

Negotiating notions of home and belonging among young Lithuanian migrants in Ireland

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ABSTRACT. This article explores the perceptions of 'home' and 'belonging' among 1.5 generation Lithuanian migrants (i.e. young people who moved to the country of settlement as part of family unit when older than 6 years of age, and who have experienced at least some of their formative socialisation in the country of origin (Bartley and Spoonley, 2008)). Previous research has shown that this generation is a unique migrant group due to ambivalence (or 'in-betweenness') regarding the settlement and attachment to the new society. That is, growing up and living between origin and destination societies has a particular impact on the identity of these migrants, which results in the creation of multiple and hyphenated identities, as well as multiple notions of 'home' (Wolf, 1997). Drawing on biographical narrative and semi-structured follow-up interviews with a sub-sample of 25 Lithuanian migrants aged 14-18, this paper investigates their perceptions of 'home' and explores the ways in which 'home' can be understood and (re) conceptualized in the context of transnational migration. The analysis centres around three major inter-related themes: (1) the complexity and diversity of young migrants' perceptions of home; (2) the fluidity of 'home'; (3) ambiguous feelings of belonging. The article concludes with the argument that young migrants' perceptions of home are an ongoing negotiation of transnational and local attachments.

Keywords: migrant youth, transnationalism, 1.5 generation, belonging.

Introduction: 'Home' and 'belonging' in transnational migration research

The past two decades have witnessed significant changes in the field of migration studies. Most scholars of international migration have recognised that contemporary migrants tend to maintain various kinds of ties with their country of origin at the same time as they are integrated in the country of settlement, and thus the notions of 'transnationalism' and 'transnational migration' have emerged to conceptualise these new ways and types of contemporary migration practices (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc, 1994; Vertovec, 1999; Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). This new perspective

challenged up till then dominant theoretical perspectives – assimilationism and acculturation – arguing that these approaches are not sufficient to capture and explain the range of migrants’ experiences (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003). According to transnational migration scholars, migrants’ integration into a new society and transnational connections to their homeland can occur simultaneously, reinforcing rather than contradicting each other (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). Furthermore, movement and attachment in the context of contemporary migration is “not linear or sequential, but capable of rotating back and forth and changing direction over time” (Levitt, 2004: 3). Thus, this conceptual shift has broadened the field of migration studies as the scholarly attention was redirected to immigrants’ lives cross-nationally rather than focusing solely on their lives and integration processes in the host society.

The emergence of transnationalism has inevitably led to a reconsideration of many terms and concepts, the notions of ‘home’ and ‘belonging’ being among the key ones. In social science, home has been traditionally conceptualised as a fixed place; “being at home means being stationary, centred, bounded, fitted, engaged, and grounded” (Rapport and Dawson, 1998, cited from Garrett, 2011: 46). In the traditional ‘settler’ migration model, the term ‘home’ typically refers to the country of origin. However, in today’s highly globalised and mobile world, the connection between “home” and “place” has become more problematic. According to Philip and Ho (2010), migrants can have a simultaneous attachment to their home and destination countries, and thus can develop different perceptions of what the term ‘home’ means. As a consequence, it is debatable whether the old notion of home in dichotomised terms of a ‘here’ (or ‘home’) as opposed to a ‘there’ (or ‘away’) truly reflects migrants’ experiences (Ahmed, 1999). Previous research has also noted that individual migrants’ perceptions of home are rather fluid and impermanent, since they involve constant construction and re-construction of their previous ideas about ‘home’. Making of ‘home’ for transmigrants is a continuous process and it occurs through movement and crossing of boundaries as well as through a form of stasis, but “commonly they involve both” (Bonisch-Brednich and Trundle, 2010: 10).

