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## Transnational Families in Lithuania: Multi-dimensionality and Reorganization of Relationships

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### Introduction

Since Lithuania's accession to the European Union (EU) in 2004, regular family life in the country has been significantly impacted by emigration. Almost one-third of Lithuanians who emigrated in 2011–2013 were married (Statistics Lithuania 2016). Mobility among women is high: they comprised 49.7–50.5 per cent of those who officially left Lithuania in 2013–2014 (Eurostat 2016). Children emigrate together with both or either of their parents, or later reunite with already departed family members: 15.3 per cent of people who left the country in 2014 were minors (Eurostat 2016). Life across borders and family reunification have become common experiences of Lithuanian families and, in Lithuania, transnational families<sup>1</sup> have come to constitute a significant category in the newly emerging typology. Lithuanian state policy<sup>2</sup> has sought to regulate economic migration, sought to secure provisions for children left behind

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by emigrant parents under temporary custody. These actions create the preconditions for ‘situated transnationalism’ (Kilkey and Merla 2014) and influence multi-directional and multi-generational family relations across borders.

By exploring the multi-dimensional relations of Lithuanian transnational families, we aim to better understand how the experience of migration re-defines and re-organizes the relational networks and relational dynamics. To do so, we draw on a toolbox of analytical concepts provided by Smart (2007, 2011) and test the applicability of four of her concepts: ‘imaginary’, ‘embeddedness’, ‘memory’, and ‘relationality’.<sup>3</sup> That is, we examine how family relations exist in one’s own imagination, how ‘embedded’ relations are within and across generations and among friends/acquaintances, how the forming of ‘memory’ is influenced by family relations, and how identities are reshaped by the renegotiation of role-specific commitments and by role-making activities. We use information from three studies carried out in 2012–2015 in the framework of the project ‘Emigration and Family: Challenges, Family Resources, Ways of Coping with Difficulties’, financed by the Research Council of Lithuania.<sup>4</sup>

The next section articulates the way in which we invoke Smart’s concepts to form a mode of analysis of transnational family relationships, and details how we operationalize those concepts in order to empirically study relations in transnational family networks. This is followed by our findings, and the chapter closes with our conclusions.

## **Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology**

Our understanding of transnational family relations as multi-dimensional and multi-directional exchanges across generations and between genders has been shaped by several previous studies that revealed the impact migration has on family life (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002; Parreñas 2005). By viewing families through the lens of renegotiating family commitments and care arrangements (Baldassar and Merla 2014), or ‘doing’ and ‘displaying’ family across borders and cultures (Brahic 2015; Seymour and Walsh

2013), the previous research studies open opportunities for studying the agency of family members in transnational processes. These approaches have shown that relations within migrant families undergo changes on different levels, and can be analyzed by using different research methodologies. The complex nature of family relations that are reorganized across national borders led us to adopt complementary theoretical approaches and to shape them by the core theoretical concepts of family life, namely, 'imaginary', 'embeddedness', 'memory', and 'relationality' (Smart 2011).

The application of the four concepts to study transnational families was tested using the data from three complementary studies. First, the national representative study of Lithuanian residents took place over the period of April, 2013; researchers surveyed 1016 Lithuanian residents aged 15–74. The questionnaire included questions on conceptualization of transnational families, intergenerational solidarity, personal networks, family memory, and migration experience. Second, the survey 'Value of children and intergenerational relationships',<sup>5</sup> designed as part of an international comparative study (Trommsdorff and Nauck 2001), was carried over the period of April–August, 2013; in total, 1003 survey participants were interviewed, namely, three generations of the same family: mothers with an adolescent aged 14–17 (N = 300), grandmothers (N = 100) and adolescents aged 14–17 (N = 300), as well as mothers with a small child aged 2–3 (N = 303). The survey participants were asked about the frequency and nature of their contacts with family members and close kin (*associational solidarity*), emotional closeness and reciprocity (*affectual solidarity*), agreement on values, solidarity attitudes and beliefs among family members and close kin (*consensual solidarity*), the involvement of family members and kin in provision and reception of various types of support in daily housework activities (*functional solidarity*) and their geographical proximity (*structural solidarity*) among others.<sup>6</sup> Third, migrant family case studies took place over the period of February–May, 2014. The members of five families (three individuals from each family) were interviewed using two visual methods: role-making map method<sup>7</sup> (Juozeliūnienė 2014) and the concentric circle map method (Spencer and Pahl 2006). Participants represented three generations: parents, children aged 6–18, grandmothers; the migratory period of selected father-away, mother-away, both-parents-away families ranged from 3 to

13 years. The case studies explored changing relatedness of family members and changing identities; it analyzed personal communities of study participants to establish relations with informants' 'significant persons' in the times of change.

