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MIGRANT ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS
AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE:
A CASE STUDY OF TRADE CENTRES
LOCATED IN WOLKA KOSOWSKA.
RESEARCH REPORT.

Stowarzyszenie
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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper constitutes a summary of study on migrant economic institutions in Poland¹. The research was carried out by the Association for Legal Intervention (Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej) together with the Institute for Public Affairs (Instytut Spraw Publicznych) as a part of “Different, but equal - research on equal treatment of foreigners in Poland” partnership project co-financed from the funds of the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals and the state budget. The study was coordinated and carried out by Natalia Klorek and Monika Szulecka together with a team of five researchers, who, due to the character of the research, had the relevant research and/or language competencies.

The research was conducted between January and December 2012. An important element of the study – field work was conducted in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska - not only the most significant migrant economic institution in Poland, but also an economic phenomenon distinctly influencing the local labour market and the socio-economic landscape. Additionally the research of exploratory character was conducted in two other economic institutions involving migrants - the “Chinese” markets in Jaworzno and Rzgów. The study was carried out by means of qualitative research methods, such as interviews, observations and review of press materials and Internet fora. Participant observation involving a short-term employment of a researcher in one of the market halls of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska was a pioneering element of the study. The chosen technique is rarely used in researching economic migration, especially when studying migrants functioning (partially) in informal economy, but it enabled to access information that would be difficult to access by other research methods.

We would like to thank the few dozen respondents² who dedicated their time and shared their knowledge and opinions with us. Particular acknowledgements go to the researchers who were committed to gather information about the functioning of the economic migrants in the trade centres and the researchers who provided us with valuable advice, even though they were not directly involved in the study.

1.1. THE OBJECT OF THE STUDY

The main object of the study was the trade centres complex in Wolka Kosowska concentrating the investors, entrepreneurs and employees from Vietnam, China, Turkey, Poland and other countries. The centres, which are focused mainly on wholesale trade in goods imported usually from Asia, are attractive destination for the domestic, as well as foreign customers from over the eastern Polish border. The researched migrant economic institution in Wolka Kosowska is unique in the scale of the region, to say the least, due to its size, even though places of similar character, though in a smaller scale, are also present in the Czech Republic and Hungary. Regardless of its uniqueness, this economic institution has not yet been comprehensively researched.

The main objective of the study was the identification and analysis of the factors influencing the functioning and changes of this economic institution, as well as its internal and external social and professional interactions. Therefore, the main objective of the researchers was to learn the opinions about the way this institution influences

¹ It is an abstract from the report published in Polish accessible at the website of the Association for Legal Intervention: <http://interwencjaprawna.pl/prezentacja-wynikow-badan-migranckich-instytucji-ekonomicznych-na-przykladzie-centrow-handlowych-w-wolce-kosowskiej/>.

² Please refer to the Appendix 1.

the environment and the environmental (including local administration) influence onto this migrant economic institution, as well as the interrelations between the representatives of the separate national and professional groups.

The study has given particular attention to the Vietnamese community gathered around the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. This perspective results from the fact that even though this migrant economic institution is attractive to entrepreneurs and employees from various countries, including Poland, the Vietnamese community seems to continue dominating in Lesznów municipality, where the trade centres are located. Additionally, the Vietnamese constitute an interesting migrant community due to its internal organization, migrant networks, mechanisms of bringing following migrants to Poland and the business activity strategies. Another group which cannot be omitted when analysing the situation of the Vietnamese in the researched migrant economic institution are the Chinese, who play an important role in Wolka Kosowska by controlling to a large extent the goods distribution channels.

1.2. THE RESEARCH METHOD

The research activities involved:

- desk research, including subject literature analysis, review of chosen media materials and analysis of the contents of chosen websites and Internet fora dedicated to foreigners living in Poland, specific migrant economic institutions or issues of migrants living in Poland;
- multiple observations aimed at gathering information about the trade centres themselves, social interactions present, services developing within or close to the trade centres, as well as the relations between the representatives of the local authorities, intuitions and communities on the one side and the boards and the employees of the migrant trade centres on the other side. There were both external and participation observations conducted (including a short-term employment in one of the centres in Wolka Kosowska), carried out based on the pre-prepared observation guidelines;
- interviews with the representatives of different national and ethnic groups, including the representatives of local authorities and institutions, employees of local service providers, employees of trade centres, representatives of trade centres' owners, as well as experts and leaders of the migrant communities. Semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews based on the pre-prepared interview guidelines were used during the study.

1.3. LIMITATIONS ENCOUNTERED IN CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH AND INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

Conducting the research was challenging for a number of reasons. One of the most significant challenges was the language barrier. The cultural barrier was also significant for the described study, as it is often encountered in research conducted among the representatives of the migrant communities of Asian origin (among others: Grzymała-Kazłowska 2002, 2010, Halik 2006, Mroczek, Szulecka, Tulińska 2008). The barrier is present not only due to the language obstacles, but also cultural norms, according to which only the persons chosen and recommended by figures renowned in and trusted by the community may hope for favourable reception and agreement to a longer conversation or an in-depth interview. To overcome the abovementioned barriers the field work was conducted by researchers with relevant language and cultural competencies, including the ability to speak Chinese or Vietnamese, , but, above all, demonstrating vast knowledge of the cultures of both of these Asian countries.

Another problem hindering the research of migrant communities (especially in case of migrants who work illegally or stay in the country without a permit) is their widespread mistrust towards the representatives of the host society (in this situation - the researchers). It may result from the fact that showing the interest in the situation of the foreigner and asking questions may resemble contacts with the representatives of the administration or the control bodies (such as the police). Nevertheless, dedicating appropriate time to establish contacts and build relations between the researcher and the persons interviewed in a friendly atmosphere of trust (often using the native tongue of the migrant) allowed, at least partially, to overcome the barrier. However, not all the contacts were successful, as in some instances they did not lead to a meeting with a potential respondent. This mainly concerns, among others, the members of the boards of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska.

It is also worth mentioning that the “Chinese” trade centres, as they are popularly referred to, which are dominated by entrepreneurs from Asia (in fact coming mainly from Vietnam and China), are often surrounded by an atmosphere of suspicion. It is undoubtedly caused by conflicts or events in the centres that the wider public is informed about (for example protests, fires or arrests in connection with illegal stay or engagement in criminal activities). All these factors are the reasons why conducting research in such locations may be additionally hindered due to the characteristic atmosphere of distrust and fear for disclosing too many facts or opinions to outsiders.

Another obstacle in describing migrant trade institutions was the access to statistical data concerning the researched communities. The strategy of data collection for the needs of the research involved collecting the statistical data that is highly likely to concern the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska (or other economic institutions). It was usually the data made available by the local authorities or offices.

The results presented in this report concern the research carried out using qualitative research methods. Therefore, the conclusions cannot be generalised and used for describing the situation of foreigners or migrant economic institutions in the time frames different from the research time frames, which in the case of fieldwork concerns the time between June and November 2012. Additionally, it is worth highlighting, that the study concerned only chosen, above mentioned aspects of the functioning of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, that is in fact a complex migrant economic institution.

2. TRADE CENTRES IN WOLKA KOSOWSKA – A MIGRANT ECONOMIC INSTITUTION

2.1. THE ORIGINS OF THE TRADE CENTRES COMPLEX

The first company to have invested in Wolka Kosowska, which also owns the largest territory, is the GD Poland Investments Sp. z o.o. - a company with Chinese capital operating the Chinese Trade Centre. It opened the first building in 1994³. Poland was chosen for the location of the Chinese investment due to the proximity of the eastern markets and Germany, where the transshipment ports for the goods imported from Asia are located (Roguska, Cybulska 2008: 6). Lesznowola was chosen as the municipality where the trade centre would be built due to the localisation (proximity of Warsaw, accessibility by car) and the existence of current local area development plan. The development plans were intentionally prepared by the local authorities to attract investors: “since the 1990's Lesznowola municipality has been paying a lot of attention to planning, seeing it as a chance to develop (...). The plans are interactive, available online, so when someone from New York suddenly decides to start a business near Warsaw and would like to purchase some land, they may have a look at the plans online” (W-25-WL). Currently the local area development plans

³ Website of the GD Poland's trade centre: <http://www.gdpoland.pl/> (access on 04.12.2012).

cover about 98% of Lesznowola (W-25-WL), allowing the investors plan their undertakings. The local authorities also tried to facilitate the investment in the initial phase: "The local authorities learnt where we wanted to buy the land and encouraged us to do so. Because you know, you need to prepare a project and obtain necessary planning permissions, sometimes it takes even half a year. I did not experience any resistance or obstacles" (W-30-Li).

