the act of migration and the product of migration can be derived. It allows for analyses of how the migration system between East European countries and Sweden has developed over time, with people coming and going. Furthermore, information can be obtained on how the migration process has been formed by decisions, economic conditions and social networks in the places of origin and destination.

**Statistical methods**

Various quantitative methods have been used in this thesis. Descriptive statistics have been applied to describe the migration patterns and background characteristics of the immigrants (*Papers I, II, III*). Further, descriptive analyses were used to explore immigrants’ migration motives and perceptions of the outcome in Sweden in *Paper II*. In addition, linear and logistic regressions have been employed to analyse which factors affect the
income among immigrant men and women, and to measure the propensity of employment among East European immigrants as well as the probability of being highly educated among employed immigrants (Paper I). The analytical method in Paper III consists of hierarchical multiple regressions to scrutinize predictor variables that affect the self-perceived sense of belonging in Sweden among male and female migrants.

Table 2 provides a brief overview of the three research papers included in this thesis. The papers include empirical studies based on register data analysing immigrants from non-Baltic former Soviet republics and unique representative survey data examining immigrants from Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in Sweden.
Table 2. Methods, materials, geographical foci and themes of the papers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Statistical methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Geographical foci</th>
<th>Basic themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong> When Will the Russians Come? On Post-Soviet Immigration and Integration in Sweden</td>
<td>• Descriptive statistics</td>
<td>• Register data (ASTRID)</td>
<td>• Immigrants from the former Soviet republics (excluding the Baltic States)</td>
<td>• Composition of migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Prerequisites for integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II</strong> East-Central European migrants in Sweden – Migration motives and migration outcome</td>
<td>• Descriptive statistics</td>
<td>• Questionnaire survey</td>
<td>• Immigrants from Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland</td>
<td>• Why people move - migration motives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Immigrated to Sweden during the period 1990-2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Outcome of the migration decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Economic integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III</strong> A Sense of Belonging – Social integration among East European immigrants in Sweden</td>
<td>• Descriptive statistics</td>
<td>• Questionnaire survey</td>
<td>• Immigrants from Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland</td>
<td>• Immigrants’ social integration in terms of sense of belonging and place attachment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hierarchical multiple regressions</td>
<td>• Immigrated to Sweden during the period 1990-2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Factors affecting the immigrants sense of belonging in Sweden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sources of data

The empirical analyses of East European migrants in this thesis are based on two sources of data. The first study (Paper I) draws on Swedish register data derived from the longitudinal database ASTRID at the Department of Geography and Economic History at Umeå University. The database originates from different administrative registers at Statistics Sweden, and contains comprehensive annual information on the total population of Sweden, including those who have immigrated. The basic condition for being registered as an immigrant in the registers of Statistics Sweden and appearing in the data set is that one intends to reside in Sweden for at least a year. Furthermore, non-Nordic citizens also require a residence permit for inclusion in the official statistics as immigrants. In total, six cross-sections have been extracted from ASTRID: all immigrants born in the non-Baltic former Soviet republics[^5] were selected for the years 1986, 1988, 1993, 1996 and 2003[^6]. The immigrants’ partners that were registered in Sweden during this period were also included in the study. In addition, a random sample of native Swedes and immigrants with other origins residing in Sweden during the selected years was chosen. In total, 534,047 individuals were included in the analyses. The register data provided extensive demographic and socio-economic information on an individual level such as sex, age, education, occupation, income, family relations etc. This allowed for analyses of volume and compositions of migration, spatial clustering of migrants, return migration and the migrants’ family situation in Sweden.