In examining 'imaginary', we aim to reveal a non-institutional conceptualization of transnational families; evidence is taken from a survey of Lithuanian residents (2013), and it will advance our understanding of how childcare arrangements shape emerging definitions of transnational family. We build on Trost's family constellations (Levin and Trost 1992), and Parreñas' (2005) typology of transnational families, to construct the types of families with different childcare arrangements<sup>8</sup> after departure of one or both of the child's parents: a child cared for by mother, father, relatives (grandparents, uncles/aunts), friends/acquaintances, and children living in childcare institutions.

From the same survey of Lithuanian residents (2013), and in addition from the VOC-IR comparative study (2013), we identify how 'embeddedness' manifests through vertical and horizontal ties with family members, close kin, friends, and acquaintances. We apply the concept of 'embeddedness' by invoking the intergenerational solidarity perspective (Bengtson 2001; Silverstein et al. 1997), since it allows us to study relations across generations. Shifting the focus to relations with close kin (Nauck and Becker 2013), we expand the study of solidarity across and within generations. Personal networks analysis, based on Milardo's and Wellman's (2005) methodology, allows us also to trace the networks with involvement of family members, kin, friends, and acquaintances.

When discussing the importance of 'family memory' as a tool to study the retention of a sense of 'familyhood' across borders, we appeal to Smart's idea that memory 'relies on communication to become a memory and on context to be meaningful' (2011: 18). We build on the work of Assmann and Czaplicka (1995), and examine the channels and contents of family communication. Here, we will again draw on the survey of Lithuanian residents (2013) and the VOC-IR comparative study (2013), in order to examine family channels (parents, grandparents, siblings, parents-in-law) and kin network channels (aunts/uncles). In studying the content of memory, we look at how memory channels are used to transmit information about: (1) historical traumas experienced by

family and kin; (2) meaningful events (celebrations, weddings, funerals); (3) family unity/ painful relationships (divorce, violence) and; (4) changes in family and kinship networks. Considering that memories are embedded with emotions (Misztal 2003), we examine family memory by focusing on the quality of intergenerational relations.

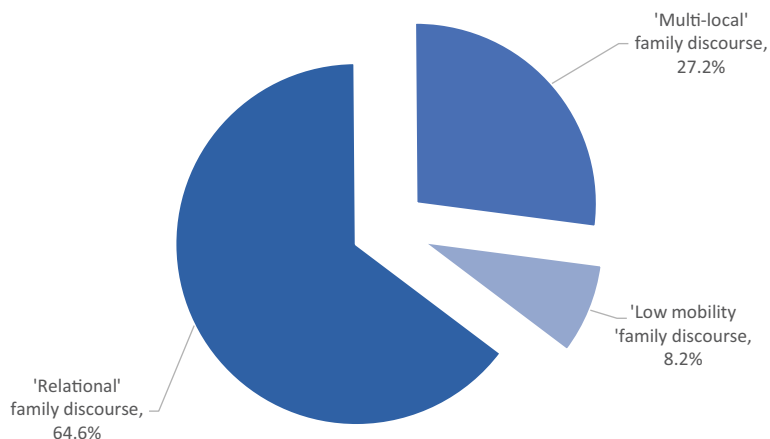
We define 'relationality' as a key concept to investigate how experience of migration reorganizes relational dynamics, and draw on Smart's (2007) ideas about the active nature of relating, which stands in contrast to a static view of relationships as given and unchanging, and one's position in a family as fixed. We rely on the ideas of Finch and Mason (Finch 1989; Finch and Mason 1993) about the reasoning, actions, and experiences of actors to argue that reshaping family relations operates at the level of renegotiation of relationships. We extend the analysis further by applying concept of 'keying' (Goffman 1974/1986) and Turner's (1978) conception of 'role-person merger' in researching role-making activities and reshaped identities. Here we draw on the case studies, carried out combining two visual methods.