The literature on transnationalism identifies several ways in which ‘home’ can be conceptualised: home as social relations, home as familiarity and family, home as identity, home as freedom, and home as a symbolic and idealised place (see Mallett, 2004; Garrett, 2011). According to Garrett (2011), presence of the immediate family in either country serves as an emotional centre for the transnational migrants, “providing the feelings of comfort and support typically associated with being at home” (p. 50). Other scholars emphasise the role of one’s country of origin and residence in the creation of multiple belongings and several places called ‘home’ (Kastoryano, 2000). For instance, Magat (1999)

separates “little home” from “big home”, with the latter encompassing one’s national identity and belonging and referring to “where one belongs, the place of ultimate return” (Magat, 1999: 120). “Little home,” she argues, is a more fluid place/space established by individuals and filled with daily activities. Finally, for many transnational migrants home can become an idolised or symbolic place (Lam and Yeoh, 2004). Garrett (2011) argues that the time spent outside one’s home country and the distance inevitably transform “a literal bond – physical visits and active communication – into a more emotional connection with one’s native country” (p. 57).

The uniqueness of the 1.5 generation

Most of the recent research on transnational activities and cross-border ties maintained by contemporary migrants have been centred on adult migrants (or the so-called ‘first-generation’), leaving their children “in the background as passively transnational in the wake of their parents’ movements, rather than as actively engaging in transnational practices themselves” (Lee, 2008: 11). To date, most research on migrant children has focused primarily on their integration and adaptation in the host society, and only recently scholars have begun to pay attention to their engagement in the transnational social field and maintenance of transnational connections with the country of origin (Levitt, 2009; Haikkola, 2011). However, although a growing body of research on the second generation transnationalism has emerged within the broader literature on transnational migration (e.g., Lee, 2008; Levitt and Waters, 2002), an identifiable gap remains regarding the so-called “1.5 generation”, i.e. children and young people who moved to the country of settlement as part of family unit when older than 6 years of age, and who have experienced at least some of their formative socialisation in the country of origin (Bartley and Spoonley, 2008). The 1.5 generation has been largely neglected in the literature on transnationalism, arguably because many scholars combine this migrant group with the second generation (see, for instance, Lee, 2008) thus overlooking the numerous differences and enormous diversity of experiences and attitudes of children and young people who belong to these two different categories.

This article contends that the 1.5 generation is a unique, sorely under-researched, and deserving more attention in the transnational migration literature. Previous studies have demonstrated that post-migration experiences and the adaptation processes of this generation differ from those of their parents, i.e. first generation migrants (e.g., Berry *et al*, 2006). In comparison to the first generation, the majority of the 1.5 generation migrant children and

young people did not choose to migrate, but were forced to leave their country of origin because of family decisions (Bartley and Spoonley, 2008). Unlike the second generation, the 1.5 generation migrants are *actual* participants in the migration process and therefore their post-migration experiences and motives to engage in transnational activities are markedly different from those of the second generation (Menjívar, 2002). In addition, Zhou (1999) emphasises the difference between these two generational groups in terms of the impact of migration experiences on “their psychological developmental stages, socialisation processes in the family, schooling experience, and treatment in the society at large, as well as in their orientation toward their homeland” (Zhou, 1999: 65). Importantly, the 1.5 generation is experiencing and managing two crucial identity-transforming transitions at the same time: a transition from childhood to adulthood and a transition from one socio-cultural environment to another (Gonzales-Berry *et al*, 2007; Bartley and Spoonley, 2008).

Finally, managing mobility and the aforementioned transitions often evokes feelings of ambivalence (or ‘in-betweenness’) regarding the settlement and attachment to the new and home societies (Min and Kim, 1999; Park, 1999; Wolf, 2002). As astutely observed by Mark Roberge (2002), this migrant group has “life experiences that straddle two or more nations, cultures and languages” (p. 107) as they bring with them the culture and experience from their homeland while simultaneously trying to integrate into the new society. In other words, they still identify themselves with the country of origin, while, at the same time, make efforts to adjust to a new environment in order to feel a sense of belonging. Living and growing up between origin and destination societies has proved to have a particular impact on the identity of these young migrants in terms of the development of multiple and hyphenated identities, as well as multiple notions of “home” (Wolf, 1997; Zubida *et al*, 2013).