Papers II and III derive from a questionnaire survey conducted in Sweden in March 2009. The survey was designed at the Department of Geography and Economic History (formerly the Department of Social and Economic Geography) at Umeå University and the sample, distribution, collection of data and analysis of dropouts were made by Statistics Sweden. The immigrants included in the survey originate from different registers administered by Statistics Sweden. The survey was directed at adult immigrants (at least 20 years old at the time of immigration) from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States who migrated to Sweden before 1987 or after 1990. However, the analyses in Papers I and II include only migrants who came to Sweden after 1990 as a result of too few respondents from the Baltic States and Russia (all others originated from Poland) who migrated before 1990 in the population and the sample. To ensure that the immigrants had at

[^5]: The former Soviet republics include Azerbaijan, Belarus', Georgia, Kirgizstan, Moldova, Russia, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.
[^6]: The selected years were chosen to enable analyses of the migration flows on occasions before and after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989.
least a year of experience of living in Sweden, the last year of immigration to Sweden was set to 2006. A stratified random sample of 2,132 individuals was drawn from a total population of 39,668 immigrants from the selected countries, which represents 5.4 per cent of the population. A final response rate of 49.7 per cent was noted after two reminders. In order to correct deviations, data have been calibrated with respect to age, sex, education and country of birth.

The survey data contributed important insights into immigrants' motives for migration, their perceptions regarding the move, and what the outcome of the decision was. Furthermore, the survey provided information on the immigrants' socioeconomic situation before and after their move to Sweden, their residential situation and their social networks. In addition to the question addressed in the questionnaire, variables from the Swedish register of the total population (RTB) were included: year of birth, sex, civil status, country of birth, citizenship, place of living (at a municipal level), and working income.

**Methodological delimitations**

Obviously, there are limitations in the data and methods in this thesis that need to be addressed. Firstly, the immigrants in both the register data and the survey data are foreign-born and defined by their country of birth, i.e. the non-Baltic former Soviet republics (before 1989) or Russia (after 1989), Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The empirical data include no information about the migrants’ ethnicity. This implies that a migrant coming from, e.g., Estonia may in reality be an ethnic Russian.

Secondly, the papers included in this thesis have different geographical foci (Table 2). The first paper, based on register data, analyses immigration to Sweden from the non-Baltic former Soviet republics, while the studies based on survey data (Papers II, III) highlight migration from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States to Sweden. This is due to limitations in the empirical data derived from the database at the given point of time. The data included immigrants from Poland and the Baltic States, with the rest of the countries in East Europe placed in one category. If used, this would have resulted in incorrect analyses of the migration from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States. However, these countries serves as interesting case studies as they share a geographical proximity to Sweden and have been a part of the changing Eastern Europe since 1989, yet have different prerequisites for migration since the accession of Poland and the Baltic States into the EU in 2004.
The first paper (*Paper I*) is based on register data from the longitudinal database ASTRID. However, the study employs cross-sectional data that reveal the immigrants’ situation only for selected points in time. To further analyse the migration process, a longitudinal approach would be suitable. Thus, more information can be gained about the migration patterns in Sweden and the immigrants’ lifecycle, including changes in family situation, occupation, place of living etc.

Irrespective of these delimitations, the register data and the survey data are collectively able to shed light on many aspects of East-West migration. The survey data capture more in-depth and subjective information on the migration decision and adaptation, and in combination with detailed register data important insights into the underlying process of migration can be attained (Fawcett and Arnold, 1987).
**Paper Summaries**

**Paper I: When Will the Russians Come? On Post-Soviet Immigration and Integration in Sweden**

This paper examines aspects of transnational social spaces in the context of migration from the non-Baltic former Soviet republics to Sweden. In focus in the analysis are some of the bridging and adaptive functions, including (a) the changes in migration volume and composition, (b) labour market integration as an indicator of success in the country of destination, (c) family conditions and the degree of intermarriage, (d) geographical clustering as an indicator of migrant community-building, and (e) the importance of return migration as an indicator of migrants’ backward linkages (or population circulation). A background to the study is the changed preconditions for migration between East and West Europe since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989. This geopolitical change not only resulted in an increased migration flow, but also has changed the extent and the causes of emigration from East Europe. In the aftermath, new types of migration have developed as a response to the economic and social disparities between several East and West European countries. However, these changes have not resulted in the ‘mass’ migration initially predicted, and despite an elimination of major migration obstacles, the rate of migration from East to West Europe has remained low.