## Results<sup>9</sup>

### Imaginary

While analysing 'imaginary', we identified a discursive nature of representation of transnational childcare networks in one's imagination: 8.2 per cent of respondents do not conceptualize transnational childcare networks as family ('low mobility' family discourse), 27.2 per cent conceptualize any type of transnational childcare networks as family ('multi-local' family discourse), while according to the largest group of respondents (64.6 per cent), whether or not the transnational network will be referred to as family/or not depends on who is caring for a child ('relational' family discourse) (Fig. 11.1).

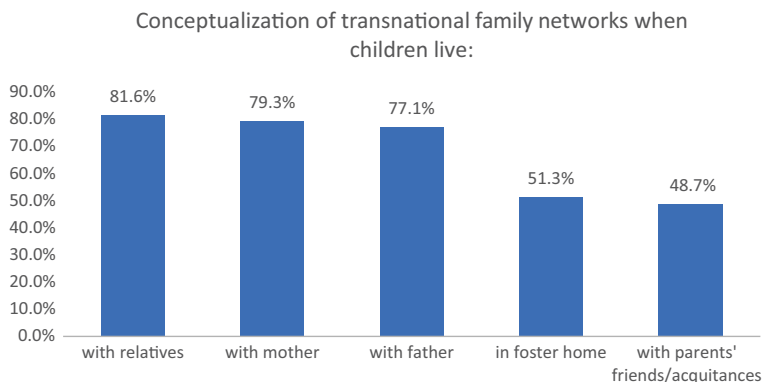
Analyzing how gender and intergenerational relations shape emerging definitions of transnational family networks, we established that there is very little difference between how respondents view father-away family, when a child is being cared for by their mother (79.3 per cent of the



**Fig. 11.1** Representation of transnational family networks in one's imagination

surveyed considered it to be a family), and how respondents view mother-away family, when a child is being cared for by their father (77.1 per cent said it is a family). This indicates that intensive mobility among women changes attitudes to gender roles, especially towards mother being the primary child caretaker. Gender role dynamics contribute to the reorganization of social relations within transnational families; namely, it leads parents to rely more on kinship ties within which family members are embedded. As many as 81.6 per cent of respondents refer to transnational family networks as family when children staying behind are cared for by their relatives, and respondents even deem a network of relatives to be a more favourable environment for a child than one in which a child is cared for by single parent alone (mother or father) (Fig. 11.2).

Thus, the experience of migration has mainly contributed to highlighting the significance of kin relationships in conceptualizations of transnational childcare arrangements. When children are cared for by parents' friends/acquaintances, only 48.7 per cent of respondents refer to transnational arrangements as a family; when left behind children are in foster homes, 51.3 per cent of respondents define parents–children relationships as family. On the other hand, personal involvement in migratory networks appears to reshape an individual's imagination; involved respondents have become more inclined to define non-kin guardianship arrangements as families.



**Fig. 11.2** Conceptualization of transnational family networks with diverse child-care arrangements

## Embeddedness

This section explores how ‘embeddedness’ manifests through vertical and horizontal ties with family members, close kin, friends, and acquaintances, and how the migration experience turns these ties into intensive and meaningful ones. The section is based on data analysis performed by Tureikytė and Butėnaitė (see Juozeliūnienė and Seymour 2015: 250–266; 267–279).

We build on Milardo and Wellman’s (1992) methodology to examine the size and content of significant persons’ networks, considering these networks to be social capital and which affect the dynamics of transnational family networks. We found that family and close-kin ties related persons comprise 85.7 per cent of a significant persons’ network.<sup>10</sup> In addition, an analysis of the VOC-IR comparative study showed that family and close-kin relations vary significantly on the ‘opportunity’, ‘closeness’ and ‘support’<sup>11</sup> kinship relations indices<sup>12</sup> and represent different levels of familial unity. We distinguished between three levels of unity: (1) the closest relations are found with parents, especially mothers; (2) somewhat more distant ones are with one’s sister and/or brother as well as the mother and father of a spouse/partner; and (3) the most distant relations are those with sister and/or brother of a spouse/partner. Different levels of familial unity point to different degrees of ‘embeddedness’ and determine different strategies for the workings of transnational family networks.

