Research goal and research questions: Scholars of international migration pay increasing attention to localities. As a result, we know much about cities being more innovative and efficient in their local immigrant integration policies than central governments. However, less is known about cities' response to the needs of their most marginalized immigrant populations struggling with poverty, and about the risks related to decentralising policies to the local levels (e.g. creating unequal opportunities). Although migrants in Europe and in the U.S. statistically are more active on the labour market than nationals, they are twice more often affected by poverty, stay longer in poverty, fall back into it more often, face greater barriers to and within employment, and yet, they underutilize welfare services which are available to them. Using a case of Polish immigrants in three EU (London, Berlin, Stockholm) and one U.S. (New York City) cities, LocMig research project aims to examine the response of **local welfare system** (the system of provisions of welfare resources by local actors) to migrant urban poverty. LocMig will develop a novel theory explaining the role of macro-, mezo- and micro-level factors in shaping various responses to migrant poverty. **Polish immigrants** will be a focus of this study, as they are the second-largest group among intra-EU migrants (1.1. million in 2016), and the third-largest among European migrants in the U.S. (nearly 425,000 in 2018). A massive interest has been dedicated to Polish immigration particularly post-2004, however, only a handful of studies focus on the less successful stories of Polish immigrants struggling with poverty. A few studies describe Poles experiencing homelessness in London, Oslo and Brussel. A comparative understanding of various poverty experiences and use of services within various local welfare systems is missing. The four cities are selected to the study, as they are all top migrant destinations, operate within different national and local welfare regimes, have different national-level effectiveness in reducing migrant poverty, and are among the top destinations for Polish immigrants.

LocMig project will answer three specific research questions: *Question 1: For Polish immigrants living in cities and experiencing poverty and for direct service providers who work with them, **how does reducing poverty look** within different LWSs? Question 2: How do different **responses of LWSs enable or impede reducing poverty**? Question 3: How do macro, meso and micro-level factors shape various types of LWSs responses to migrant poverty?*

Research methodology: In order to answer these questions, we propose to conduct a comparative-case study (CCS, Yin, 2017) with qualitative longitudinal research component (Neale, 2019; Derrington, 2019) and based on so called community collaborative approach (McKay, Bell, Blake, 2010). CCS will allow to compare cases using a high level of scientific rigour. The longitudinal research will allow to maximize opportunities for understanding how overcoming poverty occurs (or is hindered) in "real-time" as participants enter local welfare systems. Finally, the community collaborative approach involves key stakeholders in the research process and that way, the research design and process is culturally and contextually relevant to the participating communities. **The data collection process** will include 72 interviews with Polish migrants and native-born who experienced poverty, and with direct service providers; Longitudinal research will be based on 48 interviews and 4 shadowing observations conducted in three waves of interviews with LWS migrant participants and persons directly providing services. Additionally, 8 expert interviews will be conducted, two in each city. Interviewed immigrants will also fill a demographic and social network survey. The project will also use secondary data collected in each city: national and city-level legislation related to the local welfare system, principal texts produced by non-state actors involved in the local welfare systems, and qualitative and quantitative indicators of local welfare system response to migrant poverty (e.g. multilingual provision of various welfare programs in cities, access to services for undocumented migrants etc.). **The data analysis** process will combine elements of grounded theory approach, deductive qualitative analysis, and inductive thematic analysis; and social network analysis. Dedoose and SPSS software will support data analysis process.

Project impact: **LocMig contributes to the field of sociology of international migration and social welfare studies** by addressing the following gaps existed in these fields: limited knowledge on migrants utilizing local welfare systems; successful LWSs responses to migrant poverty; Polish immigrants struggling with poverty and accessing welfare systems in comparative contexts. Scientific impact of the project will be achieved by means of advancement of state-of-the-art, preparing and submitting articles to peer-reviewed international journals, preparation of a book manuscript, participation in international conferences, presenting and consulting the research during public lectures, and popularizing project findings on social and professional media.