The empirical study is based on Swedish register data for the years 1986, 1988, 1993, 1996, 1998 and 2003. The data contain demographic and socio-economic information about all registered immigrants from the non-Baltic former Soviet republics in Sweden during these years. The data are analysed using descriptive statistics and linear and logistic regression models.

In the analyses of changing migration patterns, the results reveal a small increase in migration volume and a changing migration composition over time, with a growing number of students and highly educated migrants. The results also show an over-representation of female migrants, and in an examination of family relations and intermarriage the results reveal that migrants from the former Soviet republics, especially female ones, married Swedes to a larger extent. Immigrants who married native Swedes had less success on the labour market, although intermarriage is sometimes considered a way to quickly become integrated into society. Further analyses of the immigrants’ education, employment and income gave a rather ambiguous picture of their social and economic position in Sweden. Whereas the results show a rather weak position on the labour market regardless of
education level, the empirical data also reveal a more positive picture of an enhanced social and economic position in society among recently arrived immigrants. The migrants who had migrated more recently managed better on the labour market than did those who had migrated earlier. This is to a certain extent a result of a changed composition of migrants from the former Soviet republics. Furthermore, there is no evidence of an extensive population circulation between Sweden and the former Soviet republics, and the immigrants tend to remain rather than return.

Thus, the analyses show rather limited migration and a lack of a more developed transnational social space. A partial explanation for this is the relative lack of success on the labour market, the high degree of intermarriage, the lack of an existing migrant community, and limited circulation between the former Soviet republics and Sweden. However, the immigrants’ stronger social and economic position may be of importance for encouraging others to follow and for the future emergence of a denser transnational social space.

**Paper II: East-Central European migrants in Sweden – Migration motives and migration outcome**

Sweden is one of the West European countries to which migration from East-Central Europe, despite free access to the labour market since the EU enlargement of 2004 and geographical proximity, has remained unexpectedly low. Reasons for the moderate inflow of migrants to Sweden are not only connected to political structures but also include, for example, the migrant’s occupation, family circumstances, and local and transnational social networks. Thus, the focus of this paper is to explore the rationalities for the out-migration from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States to Sweden.

Based on empirical data from a questionnaire survey directed at immigrants from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States in Sweden, this paper scrutinizes the immigrants’ motives for migration and the outcome of their migration in terms of employment, family status and satisfaction with their decision. This was possible through a national questionnaire were the migrants were asked to state their primary and secondary motives for migration, employment before and after migration, family status, and satisfaction with the migration decision. In total 1,059 immigrants answered the questionnaire which corresponds to a response rate of approximately 50 per cent.

Similar to migration from East-Central Europe to Sweden in general, there was an overrepresentation of female respondents in the survey: over 70 per cent were female migrants. The results further show that many of these...
immigrants are highly educated and that the educational attainment has
generally increased after migration to Sweden. Women, especially those
from Russia and Lithuania, had a slightly higher education level than men.

This study reveals significant gender differences when it comes to migration
motives: men and women tend to have different reasons for migrating to
Sweden. While women stated social reasons (almost exclusively marriage to
or moving in with a partner in Sweden) to a higher degree, a majority of the
men reported that they had migrated for economic reasons. However, even
though women report social reasons as the major motive, economic reasons
may have been concealed but still of importance for their ultimate migration
decision. Furthermore, a noticeable trend for all respondents is that motives
for migration have changed over time. While social reasons were the
dominating motives in the 1990s there is a growing trend towards economic
motives becoming more important, and more so since the year 2000. This
increased importance relates to all aspects of economic motives: migrants
who moved because they found a job in Sweden, their spouse had a job, they
came to look for a job, etc. The differences in men’s and women’s migration
motives are also shown to affect the outcome of the migration. Male
migrants, in general, consider it easier to acquire their first job and have a
higher correspondence between employment and skills than do female
migrants. Overall, a majority of the immigrants report that they are quite
content with the outcome of their migration to Sweden. Their private
economy, residential situation, personal security and personal well being
have improved significantly, and half of the respondents reported their
intention to stay in Sweden.