Examining relationships from a gender perspective, we found that female family members are particularly active both in vertical and horizontal communication. Solidarity indices describing the relations with a mother are higher than those with a father, the indices are higher for a sister than those for a brother, and so on. Besides, mothers occupy a special role in the matrix of kinship relations. They are the most important nodes within the network of family members and close kin: mothers communicate most frequently and intensively and are the most emotionally involved, they most intensively participate in flows of support. One's relations with their mother are distinguished by a particularly strong emotional connection. Under the 'closeness' index, which helps to gauge the strength of emotional ties, Lithuania falls into the group of countries ranked with a high closeness index<sup>13</sup> and, in that respect, is closer to Asian and African countries that took part in the international VOC-IR study than to the European ones.

The strength of emotional ties was also confirmed by an analysis<sup>14</sup> of types of relation—whether a relationship can be defined as tight-knit, intimate-but-distant, obligatory, or detached<sup>15</sup> (Silverstein et al. 1997). We have discovered that the most widespread type of relationship within and across generations in Lithuania is 'intimate-but-distant', which is characterized by infrequent communication and low-intensity support, yet exhibit emotional intimacy and similar opinions, both of which are important during times of change in terms of social capital and mutual support.

The concept of 'embeddedness' is instrumental for researching how social relations are reshaped in migration situations. Data from a representative survey of the Lithuanian population revealed that migratory experience does not significantly modify the size of networks: the average size of the networks of respondents who reside in Lithuania is 2.8, while the average size of the networks of respondents who have migratory experience is 2.9. Moreover, their composition is relatively equal: the networks of respondents who reside in Lithuania and the networks of those who have migration experience comprise not only family (78.9 and 78.5 per cent), but also kin (7.5 and 8.1 per cent) and non-kin ties, including friends (10.6 and 10.2 per cent) and acquaintances (3.0 and 3.2 per cent). Meanwhile, there is a noticeable difference between the number of

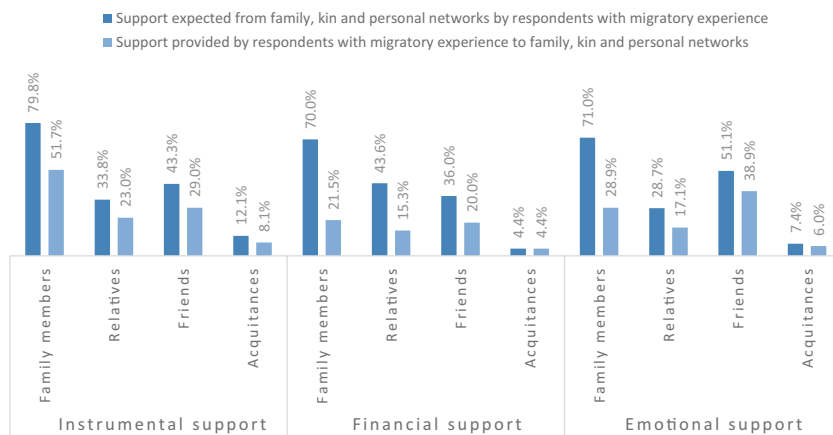


those with migratory experience who expect to receive support, and who report to reciprocate support. As Fig. 11.3 indicates, significantly fewer respondents report that they reciprocate support to their kin and non-kin.

A significant distinction emerged along gender lines when we compared how many respondents reported they expected to receive support, with how many reported that they had actually received support. In order to care for children and/or parents, family members helped men with migration experience more often than they helped women (23.5 and 16.2 per cent respectively). Men were also slightly more likely than women to receive psychological assistance from other family members (60.9 and 57.3 per cent respectively). Meanwhile, women were more likely than men to get material assistance from family members (17.4 and 14.5 per cent respectively).

## Memory

Life across borders challenges the imaginary realm of what one defines to be 'my family', while shared memories give family members a sense of



**Fig. 11.3** The distribution of support expectations from and support provided to the different groups by respondents with migratory experience

shared history, which helps them to preserve family unity. Drawing on data from both quantitative and qualitative studies, we aim to analyze how intergenerational relations play a part in family memory-making. This section is based on data analysis performed by Žilinskienė (see Juozeliūnienė and Seymour 2015: 280–301).