The land for foreign investments was purchased from private owners. Even though the trade centres have been operating since the mid-1990s and some new centres built by companies other than GD appeared in the neighbourhood in the 2000s, the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska gained on popularity when the announcements about closing the 10th-Anniversary Stadium became real. Especially after 2007 when the large market on the stadium's premises, gathering mainly the traders from Vietnam and Turkey, was closed (see e.g. Wysienska ed. 2012).

2.2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Even though it has become customary to talk about a trade centre in Wolka Kosowska, the studied economic institution in fact includes several independent trade centres, located in immediate vicinity⁴, each consisting of a few buildings (the largest centre - the Chinese Trade Centre consists of 10 buildings). The territory covered is at least 50 hectares⁵. All the centres are located in Lesznowola municipality (Piaseczno district, Masovian province), a municipality of about 20 thousand inhabitants, located about 30 kilometres away from the centre of Warsaw. In the village of Wolka Kosowska there are about 300 inhabitants⁶. The centres are managed by independent economic subjects - mainly companies with foreign capital. The companies are:

- a. ASEANEU (operating the ASEANEU Trade Centre, Vietnamese board, area of over 3 hectares, 3 buildings, the first building was opened in 2008, about 160 stores⁷),
- b. ASEANPL Sp. z o.o. (operating the Polish Trade Centre, Vietnamese board, 2 trade centres, the first building was opened in 2006, about 450 stores⁸);
- c. ASG-PL Sp. z o.o. (operating the ASG Trade Centre, Vietnamese board, three buildings, the first building was opened in 2002, about 100 companies⁹)
- d. "EACC Investments" Sp. z o.o. (operating the Euro-Asian Commercial Centre, Vietnamese-Turkish board¹⁰, covering 4 hectares, 4 buildings, the first building was opened in 2003, over 250 companies¹¹).
- e. GD Poland Investments Sp. z o.o. (operating the Chinese Trade Centre, Chinese board, covering over 15 hectares, 6 buildings, the first building was opened in 1994, about 1000 stores¹²).

Although the centres have different owners, there are some similarities between them. One of the similarities is the space planning and organization. Majority of the centres consist of a few buildings surrounded by a car park and a fence. Majority of them serve as commercial area and are open for customers. Some of the buildings, however, are warehouses. In majority of the buildings wholesale commercial activities are conducted. In terms of the product range, it is dominated by textiles, shoes and accessories, but household articles and other goods can also be pur-

⁴ See the map in Appendix 2.

⁵ Information from the Lesznowola Municipality Office from 29 October 2012.

⁶ Website of the Lesznowola Municipality Office: www.lesznowola.pl. (access on 10.12.2012).

⁷ ASEANEU's trade centre website: www.aseaneu.com (access on 10.10.2012).

⁸ ASEANPL's trade centre website: www.aseanpl.com (access on 10.10.2012).

⁹ ASG-PL's centre website: www.asg-pl.com (access on 10.10.2012).

¹⁰ Compare with the information about the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska in Mroczek and others 2008.

¹¹ EACC's centre website: www.eacc.pl (access on 10.10.2012).

¹² Website of the GD Poland's trade centre: www.gdpoland.pl (access on 10.10.2012).

chased. According to the information available on the websites of the individual companies managing the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, it is estimated that the centres include about 2000 stores, mainly dealing in trade (some also serve as service providers such as restaurants or banks). The store surface varies (for example the ASEANPL stores are between 30 and 215 square metres, while the smallest stores in GD buildings are 50 square metres¹³) and all have independent, locked entrances. The outlets are usually rented from the board and are not owned by persons or companies doing business on their premises. Sometimes goods are sold outside the buildings, for example from cars parked in the car park, where Poles sell live fish or other goods (W-17-PR, W-22-PR).

Even though the stores' size varies, majority of them look alike. Each store serves a couple of purposes. Firstly, it is a place where the goods are displayed. Usually the stores also have a counter with a computer/laptop and a mini-office or a table, where some of the financial transactions are made and documents are kept. The stores may also include a small warehouse in the back. Only some of the goods are kept in the stores. The warehouses where the customers usually receive the purchased goods are located in different buildings on the premises of the trade centres or in independent warehouses located in neighbouring towns, for example in Jablonowo or Mrokow.

The stores operate within the opening hours - majority of the trade centres are open until 4 p.m. and are closed on Sundays. The customers of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska usually come from Poland, but there is also a lot of customers from Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania and Estonia, which can be confirmed, among others, by the number plates of the cars parked outside the buildings. Some of the buildings include accommodation facilities for the representatives of the companies renting the stores and customers, most probably coming from places farther away from the centres (W-5-PR).

2.3. THE MIGRANT ECONOMIC INSTITUTION AS A WORK PLACE

Vast majority of the respondents, both Poles and foreigners, perceive the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska as an important workplace in the region. Among the nationalities most often mentioned in terms of their professional involvement in Wolka Kosowska there are the Vietnamese, the Chinese and Poles, but also representatives of Turkey, Pakistan and India. Based on the estimated number of stores located in Wolka Kosowska (about 2 000) it may be assumed, that this is the minimum number of employees of the centres. The observations show, however, that in majority of cases one store employs at least 1-2 persons, apart from the employees responsible for transportation and supply of goods, management, office and accounting in a given company. The employees performing these duties may be employed both inside and outside the trade centres - on the premises of warehouses, offices or different kinds of service providers' seats in the neighbourhood. Therefore the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska may indirectly employ a few times more persons than the number of stores rented.

Due to the size of the economic institution and a variety of responsibilities connected with its operations, there are no problems with finding employment on the premises. Many jobs are simple (such as loading and unloading the goods), often not requiring any qualifications or requiring low qualifications (for example a driver's license). As far as the Poles looking for employment in Wolka Kosowska are concerned, the main factor encouraging to seek employment in this economic institution is lack of alternatives ("it would be difficult to find some other job nearby" - W-9-PR) or difficulty in finding employment on satisfactory terms.

¹³ GD Poland website www.gdpoland.pl (access on 10.10.2012) and ASEANPL website: <http://www.aseanpl.com/shops.aspx> (access on 09.12.2012).

The availability of employment attracts Polish employees and employment seekers from Wolka Kosowska or neighbouring locations (Mrokow, Kosowo and others in Lesznowola municipality), but also commuters from farther away (mainly from the Masovian province, for example Radom, Grojec, Garwolin, Grodzisk Mazowiecki). An important factor attracting both Polish and foreign employees to work in trade centres in Wolka Kosowska is a considerably simple recruitment process for the lowest positions. In case of Poles the employment process is usually carried out without engaging the official labour market institutions.

Based on the participant observation, which involved the process of seeking employment in the trade centres, it may be stated that the "job interview" for the lowest positions is usually not formalised. According to a representative of the Vietnamese community who was asked whether the Vietnamese employers conduct job interviews with potential employees they answered: "No, the Vietnamese do not practise job interviews. They always organize some trial period and everything gets clear on-the-job, there is no point in explaining" (W-33-Mi). Instead of job interviews sometimes "competencies test" might take place (e.g. lifting some packages), which in this case is far more important than a formal confirmation of qualifications or identity. It seems that the employers usually apply basic precautionary means in the recruitment process, such as photo copying of the employee's identity card. The employers might also inquire about experience in working in the centres in Wolka Kosowska.