Limited studies on the 1.5 generation leave lingering questions about attachment and affiliation. Children and adolescents who migrated during the years of identity formation were found to experience a complicated cultural transition, marked by ambivalence and identity split (Rumbaut, 1991). In their recent quantitative study of the identity formation among 1.5 and 2nd generation adolescent migrants in Israel, Zubida and colleagues (2013) suggest avoiding simplistic labels in explaining young migrants’ identities and their developing sense of belonging. The findings of their study point to the complexity of young migrants’ experiences that could not be summarised as dichotomous “either or” labels. These youths perpetually oscillate between different cultural and social worlds, developing their identities by confronting conflicting ethnic, personal and national identity options. Hence, the authors propose to view the

identity formation among these adolescents as “a continuous process combining influences of the host country, the origin country, both of them or neither of them” (p. 22) and encourage scholars to endorse a more hybrid perspective to explain the complex dynamics of migrant adolescents’ identity formation.

The findings described above present a complex picture of the 1.5 generation migrants’ identity and feelings of belonging. This article seeks to further explore the issues raised by previous research by specifically looking at the negotiations of home and belonging among Lithuanian adolescent migrants. In so doing, the following questions will be addressed: How does migration influence young migrants’ perceptions of home and their sense of belonging? How do young people define their home?

Method

This article draws on the preliminary findings from a doctoral research that aims to explore the transnational social relations maintained by the selected sample of the 1.5 generation Lithuanian adolescent migrants living in Ireland with their extended families left in the country of origin. One of the key objectives of the study is to contribute to the transnational migration research and youth studies by exploring the experiences of the cross-border ties and connections by young Lithuanian migrants. Thus, the data has been collected in three phases over an extended 18 month period (October 2012 – March 2014) in both Ireland and Lithuania. A qualitative multi-sited, multi-method approach, namely biographical-narrative and semi-structured interviews have been used to gain a better understanding of the 1.5 generation migrants’ engagement in transnational social relations. While the larger study includes an analysis of small scale surveys with Lithuanian students in Ireland and in-depth interviews with both young Lithuanians and their grandparents remaining in Lithuania, the present paper focuses exclusively on the data derived from 25 biographical narrative and 15 follow-up interviews with Lithuanian migrants aged 14-18.

Participants and recruitment

The target group in this study is Lithuanian adolescents aged 14-18 who migrated to Ireland as part of the family unit at the age of six and older, and who have experienced at least some of their formative socialisation in Lithuania. According to the statistical data provided by the Department of Education and

Skills (Ireland), in 2013 there were more than 2,000 post-primary school students whose country of birth is Lithuania⁴. Considering the fact that there is no official information available regarding the distribution of Lithuanian students across Irish cities or counties, I decided to limit my participants search to County Dublin mainly because over 1/3 of all Lithuanians living in Ireland are residing in this area (CSO, 2007; 2012). Participants were recruited through three main channels, namely: (1) Irish secondary schools in Co. Dublin (2) Lithuanian complementary (weekend) school based in Dublin; (3) snowball sampling. The rationale for recruiting participants through different channels is based on the principle of maximum variation sampling, which implies a conscious selection of informants with a range of different migration experiences and diverse patterns of transnational social relations.

Data collection

Throughout the recruitment process, 110 Lithuanian migrants aged 12-18 completed short questionnaires collecting demographic data and information regarding their connections to Lithuania. Then, a smaller sub-sample of 25 Lithuanian adolescents, male and female, aged 12-18 was selected for the biographical narrative interviews. The rationale behind the biographical narrative interviews was to generate spontaneous autobiographical narrations on participants' post-migratory experiences and particularly on the maintenance of transnational connections with Lithuania. During the subsequent data collection phases, additional 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with research participants with the aim to explore the themes and categories that emerged during biographical narrative interviews. All interviews were conducted in Lithuanian language⁵, and occurred in places where participants felt comfortable, such as public places, schools or participants' homes. Interviews were audio recorded and lasted between 30 minutes to 90 minutes.

Research ethics and informed consent

Research with children and young people under age 18 presents researchers with unique opportunities and ethical dilemmas (Tisdall, Davis and Gallagher, 2009). Therefore, ethical approval to conduct the study was obtained from the

⁴ Personal communication with the Statistics Section at the Department of Education and Skills (October 2013).