We found that the level of ‘embeddedness’ within family and kin networks is significant to the dynamics of family memory, primarily because family memory is shaped by these networks and communicated through them. The most active channels are vertical ones—between parents and children. Half of the families exhibit a high level of communication in parents–children channels, and they are not coincidentally the primary carriers of all of a family’s examined memory contexts. Grandparents make a somewhat smaller contribution to constructing family memory, yet, since they carry an experience from a previous generation, they add extra layers to it. Meanwhile migration experience reshapes intergenerational relations by engaging grandparents in closer relations with their grandchildren, and it reinforces their involvement in preserving family unity through maintaining family memory. For example, grandparents might tell their grandchildren stories about their parents, or create photo albums, to preserve memories while living separately (we will discuss an example, Elena, in the next subsection). Moreover, family memory exists in a continuous mode of ‘enrolling’ other members of the family network, adapting to the situation in order to preserve memories. For example, when relations between grandmother and grandson are strained, parents-in-law may assume an increased role in memorizing.

The success of preserving ‘familyhood’ across borders goes beyond the size of networks and the engagement of kin in transnational support; the emotional quality of relations must also be considered. The role that emotion plays in the cohesion of family memory communication is manifested in a number of ways. For example, when we observe high-quality indices in a family’s intergenerational relations (high intimacy, low conflict, high admiration), memory communication manifests through wider networks including both family and kinship channels. Furthermore, the high-quality indices in intergenerational relations lead to a more intensive communication of memory and more expansive content. Thus, the quality of relations between grandmothers and their daughters could be treated as social capital, significant for constructing and continuing family

memory in transnational family networks. In cases where there is an average level of intimacy in mother–daughter relations, memory starts to ‘waste away’, thus threatening the continuity of family memory overall. In cases where there is a low level of family relations, memory channels are at risk of being ‘shut down’ entirely. Another significant finding indicates that when one memory channel ‘shuts down’, another memory communication channel tends to be opened. In transnational networks, for example, in the case of low levels of intimacy with one’s mother, one’s siblings or grandparents become significant alternative memory channels.

## Relationality

We discuss three cases, narrated by participants of a qualitative study, to demonstrate how the experience of migration redefines relatedness with significant persons; that is, how family members renegotiate commitments and, in the long run, come to adopt new identities. The first example comes from Jonas, a parent in a father-away family, who works abroad and comes back to Lithuania every 3 months. The second recounts the story of Jurga, a left-behind daughter, who stayed in Lithuania with her younger sister after her parents had divorced and her mother had left to work abroad. The final case is Elena, a grandmother whose daughter emigrated to work in the USA while leaving behind a three-year-old granddaughter (Urtė). Jonas, Jurga, and Elena each recounted how keying the role manifested when living across national borders, how commitments stemming from different family roles intertwined, and how identities were reshaped. This section is based on data analysis performed by Juozeliūnienė (see Juozeliūnienė and Seymour 2015: 359–375).

In the case of Jonas, when reflecting on how his relatedness to significant persons had changed, he noted that he had less and less influence on decisions concerning the household and child-rearing, and was left with the sole obligation of organizing the family’s leisure activities. Jonas explained: ‘Before [starting to work abroad], we used to discuss all problems and solve them together, but now it is all for her alone and she performs it in her own way’. While Jonas would like to describe himself as a ‘family breadwinner’, he lacks authority and feels alienated. He said: ‘Even if I let children [do something] they re-ask mother, maybe they are

afraid that I will let them do something and after they will be scold for that by mother'. Jonas' communication with his wife and children became arbitrary and superficial, and he felt like a guest in his own family. Over time, Jonas redefined his identity and now perceives himself as a 'guest-like father'.

Jurga recounts that, after her parents' divorce and her mother's departure, she assumed the role of an intermediary between the significant persons in her family and became the guardian of her younger sister. Jurga: 'As I say I'm mediator between those three people—father, sister, and mother—when sister doesn't want to tell something to mother, she tells father, when she doesn't want to tell something to father, she tells mother and when she doesn't want to tell something to any of them then she tells me. But I'm always the one who knows everything because when my sister tells something to father he calls me, when my sister tells something to mother she calls me'. Her parents entrusted Jurga with the responsibility for her sister, whom they sought to communicate with and control through Jurga. She gave an example: 'My sister got a job offer [...] She told them [father and mother] and asked for an advice. Both father and mother started calling me and asked to persuade her from this nonsense'. When describing her new relatedness with family members, Jurga defines herself as a 'mother-like sister'.