The researched economic institution offers a possibility of working part-time, which may quickly earn additional revenue, but at the same time is easy to resign from, as the employment relationship is usually not formalised ("when I get bored or the <<yellows>> get on my nerve I simply walk away and never come back" – W-9-PR). At the same time on the declarative level a lot of employees perceive the job in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska as part-time or temporary, even though they have been employed for a few years (W-6-PR, W-10-PR). It therefore proves, among others, that the employees seeking stable employment may also find it in the centres. The employers, on the other hand, usually hope for a stable employment relationship and complain about the constant turnover. The long-term employees of a company may receive certain benefits, often unavailable for new employees, such as an employment contract or satisfactory financial terms and working conditions, which are more important for some employees than employment based on a formalised agreement (W-8-PR). The employees with longer tenure are more trusted and cared for by the employers: "First of all, the employer cannot afford to easily lose a person who knows everything. A warehouse employee may always leave, but a person who has been working for two or three years and knows everything is far more difficult to replace. It takes about three months, half a year before new employees are trained. And before they are trained, you have more responsibilities, as usually you have to take care of them" (W-33-Mi).

Trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are also an important workplace for foreigners. Among them there are not only migrants having arrived directly from the country of origin (for example Vietnam or China) or the foreigners already staying in Poland, but also the foreigners who lived in different countries of the region in large communities before coming to Poland. It concerns mainly the Vietnamese and the Chinese who came to Poland from, among others, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. Since they were granted permission to stay in these countries, they often pay taxes there as well (W-40-Ek). It results from the fact that often the mentioned countries, in the perception of the foreigners, offer better access to legalizing stay (which the Vietnamese usually think about the Czech Republic). At the same time with regard to the economic conditions and employment, Poland (and more specifically places such as trade centres in Wolka Kosowska) seems far more attractive than other countries in the region.

2.4. AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE ECONOMIC INSTITUTION

In terms of the activities carried out by the persons working in Wolka Kosowska, there are three basic areas of employment. Firstly, the area of trading in goods, which offers different types of functions/positions in the hierarchy and salaries mirroring the hierarchy. The lowest positions in the hierarchy involve the simplest activities, such as working in the warehouses or transporting goods. These positions are usually filled by men - both Poles and foreigners. A slightly higher position in the hierarchy is the position of sales assistants, usually Polish women employed owing to the language spoken, and the persons responsible for office and accounting (these positions are filled by both Poles and foreigners – W-31-SL). One level higher is the level of managers, even though according to some respondents the sales assistant role and the managerial role very often coincide. They both rely on contacting the customers, gaining new customers and maintaining the existing contacts (W-32-SL). The managerial roles are filled by experienced sales assistants managing a store (or a few stores), usually foreigners. In principle, the trade centres are not perceived as places, where employees may get promoted. A shift from hired labour to becoming an entrepreneur is in fact the only possible way to advance. The employees work in roles they suit best and the working conditions, especially financial terms, and the trust the employee is given are more important than a higher position in the hierarchy, as this brings measurable benefits (W-33-Mi).

The second area of economic activity is connected with the maintenance and support provided for the trade centres - this concerns mainly the employees of cleaning companies or companies responsible for the technical maintenance of the buildings, guards, parking attendants or office employees. The employees in these positions are usually Polish, employed by large companies providing services for the individual companies managing the centres.

The third area worth mentioning in terms of the perception of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska as a workplace is the area of services created as a consequence of the localization of the centres. In this area there are service providers such as grocery shops, accounting and translation companies, companies assisting in procedural matters (legalizing stay and work), bank branches, post office and beauty salons. These services are provided by foreigners offering services of ethnic character to their nationality groups, but also Poles who offer their services to foreigners and Poles employed in the centres and their customers.

3. TRADE CENTRES IN WOLKA KOSOWSKA AS A PLATFORM FOR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

In spite of the concentration of different nationalities, languages, cultures and economic interests in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, many respondents (entrepreneurs, representatives of the managing companies, local authorities) claim the representatives of different nationalities cohabit quite peacefully in the analysed economic institution, focusing mainly on their activities. In principle, everyone has one objective - profit, regardless of their position and nationality. Common objectives may eliminate any divisions: "(...) business is business. When it comes to business, there are no Vietnamese, Turks or Poles. (...) The nationality is not important here. The thing is - in fact everyone wants to earn money, so where there is business, they do business and that is it" (W-33-Mi). There are some exceptions, however, and while preferring business to other matters may help avoid potential tensions, it may also cause conflicts.

A better material status, success of some of the entrepreneurs or their competitive advantage (for example advantageous goods acquisition channels) may arouse envy and result in negative treatment or even social ostracism (W-8-PR). The above applies to the relations between Poles and foreigners, as well as between other nationality groups. The trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are referred to by some of the respondents as "a city in a city" or "a

country in a country" (e.g. W-12-PR). This perception caused by the fact that often within the trade centres hermetic national groups are present, internally bound by complex relations of ownership, professional, commercial and family nature, often imperceptible at first glance or invisible for an external observer. The respondents who have been working in Wolka Kosowska for a long time suggested that the competition is not always fair in the trade centres, there is a currency "mafia" present and there are some conflicts and accounts are squared between the traders and between the boards (W-10-PR).

The relations between the representatives of the individual nationalities may be studied from at least three points of view in terms of trade centres in Wolka Kosowska: the contacts between foreigners professionally involved in Wolka Kosowska, the contacts between Poles and foreigners professionally involved in the trade centres and the contacts of the persons professionally involved in Wolka Kosowska with the customers.

3.1. THE RELATIONS AMONG THE VIETNAMESE

Since there are a lot of nationalities represented in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, only the relations within the Vietnamese community will be studied here. It is one of the most populous groups of migrants both in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, as well in the whole of Poland.

3.1.1. "A small town" – a self-sufficient character of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska

Due to the character and the scale of the trade centres operating in Wolka Kosowska the professional and private spheres merge at every turn resulting in the creation of a characteristic Vietnamese micro community. Wolka Kosowska continuously sees the development of ethnic services (understood as services provided by foreigners to their national groups) facilitating everyday life of the foreigners. These include all the aspects of life, not only the professional part, which makes Wolka Kosowska a self-sufficient organization and excludes the need to travel to larger cities, including Warsaw. During the study the researchers met Vietnamese, who had been staying in Poland for a year and yet had never been to Warsaw, which is within a half-hour travel. The opportunity to use the services offered on the spot results in the lack of motivation for some migrants to learn Polish, which may become an obstacle to achieving self-reliance: "If someone does not own a car, does not speak the language and would have to use the public transport, then even reading the time table [is] problematic, how to get somewhere, tramways etc." (W-38-Ek).

In the trade centres and their vicinity there are grocery shops where products typically used in Asian cuisine can be purchased. Even though Poles may also shop there (the sales assistants often communicate in Polish), they constitute only an additional group of customers. Usually the packaging does not even include Polish labels or prices. Often the receipts are not issued, but the customer may request to receive a list of the ingredients and prices (W-22-PR). The shops may also serve additional purposes, for example an advertisement may be left at the premises.

In Wolka Kosowska there are a lot of restaurants and bistros mainly serving Vietnamese customers and the menu is often available only in Vietnamese. However, it does not mean that over time these gastronomic establishments will not gain recognition among other nationalities. For example many of the facilities at the 10th-Anniversary Stadium became so popular, that they were moved to the centre of Warsaw after the market at the stadium was closed. The restaurants in Wolka Kosowska offer, among others, take away food, which is eaten at the trade centres' premises. Some of the Vietnamese gastronomic establishments additionally organize weddings, birthdays and parties on different occasions important for the Vietnamese community (for example child's first month birthday celebra-

tion). There are also complementary services available - DJs, photographers or cameramen: "a normal Polish photographer or a cameraman will go and miss important moments, they will not know what is most important and they will miss it. It has already happened that they missed key moments" (W-39-Ek) and such films are important, because they are sent to the family in Vietnam. While getting prepared for the party the services of a Vietnamese hair dresser, who is capable of managing the specific type of hair and the Vietnamese liking for extravagant hair styles, may prove useful (W-40-Ek).

Wolka Kosowska also answers the health care needs of the Vietnamese population working in the centres. There is a private outpatient's clinic Lotus operating in one of the centres and managed by the Vietnamese (non-public health care centre LOTUS MEDICAL CENTER Sp. z o.o.). It offers a wide range of medical services. The centre is open for everyone, regardless of their nationality, though the main target group are the Vietnamese (Vietnamese-speaking staff, flyers and website in Vietnamese, services of a Vietnamese interpreter). The alternative medicine services, popular in Vietnam, are also available in Wolka Kosowska.