⁵ During the visits in Irish secondary schools, Lithuanian students could choose to complete questionnaires in either Lithuanian or English language. Out of 110 students, 62.7% (69) preferred Lithuanian, and 37.3% (41) – English language. During the interviews, however, all participants chose to speak Lithuanian.

relevant ethics committee within the university, and ethical issues were carefully addressed at each phase in this study. First, following the usual guidelines for ethical research with children and young people (the CRC Ethical Guidelines, 2006; Felzmann *et al*, 2010), a three-stage informed consent process was used to obtain consent from the ‘gatekeepers’, i.e. school principal and parents, and gain access to the participants. After securing the principal’s permission to allow their Lithuanian students to take part in the study, parents/guardians were sent a letter outlining the details of the research and requesting parental permission for their child to take part in the study. The final stage of the consent process involved a written consent of adolescents themselves. Participants received an information sheet in which the purpose, the main procedures and voluntary participation in the study were explained clearly and in a simple language. With respect to confidentiality and privacy issues, a statement guaranteeing the confidentiality of students’ answers was included in both parents’ and participants’ information sheets. However, since guaranteeing complete confidentiality is seen as a problematic issue in research with children and young people (Kirk, 2007; Morrow, 2008), the limits of confidentiality were highlighted in information sheets as well as discussed with participants before starting interviews. In addition, students were informed that interviews would be digitally recorded and consent for audio recording was obtained. Finally, participants were assigned fictitious names for purposes of protecting their privacy, data analysis and reporting.

Data analysis

Data analysis involved several stages. First, raw interview data was fully transcribed in Lithuanian language, and case summaries were written up in English for each interview. These case summaries were structured around the five key life history themes that emerged during biographical narrative interviews: (1) Childhood and life before migration (2) Moving to Ireland (3) Life in Ireland (4) Ties with Lithuania (5) Future plans and aspirations. All interview transcripts and case summaries were read several times to ensure that I felt familiar and fully involved with the experiences presented in the text. The second stage involved coding and categorising data using NVivo 9 qualitative data analysis software. That is, an open-coding was conducted to organise data into categories, which was followed by grouping these initial codes into higher level conceptual themes (Miles and Humerman, 1994, Charmaz, 2004). Then, selective coding was also used. It involved the method of constant comparison and confronting non-confirmatory examples (Seale, 1999) in order to refine themes and identify

“the essence of what each theme is about” (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 92). Finally, a cross-case analysis was systematically developed to ensure a comparison of themes across different cases. The following section of this paper presents some of the preliminary findings emerging from this analysis. Pseudonyms have been used throughout this paper when referring to the interviewees and their family members, all other identifiable information has been changed.

Findings

Table 1 summarizes the three key themes and numerous sub-themes that emerged from the participants’ accounts, reflecting the various meanings attached to the notions of ‘home’ and ‘belonging’.

Table 1. Summary of Themes.

THEME	DESCRIPTION AND SUBTHEMES
Complex and diverse perceptions of ‘home’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home as a place • Home as social relations / people • Home as memories • Home vs. Homeland • First home vs. Second home
Fluidity of ‘home’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationships between time and the changing nature of home • Youth’s agency in creating home • The role of local vs. transnational attachments.
Ambiguous feelings of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Neither here nor there’ • Perceived cultural differences • Importance of (migrant) youth culture • ‘Myth of return’

Diverse notions of home: “Between two worlds”

Young migrants’ narratives and their understanding of home revealed that the place remains a significant element in defining one’s home. With respect to a certain place defined as home, the following four notions of home emerged:

(1) birth country as home (2) residence country as home (3) straddling two homes (4) undefined notion of home. For some of the participants, Lithuania has remained their home. One of the participants, Evelina (16), who migrated to Ireland at the age of 10, struggled to explain what exactly is lacking in Ireland to call the new country home:

I do live here (in Ireland) now, **I live here but I don't feel at home**. It's just... there is something missing here. Sometimes I wake up and I try to imagine that... there is Lithuania behind my window. When the truth is – it's not. Ah, you need to understand such things, I don't know.