Finally, the analyses showed that the characteristics of the individual, rather
than country of origin, are the most relevant factor when discussing
migration motives and outcome in the new country. There are differences
between the respective groups of migrants from Russia, Poland and the
Baltic States, but these are not clear-cut. In fact, gender differences seem to
be the most significant category in the analyses, according to the study.

Paper III: A Sense of Belonging – Social Integration among East
European Immigrants in Sweden

In the final paper the focus is directed beyond the economic issues of
integration, such as occupation and work income, and towards a less
explored field of immigrants’ social integration. An emphasis is placed on
the migrants’ sense of belonging within the receiving society by analysing the
effect of socio-demographic characteristics, social networks and adaptation
time (in terms of duration of stay, citizenship and language proficiency) on
immigrants from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland in Sweden. The immigrants’ sense of belonging is not only regarded as important for a successful social integration and for the migrants’ general well being, but may also be crucial in the long run for the future development of migration.

The empirical data are drawn from a questionnaire survey directed at a stratified random sample of immigrants from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States in Sweden. Only those who have migrated as adults (at least 20 years of age at the time of migration) since 1990 and have lived in Sweden for at least two years were included in the study. Almost half of the respondents answered the questionnaire, and a majority were female migrants. Descriptive statistics and regression analyses were employed to analyse the survey data.

The main findings reveal significant gender differences in the immigrants’ sense of belonging in Sweden. Although education and employment are important features for explaining sense of belonging, the analyses show that different predictors affect men’s and women’s sense of belonging in various ways. Established local social networks, with native Swedes, are found to be of significant importance for especially women’s sense of belonging in Sweden, while men’s sense of belonging is mainly affected by the immigrant’s duration of living in Sweden, language proficiency and citizenship. Moreover, women respondents tend to have a higher place attachment and a stronger self-reported sense of belonging than men do. The reasons for this may be found in the immigrants’ different experiences of and participation in local social networks in Swedish society, but also in men’s and women’s different rationales for migrating (Paper II). In sum, women came to Sweden for social reasons while men came for more economic reasons. Women tend to have established stronger and more extended local social ties in their neighbourhood and in Sweden in general, reside to a higher degree with a Swedish-born partner, and report a greater intention to stay in Sweden than do their male counterparts.
Discussion and conclusions

In contemporary Europe many people, primarily young people, are moving from East to West. The stories of these individuals are crucial for a more comprehensive understanding of the migration process. This thesis has explored some of the issues regarding international migration flows and the adaptation of migrants in their new country of living. The intention has been to scrutinize how motives, the outcome of the migration and social networks affect the development of migration systems. The ambition is thus to contribute to further knowledge about the dynamics of migratory processes in general, and more specifically between Sweden on the one hand and Russia, the Baltic States and Poland on the other.

Furthermore, this study continues in the tradition of analysing the importance of economic integration for society and for individual migrants. However, the results add further important knowledge concerning the immigrants’ self-perceived social integration in their new country of living. And, through analysing migrants’ social and economic integration and the migration flows as interconnected processes, new insights into the functions of and prerequisites for the emergence and development of migration systems can be derived. The development of a migration system and the economic integration of immigrants is especially highlighted in Paper I, while the migrants’ motives and perceptions of the outcome are explored in Papers II and III. These issues will be further elaborated on in the sections below.