The trade centres in Wolka Kosowska facilitated the formation of a group of middle-class Vietnamese, who, apart from supporting the family in Vietnam or investing in the education of children, want to invest their funds or spend them for pleasure. The local market, therefore, is trying to satisfy these needs. Among the available services there are summer holidays provided by Vietnamese travel agencies. It is worth noticing that travelling for leisure is a fairly new phenomenon among the Vietnamese in Poland and at the same time very rarely present in Vietnam, due to the limited financial resources. The Vietnamese who are planning to invest in real property in Wolka Kosowska will also find an opportunity to do so. The Asian Real Property and Investment Support Agency "ASEAN-DEVELOPMENT" mainly acts as an estate agency and its main focus is to assist in finding a suitable flat or a house, but it also deals with credit counselling and assistance in negotiating with banks¹⁴.

In Wolka Kosowska there are a lot of services offered by individual persons who may, among others, collect a child from school (day care centres are also available), assist them in doing homework or teach Polish, attend a parents' meeting, help in communication, for example during a medical appointment (e.g. W-38-Ek, W-39-Ek). These services are usually provided by the second generation of the Vietnamese living in Poland, who often graduated from Polish universities and speak both Vietnamese and Polish. The mentioned group often faces employment problems in the Polish labour market, which is the reason why they turn to the Vietnamese community constituting a social and economic ethnic niche. Even though the second generation of the Vietnamese migrants living in Poland sometimes starts working in the trade area (especially when their parents or a family run a relatively successful businesses allowing for growth of the company and further employment), the young Vietnamese often look for opportunities elsewhere. Therefore they perceive the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska as a place of providing additional services, connected more with operations of the centres rather than trading in goods.

The services provided by individual persons and companies are based on intermediary agencies widespread in the Vietnamese community, on the one hand, and on the system of recommendations, on the other hand. The widespread use of the agencies, which is confirmed by their employees (W-18-PR, W-21-PR) may also be motivated by other reasons. To a large extent their operations result from the existence of language barriers. Additionally, these services, often including accounting and legalization of stay, are an answer to the anxiety resulting from the unfamili-

¹⁴ ASEAN-Development website: <http://e-development.gratka.pl/ofirmie/> (access on 10.10.2012).

arity with Polish law and its complexity, since the official matters and the contact with the clerks in Vietnam are different, less formalised. Therefore the Vietnamese living in Poland often use the services of persons and companies dealing with procedural matters such as work permits, permits to stay and contacts with the public authorities. The Vietnamese, often unfamiliar with the law, language and the way public authorities operate, hope that the persons or agencies they hire will not only have the required knowledge, but also additional possibilities or “contacts” which, for example, will translate into a favourable administrative decision. This situation is exploited by dishonest agencies and individuals, who focus only on earning profit and often promise completely unrealistic results when acting on behalf of the foreigners.

The fact that the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are “a small town” (W-28-IL), not merely a workplace, also results from the fact that they satisfy social needs of the community. The Vietnamese working in Wolka Kosowska not always have time for social life due to the intensive and long work days, therefore some of their needs outside their professional lives are satisfied during the work time. The days when the stores are not busy (for example Saturdays or during the holiday season) make socializing easier. The men then often spend time in restaurants and bistros, while the women working in the neighbouring stores meet in front of one of them and spend time talking, playing with children and performing practical chores, such as cleaning the fresh leaves of water spinach (W-16-PR). It sometimes happens that the Vietnamese play a game of Mahjong (a traditional Chinese game) in the alleys along the stores (W-2-PR). After a workday is finished or at the end of a workday if there are no customers, there are socializing meetings organized where the men working in Wolka Kosowska play cards (it is usually the warehouse employees, but sometimes also the accountants and the sales assistants). The meetings are held, for example, in the warehouse of the store and the cards are set on cardboard boxes. The stake is usually either small change or a meal in a nearby Vietnamese bistro. Games with higher stakes are played on days off work in private homes. They are usually accompanied by eating, drinking alcohol and karaoke (W-23-PR). Gambling games are also popular among the Vietnamese, including fruit machines located in trade centres buildings and restaurants. Some of them are available round the clock (the Chinese also gamble; in one of the casinos in Janki there is Chinese-speaking staff employed - W-24-PR).

Additionally, there are recreational institutions and facilities focusing on wealthier Vietnamese entrepreneurs developed. These are usually located outside the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. Some of them include tennis courts and golf clubs. Football is also popular among the Vietnamese - a Vietnamese league was organized including eight teams divided according to the provinces the players come from. The teams compete in annual tournaments, currently organized in Szczesliwice (W-29-Li). The Vietnamese children may also participate in meetings of a boys' football team in Warsaw. Such meetings of the Vietnamese may sometimes have an international character when, for example, international tennis tournaments or football tournaments with teams from various European countries are organized. A Vietnamese association organizes dance courses and karaoke competitions in neighbouring Raszyn and one of the Vietnamese entrepreneurs built a leisure centre in Lesznowola municipality. The centre includes a swimming pool, billiards and courts, where the Vietnamese play tennis or badminton (this sport is often practised in Vietnam, where the badminton courts are marked on the pavements – W-23-PR). A badminton court is also located in one of the new buildings in the complex. The spatial order where the private sphere merges with the professional life was transferred from the country of origin and is not unusual for the Vietnamese (the badminton court is located next to the post office and stores, above which there are accommodation facilities located).

The spiritual life is worth mentioning here as well. There are no places of worship located in Wolka Kosowska, but in a lot of the Vietnamese stores there are small, flower-decorated altars, where the Vietnamese light candles and incense sticks, make offerings (fruit, water, small gifts), which may be a token of spirituality rather than the expression of belonging to a particular religious denomination, similarly to the situation in Vietnam (W-38-Ek). According to some of the Vietnamese entrepreneurs, the presence of a small altar and making offerings to win Buddha's favour should ensure success in business. One of the Polish employees said: "The only god present here is money" (W-7-PR).

Sometimes in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska some people actively try to convince others to convert - one of the respondents mentioned a Polish Jehova's Witness talking to the Chinese (in Chinese) (W-2-PR). Some of the Vietnamese are engaged in religious associations of more or less open character, operating within a wider international network (W-38-Ek). The Vietnamese Catholics (according to one of the experts about 10% of the Vietnamese in Poland W-38-Ek) are gathered around the Fu Shenfu Migrant Centre in Warsaw cooperating with two Divine Word Missionaries from Vietnam. The two missionaries celebrate Saturday masses for about 120 persons in Wolka Kosowska¹⁵. The Centre also offers Polish lessons for the Chinese and the Vietnamese with classes organized in Wolka Kosowska. In Lazy, a town close to Wolka Kosowska, there is a Vietnamese Buddhist temple located. There are also plans to build a cultural centre for the Vietnamese there. The temple partially substitutes for the Vietnamese Cultural Centre which used to operate next to the 10th-Anniversary Stadium. It is an example of services following the foreigners, who are attracted by the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. Another example of such services is the editorial team of *Quê Việt* newspaper which, together with its publisher - the Association of Vietnamese in Poland, is currently headquartered in Wolka Kosowska. Some service points, such as restaurants, which used to operate at the premises of the 10th-Anniversary Stadium, have also moved to the researched trade centres (W-38-EK). There are also some less formalized associations of religious character operating in Warsaw, some of which require introduction by a person belonging to the particular group. Even though some of them were established by other nationalities, for example the Chinese, the Vietnamese and Poles are also their members (W-38-EK).

3.1.2. The influence of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska on the character of relations within the Vietnamese community

The migrant networks in which the Vietnamese working in Wolka Kosowska operate are characterized by a complex structure of internal relations. On the one hand, they may be perceived as a source of support in, among others, coming to Poland, finding a job, daily life in Wolka Kosowska. On the other hand, these networks may be perceived through the potential risk of exploitation or crime such as trafficking in human beings, exploiting employees or slavery. The mentioned cases, however, were not found during the study. Observing such occurrences is very difficult in practice and in principle their detection is carried out by the appropriate supervisory and law enforcement bodies. It also should be taken into account that the Vietnamese community is considerably closed, highly hierarchical and the functions of the migrant networks are usually ambiguous, so what at first may seem to be support could in fact be an element of exploitation. Therefore it cannot be ruled out that the mentioned phenomena are present in the migrant economic institution in Wolka Kosowska. Examples of such occurrences were also covered by the media¹⁶. The probability of these occurrences is increased due to some specific characteristics of the studied Vietnamese community.