Elena's example illustrates how grandmothers engage in transnational family life and look for ways to preserve family memory and unity. While her daughter lived abroad, Elena continued to stay in touch with her and ordered her daughter, Eglė, and her granddaughter, Urtė, to phone each other. She also kept her daughter informed about the various events in Urtė's life. As Elena put it, 'I used to write only about Urtė, no detail was too small: what has she worn, eaten, where have we been [...] all the time'. Meanwhile, when speaking with Urtė, Elena used to recount stories about Eglė's life. She said: 'I used to talk about everything she has done at the young age, where she has worked, studied, what skills she possessed. I used to tell that she was an excellent cook, she was very pretty'. When talking about herself, Elena emphasized her identity as a 'family keeper'.

We analyzed the redefinition of relatedness with significant persons by relying on the standpoint of 'keying' family roles as 'strips of doing'

(Goffman 1974/1986: 40–82). We revealed how patterned activities are transformed, and what meanings actors attribute to these changes. For example, Elena's role-making is defined through 'technical re-doing key'; more specifically, the 'demonstrations' sub-type. Elena explained to her granddaughter the basics of mother–daughter relations; taught her how a daughter should interact with her mother; told her to engage in the typical activities of such relations, which in her view included calling her mother and conversing about the mundane aspects of daily life. Another sub-type of the 'technical re-doing key' is a 'documentary intent'. This is illustrated by Elena's attempts to create 16 photo albums of her granddaughter to keep her daughter's memories of the family alive, after her daughter's departure. Elena performed these multiple task-intensive activities as her new identity as 'family-keeping' grandmother emerged.

The distinction Finch and Mason (1993: 64–79) make between implicit and explicit negotiations, helped us to examine how family members renegotiate family role-making across borders. For example, Jurga and her sister usually engaged in the 'non-decisions' type of negotiating. As Jurga put it: 'We always had this principle that you have to tell, when you plan to come back home, at what hour, if something changes, you have to call. Since this [principle] was introduced in the family earlier, my sister and I, we just did not change anything and applied this [...] everything just functioned like this after mother's departure'. Meanwhile her negotiations with her parents were usually in the form of 'clear intentions': Jurga's parents would call her and, without so much as a cursory discussion, oblige her to talk 'some common sense into her' sister. There are also numerous examples of implicit and explicit negotiations in Jonas' search for new relatedness with his family members. Jonas understood the undergoing changes and was disposed to negotiate about new role-making, but without invoking 'open discussion'. He explained: 'Sometimes I try not to interfere because I know that I will confuse everything and later my wife will have to rearrange everything according to herself'. These cases shed light on how family members renegotiate and sustain their relationships while living across borders, and how they reshape their identities by attributing meanings to these changes.

## Conclusions

This chapter explored how the experience of migration re-defines and re-organizes the relations in transnational families in Lithuania. Building on Smart's concepts which she developed to analyse personal life—'imaginary', 'embeddedness', 'memory', and 'relationality'—we demonstrated how these analytical tools could be operationalized by employing approaches of intergenerational solidarity, personal networks analysis, frame analysis, and memory studies.

We established that family discourse is fundamental to understanding how transnational family relations exist in one's imagination. 'Local', 'multi-local' and 'relational' family discourses contribute to the distinct conceptualizations of transnational childcare arrangements. Moreover, placing the relationships at the centre of the transnational family image allowed the authors to highlight the changing attitudes towards mothers as being the primary child caretakers, and disclose the rising significance of kin relationships in the images of families.

A multilevel analysis of family and close-kin relations helped us develop the concept of 'embeddedness' in the context of transnational family life. Different degree of 'embeddedness' within family and kinship relations provides different ways of maintaining transnational family ties—Lithuanian families tend to rely on vertical ties, meanwhile less intensive relations (for example, relations with spouse/partner's family members, friends) are also invoked for maintaining relationships across borders. The mobile person's expectations of support are higher than the received support; moreover, the support is distributed in a clearly gendered way.