Limited migration flows

Despite the historical ethnic and cultural links and the geographical proximity between Sweden and Russia, the Baltic States and Poland, Sweden has not been the main target of European East-West migration. One of the reasons for limited migration flows in the past has been the fact that East Europe has been politically shielded for approximately 60 years from the western part of Europe, with strictly controlled emigration. However, findings from Paper I reveal that the migration system between Sweden and Russia has still not developed, even though the barriers to international migration have been removed to a certain extent. Although the flows have increased since the beginning of the 1990s, they are still moderate. Similar patterns can be seen among immigrants from the Baltic States and Poland, although the flows are more extensive than those from Russia, particularly since the EU enlargement in 2004. Moreover, no clear evidence of return migration can be found (Papers II, III). The decision to move to Sweden
appears to be permanent, and the immigrants declare no intention to move back to their countries of origin in the near future. Population circulation is one crucial feature of a migration system and a transnational social space. This thesis shows a case of contemporary European migration whereby permanent return migration is lacking and where a transnational circulation is not yet fully developed. This may be one explanation for why migration systems and transnational social spaces between Sweden and the respective countries have still not emerged. This is the opposite situation than that of East European migration to the UK, for instance, which is rather characterized by a high rate of return migration (Burrell, 2009). That many East Europeans in Sweden are stayers implies that this migration is distinguished from the flows to other European countries. It is important, however, to take into account that there can be a selection effect in the empirical data. The questionnaire and the register data provide cross-sections of immigrants who were already residing here in Sweden at the point in time when the studies were conducted. The majority of those migrants who have stayed in Sweden are satisfied with their move and do not want to return home, while those who have already returned may have experienced the situation in Sweden differently. However, no evidence was found that the selection effect has had a major influence on migration from East Europe to Sweden.

The migration motives seem to be of importance for the migrants’ duration of stay in the receiving country. While many individuals who move to the UK are labour migrants, this thesis shows that the majority of those who migrate to Sweden came for family-related reasons – to marry or move in with a partner in Sweden. However, the motives have altered, and economic reasons to migrate have increased among the Baltic and Polish migrants since the countries’ EU accession. How this change will affect future migration flows from East Europe to Sweden is hard to foresee, however \textit{Paper II} shows signs of a higher intention to return with the motives changing towards more economic ones.

This thesis shows evidence of a limited migration flow between East Europe and Sweden, despite seemingly similar prerequisites for East-West migration to Sweden as to other West European countries. This implies that there are other factors of importance, such as social networks, when an individual migrates to another country.

One important question that arises, though, is why these migrations flows have still not emerged and developed into larger migration systems. And, what are the characteristics of the migration system (or the non-existing migration system) between East Europe and Sweden? The gateways from
East Europe to Sweden have mainly been through labour migration, student migration and marriage migration. According to the results from the register data (Paper I) and the survey (Papers II, III), marriage migration is the predominating gateway among immigrants from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland. However, during the past decade, and especially since 2004, the number of students and labour migrants has increased. Nonetheless, it is often a combination of motives and events that are of importance (e.g. economy, work, family situation, and politics) in people’s decision to emigrate.

**Immigrants as strong or weak bridgeheads**

This thesis uncovers some pieces of the puzzle of why migration systems and transnational social spaces in some cases do not develop and extend. Through analyses on a micro-level (individuals), the results of the thesis demonstrate that the immigrants function more or less as bridgeheads and thus determine the direction and development of future migration, which is in line with Faist’s (1997; 2000) theory on transnational social spaces.

The function of a bridgehead is to attract new migrants and to link together the sending and receiving countries. Good examples of well integrated immigrants and positive migration experiences feed further migration flows and thereby maintain the migration systems in the future. However, the result can also imply the opposite effect, with less contact and a more oriented approach to the new country of living.

The studies of this thesis reveal a quite ambiguous picture regarding the success of the integration of Russian, Baltic and Polish immigrants into Swedish society. In Paper I results were found that the Russian immigrants were quite weakly integrated on the labour market, in terms of employment propensity and income. This could be one indication that the migrants function as weak bridgeheads, with a limited migration flow as a consequence. However, it was also found that the immigrants’ position on the labour market has strengthened over time, with more highly educated migrants, demonstrating stronger bridgeheads and a potential for migration to further increase in the future. Adding to this, Paper II reveals that migration motives are of importance for the successful economic integration of the immigrants, as individuals with economic motives experienced it as easier to find a job (see also Zimmermann, 2005). Furthermore, the results show a distinct trend of increasingly economically driven migrants, which could be one consequence of the EU enlargement of 2004 and the increasing access to the old member states’ labour markets. Taken together, this indicates a potential for contemporary immigrants to become stronger
bridgeheads than previous ones from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland in Sweden.