¹⁵ The website of the Fu Shenfu Migrant Centre: www.migrant.pl (access on 28.12.2012).

¹⁶ E.g. M. Majewski, P. Reszka, *Niewolnicy znad Wisły [Slaves in Poland]*, „WPROST”, No. 39/2012 (1545).

Some of these are: interdependencies between the professional and private life (for example living in the trade centres' buildings, using the ethnic services available in Wolka Kosowska) or dependencies some of the employees are entangled in that intensify their vulnerability (for example not speaking Polish, irregular stay in Poland, lack of financial means to return to the country of origin, pressure, expectations of the family staying in the country of origin, debt due to the costs of coming to Poland).

The foundation of the social structure of the Vietnamese community is a broadly understood family (W-5-Ek, W-38-Ek, W-40-Ek). The Vietnamese entrepreneurs often employ their family members and relatives including a husband or a wife, as well as distant cousins. It results from the broad definition of family, which also includes distant relatives and the willingness to employ trusted persons. Children playing in the corridors or riding scooters¹⁷ are often found in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, when both parents are engaged in the entrepreneurial activities. This is clearly visible on Saturdays when schools are closed and during summer break. It results not only from difficulties in ensuring child care, but also from some customs present in Vietnam, where bringing a child to work place is not considered to be wrong (W-39-Ek). The family character of the Vietnamese companies causes that the family life is partially lived in the trade centres' buildings (eating meals together, playing with children in free time). It is also facilitated by a fairly long work day, especially in case of the persons, who need to perform certain activities beyond the centres' opening hours (e.g. inventory).

A frequent phenomenon observed is bringing to Poland other Vietnamese (usually directly from the country of origin) by persons who already live here and usually have already achieved some level of economic success. These persons are usually brought to Poland to work here. This concerns the family and relatives in the first place, then maybe some other persons from the same region (W-40-Ek). Apart from working in Wolka Kosowska, which "allows the owners to cease carrying the cardboard boxes" (W-29-Li), the newly arrived migrants may perform other duties such as child care (W-13-PR, W-39-Ek). It sometimes happens that the closest family members, especially the elderly, who were to help at home or take care of children, come back to Vietnam, because it is difficult for them to get used to the new place, where they often feel lonely, not needed when the younger generation is at work (W-39-Ek). The more distant relatives or non-related persons use the opportunity to return to Vietnam more rarely, because they feel indebted to the persons who helped them come to Poland. The feeling of indebtedness is caused by the fact that organizing the journey from Vietnam requires a lot of efforts. It comes down to either obtaining a visa, which is very difficult for a person living in Vietnam (W-29-Li, W-30-Li) or organizing/paying for the (partially) illegal travel through the borders and then organizing and possibly bearing the cost of the newly arrived migrant's stay in Poland. The Vietnamese bringing their fellow countrymen to Poland also act often as intermediaries in all the procedural matters in Poland, such as obtaining a work permit and residence permit for a defined period of time (W-9-PR). Due to the high costs of the activities enabling coming to and staying in Poland, the migrants from Vietnam have to work for the company owners to pay back their "debt".

It often results in the migrants becoming underprivileged - the Vietnamese brought to Poland from the country of origin are prone to exploitation if the costs of their travel and often the cost of stay are covered partially or in full by the intermediaries or the employers. Coming to Poland they rarely have any knowledge about the country. They usually have the information obtained from the Vietnamese who helped them come to Poland, so the infor-

¹⁷ A scooter is a popular mean of transport in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, as it allows to move fast around the building as well as carry heavy packages.

mation is not always correct and often it additionally is aimed at making the migrants dependent from the intermediary or the employer. The situation is further complicated by the lack of language knowledge and limited contacts, often limited even further by living with the employer (W-9-PR).

It is difficult to perceive the asymmetric relation between the employer and the employee brought from Vietnam only negatively or in the context of exploitation only. The persons brought to Poland often live in good conditions, for example with the employer. Regardless of the dependency from the employer also in the housing area, the employee may live in a higher standard than in the country of origin - have a separate room, access to various equipment. Usually the migrant's board, clothing, personal hygiene products and sometimes even higher education are provided for. Usually it takes relatively long (even a few years) for the employee to "pay back" the costs borne by the employer due to their arrival to Poland. When these costs are paid back, majority of the wages cover the cost of living (W-7-PR). If, however, the employee does receive some wages, they often send part of the wages to the family in Vietnam. The principles of paying back the "debt" and settlements are decided by the employer - the employees often do not have the knowledge or influence when exactly the costs of travel will be covered. Paying back the debt may require working away from the trade centres and may concern fulfilling some obligations after work. For example, an employee brought from Vietnam may be responsible for the preparation of meals, keeping the house neat or some maintenance and construction work in the employer's house. The reciprocity norm is deeply rooted in the Vietnamese perception of the world and it means that "debt" collection process is very characteristic - claiming what is yours is out of place. When a Polish employee works in overtime, they will usually claim their overtime wages. A Vietnamese employee considers this as something normal, because when there is little work or less customers the employer also pays the employee the wages, so the employee should sometimes work in overtime if there is a lot of work: "here, where the private and professional lives merge all these matters are dealt with delicately and harmoniously" (W-40-Ek).

According to one of the leaders of the migrant community the reciprocity norm works well, because if a Vietnamese entrepreneur employs a Pole, they have to remember that the Pole may always quit, while the Vietnamese who is indebted to the employer, has no such possibility - they have to keep working. Moreover "in the closed community (...) sanctions are more effective and painful. Any behaviour contrary to norms will be punished with exclusion from the community and therefore solitude in a foreign country. Poles are not bothered with these sanctions, so the employers find it more difficult to control them" (W-1-PR). The Vietnamese who found themselves in such a situation sometimes have the feeling of exploitation and at the same time the awareness how much they owe their employers. They also try not to disappoint the persons who helped them come to Poland and find a job, so they do not plan any activities which could change their situation. The reluctance to take any steps or the conviction they will be ineffective may also result from the irregular status of stay. When staying or working in Poland the migrants very rarely go outside the Vietnamese community and rather do not count on any support from the official institutions or the bodies of the host country or avoid contacting the officials for fear of consequences such as expulsion. One of the leaders of the migrant community claims that insubordination happens very rarely also because the persons who are brought to Poland are carefully chosen (W-29-LI). In case of disobedience a means of "taking the employee to task" is, among others, a threat to send them back to Vietnam, where the migrant may not want to return due to the lower standard of living or expectations of the family that stayed in the country of origin (W-11-PR). A similar pattern may be found in many stories of the migrants from Vietnam who work in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska (W-7-PR). Sometimes, unfortunately, this results in tragedies, when, for example, the excessive physical effort or exploitation by the

employer cause serious health problems. And it is worth remembering that the jobs low in the professional hierarchy in Wolka Kosowska are physically demanding anyway.

Complex networks of interdependencies and reciprocity do not only concern the employees at the lowest positions in the hierarchy. These may develop over time between the Vietnamese working in different positions of the hierarchy, according to the principle "the stronger the relation, the more commitments it brings" (W-40-Ek). An example of such a situation is when an employer requests a close employee, who works on a responsible position in their trade company, to live in their home and look after it when the employer is away. Even though this request goes beyond the professional duties, the employee may count on returning the favour after some time, sometimes in a form that goes beyond standard employer-employee relations. For example, the employee may receive the employer's old car when they decide to buy a new one (W-40-Ek). What is also important here is the consent for postponed gratification, which may take the form of assistance of the employer in opening a business for an employee who has worked for them long years for a minimum wage or a favour going beyond ordinary professional duties (W-40-Ek).

From this perspective the mutual commitments are not perceived negatively: "We feel (...) that they fulfil their function, they positively bring us closer (...). They know they have a large commitment. If I devoted my time and at some point I may ask them for something, but without such burden (...). It is a kind of debt, but you do not feel it really is debt" (W-40-Ek). The merger of the professional and private relations may also manifest itself in different areas such as eating meals together at the employer's home, spending time together during Polish festive seasons, spending time together during the holiday in Vietnam, participating in the employers family life - settling disputes, borrowing employer's equipment, using their facilities (W-22-PR).