Evelina's case represents the idea of 'partial home' (Magat, 1999) which emphasizes the perceived difference between the country of origin (ideal home) and the country of settlement. That is, whereas in ideal home all elements are congruent, the partial home is lacking some of these factors. Other participants in this study, however, felt that a destination country has now become their home. Rita (17), for instance, who moved to Ireland together with her family 2.5 years ago at the age of 15, now feels that despite warm feelings and familiarity attached to the homeland, she now calls Ireland her home:

I don't consider Lithuania my real home now. I do love Lithuania, and all the people there and it's always so good to be back there, because it's your language, your homeland, your country, everything feels so familiar. <...> But when I was coming back from my visit to Lithuania, I felt as if I were going home.

Interestingly, the two cases presented above challenge a prevalent assumption about weakening ties and decreasing attachment to one's country of origin across time, especially among subsequent migrant generations (Levitt, 2001; Kasinitz *et al*, 2008). Evelina's example suggests that the length of time spent in a new country does not necessarily impact the changing feelings about one's home country. Rita's narrative, on the other hand, indicates that creating home in a new country within a short period of time is not incompatible with fostering warm feelings to one's homeland.

For other participants, however, the answer to the question "Where is my home?" is not that straightforward. Sandra's (17) answer to this question rejects the dichotomous "either or" label and represents the struggles that young migrants may face when trying to define their personal understanding of home:

<...> when I'm in Ireland, I always want to go back to Lithuania, I want to go back there, everything seems so cool there, I have all my family and relatives there, I miss everything there <...> but when I go back to Lithuania and spend a month or so there... I get so bored there, I don't have many friends there, only a few but... all my closest friends are here in Ireland so... then I start missing Ireland, my room here, my hamster, my dog, our house here... But I wouldn't say that Ireland is my home, but somehow I feel comfortable here. But I also feel comfortable in Lithuania, so I don't know, it's **fifty-fifty**.

Sandra's narrative demonstrates the struggles and mixed feelings held by many other young Lithuanians who find themselves perpetually straddling two different cultural and social worlds, and developing multiple notions of 'home'. For them, home is not just 'here' or 'there', but both, and it refers to the "image of home as the site of everyday lived experiences" (Brah, 1996: 4). These lived experiences include not only networks of friends, families, neighbours and school environments, but also daily routines and activities. Therefore, home becomes a fusion of both 'here' and 'there' rather than a differentiation between these two sites (Ahmed, 1999).

Finally, a smaller group of participants struggled to identify the place they called home or they adopted a more obscure, holistic notion of home. One of the participants, Saulius (17) has lived in Ireland for less than 3 years, and after a few moments of reflecting on the question: "If someone asked you: Where is your home, what would you say?" answered:

Oh... heh. That's a good one. I don't know. I really don't know. The best answer would be – the world.

Interestingly, this answer was more common among those who were captivated by the idea of spending after-school years travelling around the world or who felt reluctant to settle in one country or another. Saulius' answer reflects the idea of home as 'freedom' described by Nowicka (2007). This sense of freedom and 'uprootedness' is grounded in the detachment from both geographical locations and the ability of individuals to create home in "a new environment, from the expectations, familial constraints, or norms of their society of origin" (Garrett, 2011: 55).

Interview data revealed that complex and multifaceted perceptions of home among the 1.5 generation migrants were linked to their understanding of what constitutes home. Some of participants associated the home with families, relatives, and beloved ones who lived across borders. According to Marcu (2012), the link between family and home is so strong that eventually they mean the same thing. This was reiterated in most interviews where young Lithuanians were trying to define their understanding of home ("Your home is where your family is"; "Where is my home? My family lives here (Ireland), but my grandparents and other relatives in Lithuania, so I don't know"). Often family ties and networks of friends can contribute to establishing the sense of home in the country of destination. However, at the same time ties to family members and friends in the country of origin can be a source of struggle and tension and thus can hamper the adjustment and recreation of a sense of home in a new society (Garrett, 2011).

Other participants' perceptions of home referred to memories and familiarity of places ("I know everything there (Lithuania), I remember all the places where I used to live <...> and I feel comfortable there"; "I live here now, I'm used to

living here, so it's my home"). Distinction between *Home* and *Homeland* or *First* and *Second* home were also common in young migrant narratives ("Your home is where you live. So it's Ireland. But ... My first home is Lithuania"; "I'd say that Lithuania is my homeland and it will always be, but now I live here, so it seems that it's my home here"). These diverse notions of home correspond to the idea of "big" and "little" home (Magat, 1999). Often the "big home" or homeland becomes a symbolic place or idealised place, a perfect place that exists only in the memories of the person who had left it.