We established that family memory facilitates a transnational mode of living, and contributes to the preservation of 'familyhood'. Family memory is shaped by family and kin networks, it is communicated through them, and it depends on the emotional quality of relations. Migration experience engages grandparents and in-laws in memory communication, and affects how memory channels operate.

Transnational life alters the relational dynamics between parents, grandparents, and children. Newly emerging identities such as a 'guest-

like-father', a 'mother-like sister', and a 'family keeping' grandmother, all highlight how role specific commitments are renegotiated when family members live across borders, and how commitments stemming from multiple family roles intertwine.

Relying on the relational perspective enriches our understanding of transnational family life. It sheds light on how relations manifest in the concept of family. It also allows us focus our attention on the extent to which intergenerational and gender relations are family resources in transnational support and memory exchange. And finally, it enables to exhibit the transformation of frameworks of family roles and the emergence of new identities.

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## Notes

1. We focus on families where one of the parents (or both parents) have departed to work abroad, while their children have remained in Lithuania.
2. For example, the Strategy of managing economic migration of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (2006); Amendments to the Law on the approval of provisions on child temporary custody (2007); National Family Policy Conception (2008).
3. Smart suggests one more concept—biography—significant to enlarging and deepening the understanding of family life. Restrained by the chosen methodology, we did not apply the concept 'biography' to analyse transnational family networks. It remains for our future research to analyse its applicability.

4. Project was implemented by a group of Vilnius University sociologists: Rūta Butėnaitė, Irena Juozeliūnienė (project leader), Saulius Novikas, Danutė Tureikytė, Laima Žilinskienė. For more information on the mixed-methods research study, which included two quantitative research studies and qualitative family-case studies (see Juozeliūnienė and Seymour 2015).
5. For more information on VOC-IR instrument see: <https://www.psychologie.uni-konstanz.de/en/trommsdorff/research/value-of-children-in-six-cultures/description-of-study/>
6. In addition, the survey included an additional block of questions on value of children, but were not analysed in this publication. We listed only the questions on intergenerational solidarity, which is the main focus of this chapter.
7. *Role-making map* method is a four-step mapping method formed as a modification of the *My family map* (Levin 1993). In this study, it was used to analyse 'rekeying' of family roles in transnational families.
8. Question on conceptualizing the types of transnational childcare arrangements as families was included in the questionnaire of the representative survey of Lithuanian population (2013).
9. We include the results of a data analysis performed by the project team members—Rūta Butėnaitė (pp. 267–280), Irena Juozeliūnienė (pp. 359–375) (project leader), Danutė Tureikytė (pp. 250–267), and Laima Žilinskienė (pp. 280–304)—published in Juozeliūnienė and Seymour (2015).
10. To analyse personal networks in this section and data sets in the memory construction section, we used descriptive statistics methods. To determine the significance of differences between groups we used the Chi-square criterion; we only analysed significant differences with 95 per cent probability ( $p < 0.05$ ).
11. *Opportunity index* was calculated by combining the answers to a question about the geographical distance between place of residence and frequency of contacts with family and close kin. *Closeness index*—by combining the answers to questions about emotional closeness that included questions about child-rearing and other serious personal questions. *Support index*—by combining answers about the provision and reception of various types of support in daily housework activities.
12. We used factorial analysis to calculate kinship ties indices.
13. The average value of the mothers' relations with close kin closeness index in Lithuania is 57. In South Africa—59, in China—60. As a comparison, the value of this index in both Germany and Estonia is 44, in France and Poland it is 47.



14. The authors have conducted *latent cluster analysis* (LCA) using the dichotomized indicator variables. The optimal suitability of the four-cluster model was assessed with a view of statistical estimates appropriate for LCA (LL<sup>2</sup>, AIC and BIC criteria).
15. LCA allows us to classify close kin relations into four clusters. First, relations are considered *tight-knit* if all dimensions of intergenerational solidarity (emotional, associational, structural, functional, normative, and consensual) are above average. Second, relationships are called *intimate-but-distant* when high emotional closeness and similarity of attitudes go together with spatial distance, low frequency of contact, and low mutual exchange of functional support. Third, relationships are considered *obligatory* in case of mutual exchange of functional support, low levels of contact, communication, and emotional closeness. Fourth, in case of low levels of all six dimensions, the relationships are called *detached*.

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