Another example for the reciprocity norm are the family relations. In many worse off families the whole Vietnamese family decides which family member will receive education. This results in a situation when, contrary to the rest of the family, the person is released from majority of house chores or working on the land so that they have the time needed to study. The person is therefore aware that their education or an opportunity to receive higher education results from sacrifices made by many people and is a kind of investment. This makes them feel indebted to the rest of the family and causes, among others, the feeling of obligation to provide for the rest of the family and support it in different ways (W-39-Ek). A similar cultural norm is the feeling of obligation of the Vietnamese children receiving education in Poland towards their parents who sacrifice a lot so that the children could learn in and graduate from good schools.

As far as the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are concerned, the social relations in the Vietnamese community may be studied further than only within a company or a family, but also in terms of the ownership relations in the trade centres. The differences in this area were expressed in Wolka Kosowska by the protests of the (mostly) Vietnamese store lessees in July 2012. The protests were organized against the Vietnamese board of the ASG-PL Sp. z o.o. company. This was the first case when the representatives of the same nationality stood up against each other (in 2009 and 2011 the protests were organized against the Chinese company GD Poland Investments Sp. z o.o. - see point 3.2.2). The strike was an answer to the announced new terms of commercial space rental after the current agreements expired. The changes included raises in rent for the stores and the necessity to pay deposit again (the first was reportedly paid by the lessees 10 years earlier, when the Vietnamese company was building the centre)¹⁸. The assem-

¹⁸ Mazuś M., *Żle się dzieje w Wólce Kosowskiej. Co iskrzy między boksami* [Something is rotten in Wolka Kosowska. The friction between the stores], published on Polityka.pl website on 4.09.2009, <http://www.polityka.pl/kraj/analizy/1530081,2,zle-sie-dzieje->

bly of the Vietnamese lessees and some incidents, such as breaking glass, resulted in police intervention. To discourage the lessees from protesting, the board tried to attribute the protest to the political divisions in the Vietnamese community in Poland.

3.2. RELATIONS BETWEEN NATIONALITY GROUPS

3.2.1. Poles and foreigners

Poles constitute a significant employee group in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. They run businesses (rarely employing foreigners) and they work for both Polish and foreign companies. The relations between Poles and the foreigners involved in Wolka Kosowska may be perceived two-fold - in the perspective employer - employee and Polish employee - foreign employee.

The opinions expressed by the interviewed Poles employed in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska present a clear division into “us” and “them” when it comes to the relations with the foreigners working in the centres, especially in terms of employers. According to the interlocutors it results from a couple of reasons: (1) a language barrier (the Vietnamese and the Chinese often speak Polish poorly; the foreigners working for the company communicate in their native tongue, which gives the Polish employees a feeling of exclusion and sometimes even reactions such as “when in Poland, speak Polish”); (2) perception of the foreign nationality groups in Wolka Kosowska as hermetic groups that stick together; (3) cultural and other differences (religious, in terms of outlook or even culinary), which cause behaviours that are often incomprehensible for the Polish employees (such as e.g. burning a considerable amount of money for sacrificial reasons); (4) feeling of maltreatment or even exploitation by the employers (low wages, lack of employment contracts).

Even though all these reasons occur in daily interactions, the last one plays a particularly significant role in the opinion of Poles employed by foreigners. The employees even caution the potential and new Polish employees against the Vietnamese employers - against their meanness, “exploitation”, “profit only” focus, looking down on employees, rarely giving specific examples of these at the same time. Some claim that even though the employers seem nice and amiable, after getting to know them better they turn out to be “hypocritical exploiters focused only on earning money”, who pay little (W-6-PR). Contemptuous and dismissive attitude towards the foreign employers and more generally towards all the foreigners gathered around the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska is widespread. The persons of Asian origin are often referred to as the “yellow plague” and the Turkish and Pakistani traders are referred to as the “slobs” (W-8-PR, W-9-PR). What is interesting, the offensive statements are also heard from Polish employees who do not complain about their working conditions and sometimes even claim their relations with the employers are good (W-9-PR). The Polish employees do not even try to hide their attitude: “the way the employees refer to their employers, insults, seeing that the employer does not understand it anyway, conversations about them in the corridor in front of the store, laughing at them, sneering at them, I think it does not work right both ways” (W-31-SL). Even if the relations between the Polish employees and the foreign employers are correct in the professional sphere, in the opinions of Poles the Vietnamese entrepreneurs spend majority of time with their family (be it at work or at home) and an average foreign lessee is not interested in new relations. One of the migrants professionally involved in the

[w-wolce-kosowskiej.read](http://m.wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,117915,12186371,Spor_o_ceny_po_wietnamsku_Jestesmy_tu_od_10_lat_.html), (access on 10.11.2012), Bobociński F., *Spór o ceny po wietnamsku. 'Jesteśmy tu od 10 lat'* [Dispute over prices in Vietnamese. 'We have been here 10 years'], daily newspaper Gazeta from 24.07.2012, http://m.wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,117915,12186371,Spor_o_ceny_po_wietnamsku_Jestesmy_tu_od_10_lat_.html (access on 10.11.2012).

trade centres in Wolka Kosowska also noticed that Poles have a positive attitude towards the foreigners, only if they have something to gain (W-20-PR).

At the same time it turns out that the relations between the Polish employees and migrant employers are complex and may take different forms. Some of these may be found correct, especially when the relations are limited to courteous, but minimum contacts at work, the employers allowing to take breaks, sometimes even treating them to their lunch (W-7-PR, W-9-PR). When seeking employees the foreign employers usually have positive attitude towards Poles seeking work and address them politely (e.g. W-3-PR-1, W-3-PR-2, W-6-PR). In others, rather seldom cases, the contacts between the Polish employees and the foreign employers go beyond professional relations: "my boss, who is Vietnamese employs Poles and they get along very well, they laugh, joke, have dinners together, invite each other to their homes" (W-31-SL). In such cases the long-term employees, including Poles, are invited for events such as a reception organized for the customers (W-23-PR). However, there are situations when "Poles are treated by some in a scornful way, like <<wash my glass, because I do not feel like doing it, throw away my rubbish>>" (W-31-SL). It seems, however, that in the cases it happens there must be some important reasons (such as a satisfactory wage) why the Poles do not quit working for the foreign employers, even though employment with others is quite easily available.

The Vietnamese may also have a negative opinion about Polish employees. "They perceive the Polish employees as lazy, in fact only capable of performing work which is rather not demanding mentally, like selling and direct contacts. Of course accounting is provided by Poles very often, the knowledge of Polish laws... But only a Vietnamese will be a manager, not a Pole" (W-40-Ek). They complain about finding "reasonable" employees (W-20-PR). Employing the Vietnamese more eagerly for the higher positions may result from the willingness to work with a person from their own culture, who will agree to some, not always legal, activities more easily (for example when it comes to accounting), but also the lack of trust towards Poles. The employers also mention high turnover of the Polish employees, who often treat employment in Wolka Kosowska as temporary and abandon their jobs. The turnover and abandonment are not surprising when one takes into account the negative opinions about the working conditions heard numerous times from Polish employees. The decision about job abandonment is facilitated by the lack of formalized employment relationship - when an agreement is not in place the employees are not afraid of negative formal consequences from the employer. The only important matter for the employee in such situations is to receive their wage.

The employers may fear the dishonest intentions of the Polish employees, which may influence their attitude towards this group (though theft is encountered not only among Polish employees, which one may read about in a Chinese forum - W-24-PR). Stealing goods and money committed by the employees in Wolka Kosowska (but also by customers) is the most widespread offence the local police have to tackle. These occurrences are so often, that the administration of one of the companies warns the lessees against it (in a form of an advertisement), even mentioning "increased interest [in the centre] of criminal groups".

