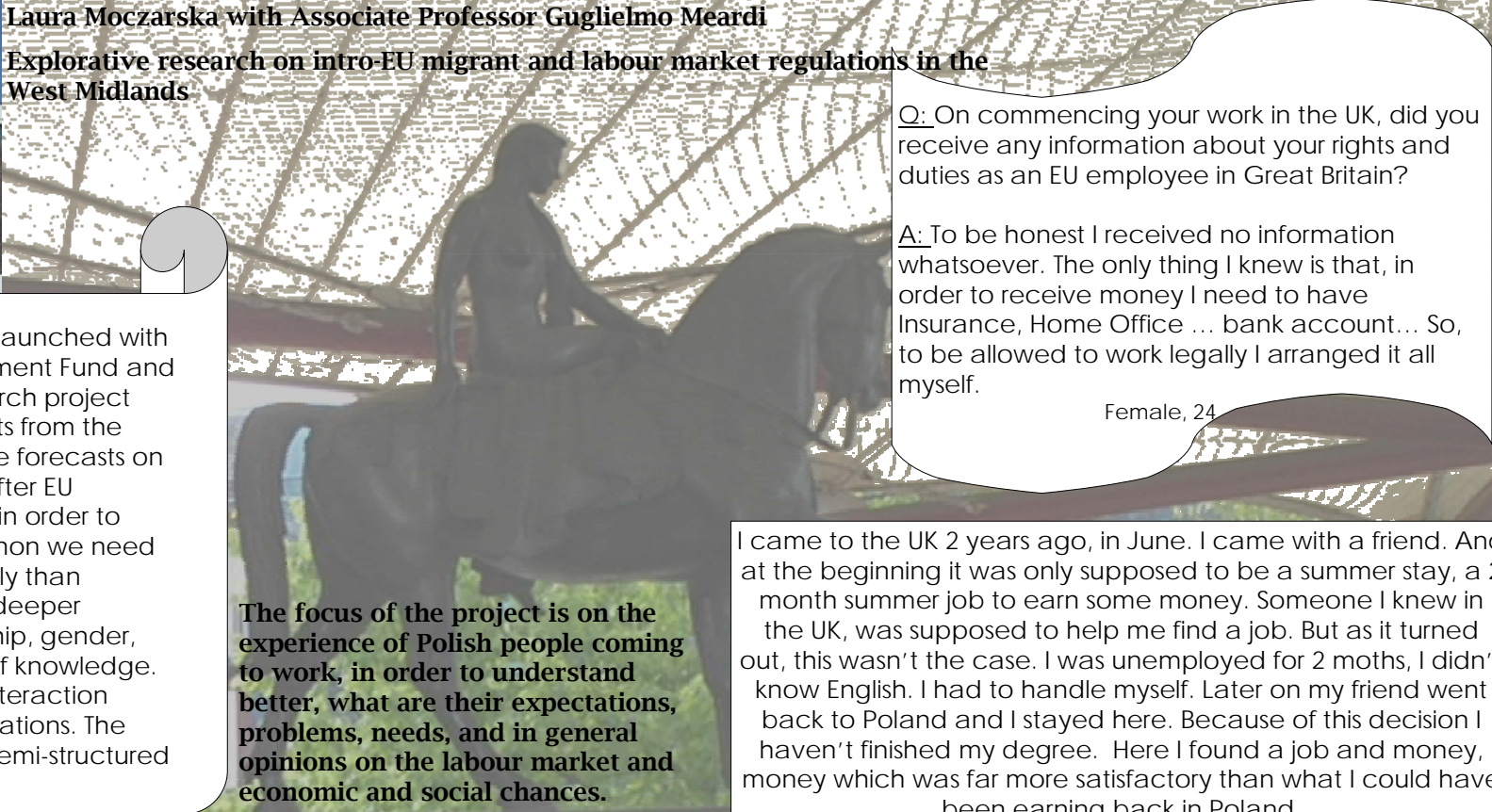


Explorative research on intro-EU migrant and labour market regulations in the West Midlands



The project is integrated within a pilot study launched with Warwick Business School Research Development Fund and aiming at developing an international research project and funding application. The pilot study starts from the observation that qualitative and quantitative forecasts on migration from the new EU member states after EU enlargement have proved wrong, and that in order to understand the current migratory phenomenon we need to conceptualise intra-EU migration differently than general migration studies do. This implies a deeper understanding of factors such as EU citizenship, gender, institutions, associations, cross-border flows of knowledge. The pilot study focuses in particular on the interaction between migration and labour market regulations. The methods used are a pilot survey and some semi-structured interviews.

The focus of the project is on the experience of Polish people coming to work, in order to understand better, what are their expectations, problems, needs, and in general opinions on the labour market and economic and social chances.

Q: On commencing your work in the UK, did you receive any information about your rights and duties as an EU employee in Great Britain?

A: To be honest I received no information whatsoever. The only thing I knew is that, in order to receive money I need to have Insurance, Home Office ... bank account... So, to be allowed to work legally I arranged it all myself.

Female, 24

I came to the UK 2 years ago, in June. I came with a friend. And at the beginning it was only supposed to be a summer stay, a 2-month summer job to earn some money. Someone I knew in the UK, was supposed to help me find a job. But as it turned out, this wasn't the case. I was unemployed for 2 months, I didn't know English. I had to handle myself. Later on my friend went back to Poland and I stayed here. Because of this decision I haven't finished my degree. Here I found a job and money, money which was far more satisfactory than what I could have been earning back in Poland.

Female, 21

The paper combines the Worker Registration Scheme data with early findings from research (interviews, case studies) on Poles in the West Midlands. This region has the largest number of new Polish migrants in the UK (17% of the total), together with a numerous 'old' Polish community. This case is particularly interesting because in this region the share of Poles working through temporary agency employment is the highest (57%). Experiences of both mobilisation and segregation confirm the ambivalent and dynamic nature of this migration wave.

Q: How did you find your first job in the UK? Friends, Job Centres, agencies, internet...?

A: I found my first job through the phone book, as they say here: 'Yellow Pages'. I was looking for a carpenter post in all sorts of companies that would offer any carpentry services. I contacted one of the managers. The circumstances were lucky enough... The first person I called became my employer for the next 3 months. Of course I was registering with agencies, many of them... I spent the whole of my first week here registering in agencies.

Male, 37

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E-mail:
G.Meardi@warwick.ac.uk
L.Moczarska@warwick.ac.uk