Although the economic integration is rather weak, a majority of the immigrants answering the questionnaire perceive that they are socially integrated into Swedish society, which is particularly evident in Paper III. They consider themselves “at home” in Sweden, and intend to stay in Sweden. However, it might be the case that those who do not perceive their outcome in Sweden as positive may have chosen, for various reasons, to not answer the questionnaire. Nevertheless, social networks are demonstrated to have a significant function in the immigrants’ integration, both economically and socially, and to facilitate their adaptation on the labour market and in society. It is furthermore shown that female migrants state a higher place attachment and sense of belonging in Sweden than men do, but also that local social networks with natives affects women’s sense of belonging to a higher extent. This could be related to the high share of intermarriage among female migrants. In this specific case of East European migration to Sweden, significant evidence is found that the main part of the flow consists of marriage migration.

Female migrants from the Baltic States, Poland and especially Russia choose to start their family in Sweden by marrying or moving in with a Swedish-born partner. Thus, the main part of the flow does not involve traditional family migration in the sense that they bring their families with them when migrating. In addition, one could assume that when married or cohabiting with a Swede, an immigrant is more quickly integrated into society, e.g. the incentives are higher to more quickly become familiar with the Swedish language and find a local native network. However, since the majority of the immigrants are not integrated into specific migrant communities (cf. Russian ethnic Jews in Israel) the process of facilitating further migration can be restrained. Based on the findings from this thesis, the immigrants find themselves integrated in Sweden, and those with a Swedish partner appear to be less prone to maintain linkages back home (e.g. less contact with family and friends, and no remittances back home), and a majority have no ambition to move back to their country of origin. This implies that the migrants can be characterized in many ways as weak bridgeheads. Furthermore, this type of migratory process does not embody a traditional chain migration or circular migration, as is the case with Polish migrants in the UK and Germany (Wallace, 2002; Burrell, 2009), where the flows mainly consist of short-term circular labour migration.

Thus, the studies presented in this thesis reveal that a majority of the immigrants feel at home in their new country of living, and that local social
networks are significant for this perception and for their social integration in general. However, the fact that these East European immigrants perceive themselves as integrated in Sweden has resulted in weak links back home. They hence function as an undermining mechanism in the development of the migration systems between Sweden and Russia, the Baltic States and Poland.

Given persistent gender structures among migrants, the question arises as to whether women and male migrants have different effects on how they integrate into their new society. An important result demonstrated in this thesis reveals that gender, rather than country of origin, regardless of different prerequisites for migrating among immigrants from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States, does have an influence on the integration process.

The findings of the papers (I, II, III) point to different types of migration systems whereby female migrants play an important role in the development of migration flows. For example, female migrants are tied to native Swedish partners to a higher degree than are their male counterparts, while men maintain networks back home to a greater extent. Furthermore, in Papers I and II male migrants are shown to be more successfully integrated on the labour market than women are. Collectively, this affects the extent to which the immigrants “open or close doors” to other potential migrants. Intermarriage is a common strategy among female East European migrants in Sweden and marrying a native Swede can ease the adaptation in society, but it may also have an isolating effect whereby the women’s contact in and interaction with society is limited to their Swedish family. Paper I demonstrates, e.g., that women who had intermarried had less success on the labour market. Furthermore, these East European women came to stay in Sweden and not to return home (Papers I, II, III). Thus, in this thesis the immigrants’ orientation – towards country of origin or destination – is shown to be important for the development of future migration flows.