Fluidity of home

The idea of 'home' is not fixed and stable, and thus it needs to be considered not only as the relationship between place and space – but within and through time (Blunt and Dowling, 2006). This fluidity, impermanence and shifting nature of home was another major theme that emerged in young migrants' narratives. One participant, Lina (14) made this point very clearly when she reflected on her changed feelings about Lithuania:

Well, two or three years ago **I used to say that Lithuania is my home**, and I thought that would never change, that I am in Ireland just temporarily and that I would come back to Lithuania, I would buy an apartment and would settle there. But now... **I don't think so anymore**, I don't want to go back there anymore.

This exemplifies how the idea of 'home' undergoes dramatic change in the process of migration. Lina's story demonstrates how a place once called home can gradually and over time become just a memory or "a place where grandparents live". Many participants expressed sadness and guilt for not being able to relate to their homeland anymore ("*It's a pity to say that, but I don't consider Lithuania my home anymore*"). Others felt that evolving nature and importance of home and belonging is an inevitable part of living one's life away from the country of origin. The following excerpt from the interview with Goda (17) shows how shifting notions of home depend on one's ability to adapt in a new environment and emerging future plans:

I don't want to say that I don't care about Lithuania, that it means nothing to me. It does mean something to me, but I couldn't say that I am thinking about it every day or that I miss it every day, it's not the case. But I also think that I wouldn't miss Ireland much if I had to leave for another country. It's just that **I adapt very easily**. <...> of course, you have to have a place you call home, but I wouldn't say that Lithuania is my home, that I go back there and I feel as if I came back home. **I don't feel like I belong there**, after these years, I feel much better here than there, **my home is here now** and I think it will remain here for a long time as I am planning my future here.

However, it would be misleading to assume that young migrants' perceptions of home are changing as a matter of course, without their control and involvement. As noted by Nowicka (2007), "home is something that one constructs" (p. 77), and thus home can be a process and a project in a making. This deliberate creation of home was reflected in the data. That is, whereas some participants claimed that "your home is where you live, where your family is", others' narratives imposed a more independent and conscious construction of home. For instance, Inga (17) first moved to Ireland together with her parents at the age of six, but then returned to Lithuania after a year to live with her grandmother. Inga stayed in Lithuania for a few years, but remembers that period of her life as "tough and distressing" because of frequent experiences of being bullied at school and problematic relations with her grandmother. She returned to Ireland at the age of 12 to live with her parents again, and made the following decision upon her arrival to Dublin:

I was standing at the airport and **I then decided, then I told myself: this country is going to be my home.** I will make it my home. <...> Of course Lithuania is still my homeland and I grew up there, but I'm not coming back there, **I want Ireland to be my home.**

This choice was the key element in Inga's understanding of home, and it demonstrates that a shifting meaning of home can be a part of deliberate choice. Thus, understanding of 'home' involves a complex construction and reconstruction of ideas about 'home' that are unique for each individual. It was clear from young migrants' stories that their pre-migration experiences as well as transnational links and ties to the country of origin were significant factors that influenced the notions of home and belonging.

(Non)belonging: perceived cultural difference and importance of youth culture

The concept of home is connected to one's ethnic identity and a sense of belonging (Banks, 1996). All participants claimed to be Lithuanians and none of them implied any other types of hybrid or multiple identities. However, the extent to which their national identity was perceived as an important part of their self-image varied considerably, from those who claimed to be "Lithuanian and proud of it" to those who considered their Lithuanian identity just a small and less relevant part of their overall identity. Silvija (16) explained how after living in Ireland for 7 years, she considers Ireland to be her home because "I grew up here and I have very few memories of my life in Lithuania". Silvija

talked openly about having a rather bleak image of Lithuania, and revealed that the idea of returning to live there would greatly upset her (“If someone told me I have to go back and live there I would be so depressed”). However, she emphasized that being of Lithuanian nationality is an integral part of her identity:

I always say that I was born there and lived there, but now I live here and that’s it. Of course, I would never say that I am Irish, **I am Lithuanian** and I am aware of that, but I don’t live there anymore. **That’s it.**

Romas (14), on the other hand, felt frustrated for being confused with some other nationality or when his pride of being Lithuanian was questioned by his schoolmates:

I always say that I am Lithuanian, and if they call me a Pole or an Irish I say “That’s nonsense! I don’t look like a Pole!”. Yeah, I don’t like if they confuse me for an Irish or take me for someone else. Sometimes my classmates say that I am not Lithuanian anymore because I have lived here much longer than in Lithuania, and then I say “Then you are not Irish because you don’t know your own language!” Because if you’re Irish, you must know your language, and they only speak English.

However, Romas revealed that even though he feels proud of being a Lithuanian, during his summer visits back in Lithuania he often feels “not quite belonging there” (“I feel like a stranger there, here in Ireland also a bit like a stranger but also normal, and in Lithuania it doesn’t feel quite like... It doesn’t feel like my country”). The feelings of belonging or lack of belonging in either place were common in young Lithuanians’ narratives. Some of the participants, who often stressed the pride of their Lithuanian identity, also emphasised the importance of return visits to Lithuania, “*to the place where you belong*”. The following narrative by Indre (17) demonstrates how feelings of nostalgia and longing are an integral part of their memories of those return trips:

When I go back, then I realise how much I had missed the language, that everyone speaks your language, and **that feeling that, that you belong here**, and I miss my friends, and I miss the landscapes, everything, everything. I miss everything there.

A strong attachment to the country of origin is often related to the notions of “myth of return,” according to which migrants always dream and maintain vague plans of returning to their country of origin (Ley, 2010). This was evident in some participants’ narratives where they explained their intentions to move back to Lithuania “one day, after all the travelling”. Interestingly, young migrants’ future intentions to move back and settle in Lithuania often depend on their family plans. For instance, Simas (17), who has lived in Ireland for almost 9 years, talked openly about his enduring wish to move back to

Lithuania (“always wanted to go back, I hate it here, never wanted to move to Ireland in the first place”) and later in the interview revealed how his parents will move back to Lithuania “in the next two years, they are already building a house there”. This demonstrates how young migrants’ feelings of belonging and future perspectives are often contingent to their parents’ plans.

In general, perceived difference from Irish peers and Irish culture was seen as the greatest obstacle to developing and nurturing a sense of belonging in Ireland. Most of the participants listed a number of things that distinguish them from their Irish peers, such as different style and clothing preferences (“Irish wear pyjamas all the time”, “Irish girls use so much make up and often walk half-naked”), reluctance to use local Irish slang and jargon (“I can barely understand what they are talking among themselves, so much jargon in their language”), and incompatible interests (“they only talk about their hair, nails and boys <...> I couldn’t care less about (these things)”). As Sandra summarised it:

I don’t know, I just see too many differences between myself and Irish (peers). Culturally we are different <...> I feel like I am stuck here, I wouldn’t say it’s my home, **I don’t belong here.**

Erikas (16) is even more extreme in claiming that “no matter how much you try, you would never fit in (Irish society). You will never be one of them, no matter how much you try, it’s impossible”. In general, personal attitudes towards Irish people and local culture were strongly linked to their feelings of belonging to Irish society.

Overall, young Lithuanians were more interested in topics related to their belonging to the so-called ‘youth culture’ (Bauer *et al*, 2013). Naturally, such themes as friendships, sports, school and interpersonal relationships were most important in defining their identity. ‘Migrant identity’ was also essential in forming local friendships with other non-Irish peers. That is, a majority of participants described their friend circles as multicultural and often ethnically and racially diverse. Belonging to a local ‘migrant youth culture’ was perceived as a positive thing that would enhance feelings of belonging to a settlement country. Lina (14), for instance, described herself as being ‘happy’ to be living in Ireland and claimed to prefer it to her previous life in Lithuania because “people are more polite, school is easier than in Lithuania, so much easier to make friends”. She reported having many friends from different countries, and when asked if they ever talk about what it is like to be growing up in Ireland, Lina replied: “No, because we are like at home here, as if we were born here”. These findings seem to suggest that locally established cross-cultural friendships represent a unique space, which enables 1.5 generation youth to articulate an understanding of identity, home and belonging.