The opinions of the foreigners about dishonest Polish employees who may be potential offenders (whether confirmed or not) may hinder strengthening the relations between these two groups, cause limited trust and partially justify the offered working conditions, according to which the employment relationship is not formalized with an employee (regardless of their nationality). Long-term employment and a declaration of further cooperation may constitute in the opinion of the employer, however, a confirmation that the employee is also seeking stability and treats the job seriously, so an employment contact may be signed. Some of the better off Vietnamese fear the outbursts of envy

from those Poles, who were not as successful in economic terms as them. Therefore at work they hide or resign from the symbols of wealth they could afford, such as good cars. However, the cultural experts observe that there have been a lot of changes and some of the foreigners are not afraid any longer to present their wealth and emphasize they earned it by hard work .

As far as the relations between the employees are concerned, the foreigners, especially from Asia, are perceived by many Poles as a hermetic group. Even though there are cases of positive relations and in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska one can observe Poles and the Vietnamese comfortably communicating, laughing, such contacts are usually quite superficial. One of the respondents summarised “there is clear division, the Polish employees stick together and defend each other and there are the Vietnamese who stick together. Everyone sees it” (W-33-Mi). The conversation topics may be suggested or limited by foreigners, who are unwilling to talk about the relations with other Vietnamese or their legal status and situation in Poland. An attempt to talk about the matters perceived as inconvenient or finding oneself in a situation requiring speaking Polish (for example when contacted by the representatives of official bodies) may cause silence, change of topic or sudden deterioration of language competencies of some foreigners (e.g. W-21-PR).

Even though the foreigners of Asian origin, especially the Vietnamese, are perceived as a hermetic group, in majority of cases the Poles do not declare willingness to strengthen the relations and go beyond professional contacts - this concerns both the relations with foreign employers and employees (among others W-7-PR, W-12-PR): “the Polish female employees would rather stick together than in a more mixed Polish-Vietnamese group. I do not know what the reason is, but they do not want to go, sort of, beyond their Polish group, even when invited, they do not go, even though they were invited. Sometimes they would go, but more often - reluctantly” (W-31-SL).

3.2.2. Vietnamese-Chinese relations

The number of the Chinese and the Vietnamese registered¹⁹ in Lesznowola municipality significantly increased in the last few years. When it comes to the Vietnamese community it may be expected that these are the persons who had already been present in Poland and probably were involved in trading in goods (for example at the 10th-Anniversary Stadium) and only changed their place of registration to Wolka Kosowska. In case of the Chinese, however, these are probably migrants who have recently come to Poland. The increasing trend in the number of Chinese in Poland is also visible in the more general statistics on the number of the residence permits for a defined period of time in, among others, the Masovian province. Even though the respondents claim, that in majority of cases the nationalities represented in the trade centres live peacefully, the topic of strained relations between these two groups is often mentioned both by Poles and foreigners.

Even though the relations of these two groups are influenced by a political contexts (the Chinese twice occupied the Vietnam's territory and once for over 1 000 years), the more probable explanation lies in the economic background. There are trade centres managed by boards of both nationalities in Wolka Kosowska – the Chinese (GD) and the Vietnamese (ASEANPL, ASEANU, ASG-PL). Both groups have been present in Wolka Kosowska for a long time, but the Chinese should be acknowledged as the investors who initiated the process of building the trade centres in this location and opened the first centre (Chinese Trade Centre), which is still the largest one with majority of lessees of Vietnamese origin.

¹⁹ In Poland both Polish citizens as well as foreigners are obliged to register their stay at the respective municipality office.

The relations between the Chinese owners and the Vietnamese lessees (even though there are now more nationalities present among the lessees) several became a reason for a dispute. Some of them occurred in 2009 and 2011 when the Vietnamese initiated protests in the buildings owned by the Chinese investors, which was later covered by local and national media. In both cases the dispute was over raises in rent. According to the information from the media coverage of the protests, the Chinese owners of the buildings were presented as fraudsters (overstating the stores' surface, which caused higher rent costs), unwilling to negotiate or even as "the oligarchs of Wolka Kosowska". Following the protests the Vietnamese and the Chinese negotiated and the former managed to negotiate quite favourable terms of lease.

Apart from the protests, the contacts between the lessees and the boards are minimized and mainly come down to financial transactions, such as settling the rent for the premises. This is usually taken care of by the lessees (the employers), who do not want to entrust the employees with this duty, whereas the persons employed in the individual stores are responsible for contacting the building owners for administrative and maintenance matters (such as reporting faults) (W-13-PR). It may be expected that if there are no further raises in rent or any other changes to the agreements, the Vietnamese-Chinese conflict will not escalate in this area.

The economic interdependencies include not only the ownership relations, but also the distribution channels of the goods sold in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. Majority of these are produced in China. The Chinese staying in Poland often directly contact the factories and import the goods with no intermediaries involved, which is usually the case of the Vietnamese. The latter usually have to buy the goods in Wolka Kosowska or import them from Germany, where the containers imported from China by sea are unloaded (e.g. W-6-PR). The control over the distribution channels means that the Chinese may often dictate terms, though it sometimes happens that the prices of the goods imported and sold in Poland are lower, than if they were purchased directly in China (W-30-Li). In some cases the Vietnamese import the goods directly, but often successfully conceal this fact (which is possible because the goods produced in China usually look alike). Revealing the truth would result in the Chinese understating the prices to eliminate the competition, so the entrepreneurs are afraid of "spying" by other entrepreneurs (W-8-PR). In the longer perspective it should not be expected that the Vietnamese will find a solution to the problem and will become even more dependent from the Chinese. At the same time it is worth mentioning that the Chinese are also dependent from the Vietnamese, who most often sell the goods distributed by them: "It depends what the size of your business is, how large your store is, if you sell a lot, then you are over them [the Chinese] and they need to listen to you, but if your store is small and you sell little, then you are below them, so they automatically dictate terms of cooperation" (W-33-Mi).

The dimensions of the Vietnamese-Chinese relations described above are not always perceivable in daily contacts between both groups. Some situations were observed when the Chinese and the Vietnamese talked to one another friendly, joked (W-2-PR) and there were also seldom cases of cooperation observed. In the above cases the communication between these groups was mostly in Polish (W-39-Ek, W-40-Ek). Sometimes events such as weddings are organized with both the Chinese and the Vietnamese invited, however, from time to time these are organized for both groups separately (W-38-Ek).

Regardless of the evidence showing that the individual contacts between the Vietnamese and the Chinese are positive, it may be expected that the conflict on economic grounds will maintain to exist. The persons observing the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska expect that the Chinese will continue strengthening at the cost of the Vietnamese.

The success of the Chinese in business results not only from the capital they own, but also the fact that their community is relatively little and divided when compared to the Vietnamese. Among the Vietnamese everyone “works for their own benefit, every store. Certainly there may be some family ties involved, but in business everyone is competition for the rest” (W-31-SL). As one of the respondents summarized: “The Chinese are united and speak with one voice (...) the Vietnamese compete between each other” (W-30-Li).

3.2.3. The relations with the customers

The customers of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska include Poles and foreigners living in Poland or in other countries, in majority of cases countries east of Poland (such as Belarus, Ukraine Lithuania, Latvia, as well as Slovakia and Romania). The latter group constitutes an important part of customers who come to Wolka Kosowska to purchase goods in bulk (W-11-PR). Majority of the goods are purchased in direct transactions, though some companies enable buying them online (among others the website www.wolkacentrum.pl managed by ASIAPOLO IMP.– EXP. FHU [trade and services]) from companies or at trade portals.

The nationality does not play an important role in the contacts with the customers, at least in the declarations of the entrepreneurs. One of the respondents noticed that only when they may choose whether to do business with a foreigner or their fellow countryman and the offer is similar, they will choose the latter (W-20-PR). There may be some strategies observed in the relations with customers - regardless of the lack of solvency or possible indebtedness, the Vietnamese entrepreneurs support their clients to help them survive the crisis. They see their close interdependency from the customers, often Poles. -the number of orders depends on whether the company survives. The owners of the Vietnamese companies are willing to hand over the goods with no payment and no documents covering the transaction to avoid the bankruptcy of the Polish company (in which case recovering the debt may prove impossible – W-22-PR). Such conduct may result from, among others, the abovementioned reciprocity norm, according to which the Vietnamese often perceive the relations as exchange of favours with a long term of “debt repayment” (see also 3.1.2.).