**Future development of migration systems and transnational social spaces**

Whether growth of migration is the initial phase prior to a large migration wave and the development of a large-scale migration system, or only a blue ripple in the migration statistics, is hard to know. This thesis shows that it is not sufficient to solely focus on, e.g., economic differences between countries or political barriers such as open or closed borders to understand why migration takes place between specific places or countries. It is important to perform more comprehensive analyses on how migration systems develop and extend, and in line with other research on international migration (e.g.

45
Castles, 2000; King, 2002; Faist, 2000), this is an attempt to embrace both the act of migration and post-migration processes. Key features that in this study have proven to be significant explanations for the lack of a more developed migration system and a transnational social space are migration motives, integration, social networks and the immigrants’ perceived sense of belonging in Sweden. The findings indicate that the migration systems between Sweden and Russia, the Baltic States and Poland have not yet emerged into large-scale flows, as a consequence of the specific migrant composition and integration that characterize this migration process.

The purpose of this thesis is not to predict the future migration potential, although it is important to consider what could happen if the prerequisites for migration between these countries were to change. However, it is most likely that the extent and strength of local and transnational social networks will be affected if the preconditions for migration alter. For example, an improved economic situation in the countries of origin could result in decreased incentives to move to West European countries. The recent enlargement of the EU has made East European countries (with the exception of Russia) more complementary in an economic respect. Changing regulations and the elimination of restrictions (as with labour migration within the EU) will facilitate the migration from the East. Germany and Austria are the latest of the old EU member states to be forced to ease their restrictions on labour migrants from the EU8 countries, opening their labour markets on May 1, 2011 (DN, 2011-04-28). Germany has been receiving most of the immigrants from the EU-8 countries, especially Poland. However, some of the emigration from Poland to Germany can be explained historically by previous geopolitical changes. Thus, the preconditions for migration between Poland and Germany have changed, but whether this change will increase the migration between these countries remains to be seen. In the Swedish context, this thesis illuminates not only a rather limited migration flow from East Europe but also a migration flow that has altered, with more labour migrants with other motives and agendas with their move to Sweden. This implies that future migrants may be stronger bridgeheads and thus encourage further migration to Sweden from Russia, Poland and the Baltic States.

However, the results of Papers I, II and III show that a majority of the immigrants, especially women, have moved to Sweden for social reasons, as an opportunity to change their life situation. Although economic reasons cannot be entirely excluded, they have not been the primary motives for the

---

7 That is, the changing of national borders, which has not been adjusted until after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989.
migration decision. Nevertheless, a secure social life “paves the way” for an enhanced economic situation. Marrying a native Swede could ease one’s possibilities to attain a better economic situation. Moreover, that the countries of origin entail different prerequisites for migrating has to be taken into consideration. There are significant differences between, e.g., Russia and Poland regarding economy, culture, gender roles etc., which may affect the reasons why, for instance, women emigrate. Among female migrants from Russia in Sweden, we found a majority who are highly educated but who have migrated mainly for social reasons: to intermarry.

The characteristics and dynamics of the migratory flows between Sweden and Russia, the Baltic States and Poland, has thus far not developed into circular or chain migration. However, in the future it can be expected that the migration from our neighbouring countries will increase as a result of the geographical and cultural proximity, and with, e.g., more harmonized regulations and good examples of successful immigrants in society. These highly skilled migrants who adapt quickly in their new society can have a positive effect on the Swedish labour market and on society in general.

Finally, this thesis focuses on East-West migration from the perspective of the destination country, in this case Sweden. It is also the story of those residing in Sweden; not of those who never immigrated to Sweden or who left after some months or years. In addition, it provides valuable insights into the individual immigrants’ characteristics and experiences in their new country of living. To further understand migrants’ role as bridgeheads in a transnational social space, there is a need to explore these migration flows from an East European perspective, i.e. to focus upon potential future migrants and those who do not choose to move to Sweden in the respective countries.
Sammanfattning (Summary in Swedish)


Den första studien fokuserar på framväxten av ett transnationellt socialt rum och dess betydelse för utvecklingen av migrationen från forna Sovjetunionen (de baltiska länderna är exkluderade) till Sverige före och efter järnridåns fall. Utgångspunkten i studien är en tidigare observerad paradox i internationell migration som innebär att migration mellan länder är oväntat liten trots geografisk närhet och stora makroekonomiska skillnader. De empiriska analyserna omfattar arbetsmarknadsintegration, familjesituation, giftermål, återflyttning och geografisk koncentration av invandrare. Resultaten visar på en överrepresentation av kvinnliga migranter samt att en majoritet av kvinnorna är gifta med en partner som är född i Sverige.