Conclusion

One of the defining characteristics of contemporary migrants is that they have plural allegiances and attachments to places that result in often complex and multi-dimensional meanings of 'home' (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002). However, the significance of home has different meaning for different migrant generations. Previous studies have discussed the unique status of the 1.5 generation migrants in the generational transnationalism research (see, for instance, Bartley and Spoonley, 2008). According to them, this migrant cohort often face conflicting social contexts in which they attempt to incorporate "here" and "there" into a meaningful sense of belonging and creation of 'home' (Levitt and Watters, 2002). This article aimed to explore the perceptions of 'home' and 'belonging' among 1.5 generation Lithuanian migrants living in Ireland. The findings discussed in this paper are consistent with previous studies, and point to the fact that among young migrants, the process of making home and developing the sense of belonging is complex and often entails the juggling of local and transnational attachments (Zubida *et al*, 2013). Situated within two cultural worlds, they define themselves in relation to multiple reference groups and develop multidimensional and fluid notions of home and belonging.

Findings of the present study suggest that whereas one's national identity was seen as given and therefore relatively fixed and stable, young Lithuanians' perceptions of home and belonging were fluid, dynamic and shifting. Clearly defined and stable identification with one's nationality during adolescence has been reported in some longitudinal research (see, for a review, Meeus, 2011). The meanings of home and belonging for the 1.5 generation migrants largely depend on how they construct them and what kind of attributes they associate with these concepts in a given context. Even though the findings suggest that place is still an important basis for analysis, other factors – both transnational and local - are equally important in the (re)creation of 'home'. That is, the dimension of place now incorporates physical localities as well as associations, memories, cross-border family networks, social ties, feelings and practices, even future plans – all essential elements in young migrants' notions of what constitutes 'home' and feelings of belonging (Mallett, 2004).

Young migrants' narratives and their personal perceptions of home provided some evidence for the idea of home as a multi-dimensional and situational concept, implying multi-locality and complexity in one's personal meaning of home. The results presented in this article are convergent with recent studies, which advocates a need to rethink and expand conceptual understanding of 'home' and 'belonging' when exploring young migrants' experiences (Bauer *et al*, 2013; Zubida *et al*, 2013). That is, 'home' must not be taken for granted as a pre-defined

notion and therefore scholarly attention should be given to the exploration of 'home meaning' or a pluralistic understanding of 'homes and belonging' (Moore, 2000: 213), particularly in the context of transnational attachments.

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Namų ir priklausymo sampratos Airijoje gyvenančių lietuvių paauglių naratyvuose

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SANTRAUKA: Remiantis transnacionalinės migracijos teorine perspektyva, straipsnyje nagrinėjamos Airijoje gyvenančių lietuvių paauglių *namų* ir *priklausymo* sampratos. Pristatomas kokybinis tyrimas su vadinamaisiais *pusantros kartos emigrantais* – vaikais ir paaugliais, kurie būdami vyresni nei šešerių metų persikėlė gyventi į kitą šalį kartu su savo šeimomis ir kurių bent dalinė formuojamoji socializacija patirta gimtojoje šalyje (Bartley, Spoonley 2008). Remiantis atliktais biografiniais ir pakartotiniais pusiau struktūriniais interviu su dvidešimt penkiais 14–18 metų paaugliais, nagrinėjama, kaip migracijos kontekste formuojasi daugialypės ir kintančios *namų* bei *priklausymo* sampratos. Straipsnyje aptariamos trys temos: (1) daugialypės ir kompleksinės *namų* sampratos; (2) *namų* dinamiškumas ir nepastovumas; (3) neapibrėžtas ir kintantis *priklausymo* jausmas. Straipsnio pabaigoje pabrėžiamas jaunųjų emigrantų nuolat kintantis santykis su namais ir raginama atsakyti pernelyg supaprastintų, dualistinių „čia arba ten“ *namų* sampratų.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: paaugliai (e)migrantai, transnacionalizmas, pusantros kartos (e)migrantai, priklausymo jausmas.