Den andra studien belyser motiv till flyttningsbeslut och utfallet av flytten till Sverige bland migranter från Ryssland, Polen och de baltiska länderna efter 1990. Syftet är att undersöka förväntningar och motiv kopplade till flytten samt dess utfall när det gäller sysselsättning, familjesituation och sociala nätverk. En tydlig trend i migrationen från dessa länder är att majoriteten av migranterna är högutbildade kvinnor. Resultaten visar på signifikanta könsskillnader, snarare än länderskillnader, i motiven till att flytta. Medan män uppger att de har flyttat på grund av ekonomiska och arbetsmarknadsrelaterade skäl så rapporterar en majoritet av de kvinnliga migranterna familjelaterade skäl, framförallt att gifta sig eller flytta ihop med en partner i Sverige. Samtidigt visar resultaten att migrationsmotiven har förändrats i riktning mot en ökad förekomst av ekonomiska motiv över tiden, speciellt efter EU:s utvidgning år 2004. Att män och kvinnor har olika drivkrafter för att flytta påverkar även utfallet av flytten, till exempel anger män att de har varit lättare för dem att få sitt första arbete i Sverige jämfört med kvinnorna. Sammanfattningsvis visar analyserna av det empiriska materialet att majoriteten av migranterna är nöjda med sitt flyttbeslut och avser att stanna kvar i Sverige i framtiden.

Den tredje och sista studien fokuserar på den sociala integrationen av invandrare från Ryssland, Polen och de baltiska länderna i Sverige. Syftet är att analysera hur den upplevda känslan av samhörighet med Sverige påverkas av invandrarnas socio-demografiska egenskaper, sociala nätverk, vistelsetid i Sverige, medborgarskap och svenska språkkunskaper. De empiriska resultaten visar, i likhet med den föregående studien, på signifikanta könsskillnader mellan kvinnliga och manliga migranter. Även om faktorer som utbildning och sysselsättning är av stor betydelse för den upplevda känslan av samhörighet så framkommer det att sociala nätverk
påverkar kvinnors samhörighet i hög grad medan mäns samhörighet påverkas till största delen av vistelsetid i Sverige, språkkunskaper och medborgarskap. Resultaten tyder på att kvinnor eftersattar mer omfattande lokala sociala nätverk i Sverige, de är gifta med svenskfödda personer i en större omfattning och de avser att stanna i Sverige till en högre grad än de manliga migranterna i studien.

Sammantaget visar avhandlingen att migrationssystemen och de transnationella sociala rummen mellan Sverige och Ryssland, Polen och de baltiska länderna fortfarande befinner sig i en relativt outvecklad fas. Detta beror delvis på karakteristiken och sammansättningen av de östeuropeiska migranterna som flyttar till Sverige. Hittills har de individer som flyttat till Sverige endast i liten utsträckning fungerat som "brobyggare" mellan länderna och främjar därmed inte framtida migration i någon högre grad. Resultaten tyder dock också på att migrantgruppen genomgår förändringar och inkluderar migranter som har andra motiv och syften med sin flytt till Sverige än de som invandrade under ett tidigare skede. Detta kan på så sikt innebära fler personer som bygger starkare broar mellan länderna och därmed underlättar för framtida migranter att flytta till Sverige från Ryssland, Polen och de baltiska länderna. På så vis kan migrationssystem och transnationella sociala rum komma att uppstå och utvecklas mellan länderna i framtiden.
References


54