The customer's purchasing power is often more important for the seller than the nationality. The observation proved that the employers/persons responsible for sales differentiate at least two categories of buyers, whom they address differently: regular customers (mainly owners of networks of shops and numerous retail points) and “occasional” customers - small-scale traders, selling the goods individually in market stands, mainly at weekends. The returning customers and large-scale customers are treated in a special way - they are offered tea/coffee, courteous conversations take place and, above all, they are offered the best quality goods, which only seemingly (model, cut) may resemble lower quality goods from other factories. Some of the foreign entrepreneurs organize receptions for the regular customers (W-23-PR). The contacts of the foreign owners of the companies with some of the customers go beyond the professional relations.

3.2.4. The language matters

One of the most obvious and perceivable areas aspect of communication between different nationalities is the language. The public sphere of the centres is dominated by Vietnamese, Polish and Chinese languages. Foreign-language billboards are visible (Vietnamese by far) near Wolka and they become more frequent when approaching Wolka Kosowska from Warsaw's direction. They refer to particular centres, inform about service points (such as restaurants)

or real property investments. There are signs, notices and advertisements in different languages in the trade centres, including some in Polish.

Although many foreigners involved in Wolka Kosowska speak Polish very well, some, regardless of their couple-of-years long stay, cannot communicate in this language (W-35-Mi) or their competencies in terms of the language are limited (W-6-PR). Low motivation of the foreigners employed in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska to learn Polish has a number of reasons (in the study these were observed among the Vietnamese and Chinese working in Wolka Kosowska). Above all, even though the communication with clients (but sometimes also between the representatives of different nationalities such as the Chinese and the Vietnamese) is in Polish, this is a specific, characteristic commercial slang encompassing a limited number of words and expressions. It is caused by the fact that the conversations with the customers usually have similar topics - the characteristics of the goods or the production process (W-34-Mi). The slang is based on words that are not declined or conjugated. The Polish employees take over this style of communication to communicate with their Vietnamese employers more effectively, though there are situations when the Polish employees working in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska learn Vietnamese (at least to a minimum degree) and speak this language when talking to their bosses (W-39-Ek). Situations when the Vietnamese took the effort to learn Chinese were also heard of. However, this concerned the better off persons, who run their businesses (W-38-Ek) and perceive learning Chinese as a chance for widening scale of business opportunities.

In daily situations the necessity to speak Polish may be reduced by, among others, shopping in a self-service shop, showing a picture of the sought product in the mobile phone (W-19-PR), asking a Polish employee for assistance in shopping, or using ethnic services offered by persons of the same nationality. The motivation to learn Polish is also lowered by the fact that (for majority of the nationalities) the work in Wolka Kosowska gives the opportunity to daily contact persons communicating in the same language. Some of the respondents remembered their studies in Poland as the moment when they quickly acquired Polish, contacted Poles whereas working in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska does not create such opportunities. The foreigners may also be discouraged to learn Polish due to the necessity to pay for course or individual tuition (though the free of charge courses organized by one of the Vietnamese organizations were not popular) or because they do not treat Poland as their permanent place of residence. Another possible barrier may be the time limitations - a long, hard working day in the trade centres may deprive the foreigner of the willingness and motivation to use their little free time for activities such as learning Polish. At the same time it is worth mentioning that some of the respondents, such as the representatives of the local authorities, said that the lack of knowledge of Polish by the foreigners in some cases is false, because the foreigners themselves choose situations when they speak Polish and the topics they want to mention in a conversation (W-21-PR).

As far as the foreigners are concerned, especially in terms of the Vietnamese whose community has been present in Poland for few dozen years, there are two categories of persons worth mentioning in the context of language knowledge. The first are children who attend Polish schools and the other - the representatives of the second generation of the Vietnamese in Poland, who very often have followed the whole education process in Poland, including university-level education. Usually these are bilinguals, sometimes Polish is even their first language (there are cases when Vietnamese siblings communicate in Polish, often in the presence of their Vietnamese parents - W-2-PR, W-39-Ek, W-34-Mi). They turn this fact into a valuable competence not only in trade, but also in other areas of economic activity in Wolka Kosowska, such as intermediary agencies or translation agencies.

In relations with different nationalities the Vietnamese or the Chinese decide to sometimes use Polish names or nicknames (e.g. W-40-Ek). They may be recorded in the documents or may be only used in daily contacts. In case of the latter, simple, not necessarily Polish names, are gaining on popularity, such as English Cathy, Mimi or Sisi. The Vietnamese also sometimes have universal, easy to pronounce in different languages names such as Maximilian - Max. The resignation from the original name in the own language may have a few reasons. Above all, it facilitates the contacts with Poles - to enable the pronunciation and avoid constantly hearing someone's mispronounced name, which in turn may cause awkwardness. For example in Vietnamese the word "Long" means a dragon, but pronounced by a Pole as "Lon" becomes a pig. Moreover some of the Vietnamese names may have negative connotations in Polish - this may concern both the written representation of the word such as "Huy" (phonetically [Hfi]) and pronunciation [Zjeb] (in writing Diep). Sometimes Poles (for example co-workers) give a foreigner a Polish name to make the contact easier and the foreigner agrees to it (W-36-Mi).

Another interesting linguistic phenomenon noticed in the research is the fact that some of the Vietnamese and the Chinese also use other European languages of their previous countries of stay. Therefore it sometimes happens that the local police, for example, use the services of a Czech interpreter, who talks to the Vietnamese possessing Czech residence permits and currently living in Wolka (W-28-IL). Another situation connected with language communication within the same nationality group is when for example a Chinese, who comes from a province where Cantonese is spoken, talks to a person coming from a part of China where Mandarin is spoken (majority of China), in which case they both communicate using gestures (due to the differences in the spoken language, as the written representation is similar and enables communication) (W-35-Mi).

4. THE INFLUENCE OF THE TRADE CENTRES IN WOLKA KOSOWSKA ON THE SURROUNDINGS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The trade centres in Wolka Kosowska constitute an important workplace for foreigners and Poles living within a few dozen kilometres from the centres. The influence of this institution may, however, be analysed not only in terms of the workplaces available, but also from the point of view of the whole municipality, the relations with the local authorities and in terms of the relations in the local community (understood as the persons living in Lesznowola municipality and the neighbouring areas and the institutions present in the area).

4.1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCHED INSTITUTION AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES TOWARDS IT

The respondents who know the history of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska underline that the authorities played an important role in attracting foreign capital into the municipality by acting pro-actively. Currently, the representatives of the local authorities see two main areas of activities facilitating development. The first of the areas is planning. The local area development plans currently cover about 98,5% of Lesznowola municipality (Warsaw's local area plans cover about 30% of the territory²⁰). The second area is investing in infrastructure - water supply systems, sewage system and road infrastructure. On top of that the municipality offers quite low local tax rates. All the above activities coupled with the stability of the local authorities (the mayor of the municipality is holding the office for fourth term)

²⁰ The Public Information Bulletin of the City of Warsaw: http://bip.warszawa.pl/Menu_podmiotowe/Urzed/Biura_Urzedu/AM/Ogloszenia/WPM_plany_obowiazujace.htm (access on 15.12.2012).

certainly facilitate its thriving development. However, when discussing this point of view it cannot be understated how important the first investment in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska was. The investment was made by the Chinese company GD Poland and later it attracted following entrepreneurs and new undertakings. In 2010 there were about 4 500 business entities registered in the Register of Business Activity in Lesznowola municipality (W-25-WL). In this respect at least additional 1 300 commercial law companies with foreign capital should be taken into account²¹. When compared with the size of the municipality (about 20 000 registered inhabitants) and the fact that this is a rural municipality, the numbers prove the relatively large scale of the business activity in Lesznowola.

Operations of the Chinese, Vietnamese and Turkish companies - mainly the owners of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska - guaranteed Lesznowola municipality proceeds of about 5,6 million zloty in 2011, which constituted about 5% of its budget (W-18-PR). The proceeds are mainly from the property tax - an important source of the municipality's income in the last 10 years (W-18-PR). The corporate tax proceeds in the whole of the municipality amount to about 3 million zloty annually. It is unknown, however, what share of the above results from the operations in Wolka Kosowska. Even though the percentage of the budget proceeds tied to the foreign companies operating in Wolka Kosowska does not seem high, the representatives of the local authorities emphasize that there are also other consequences important for the development of the municipality such as indirect proceeds (some of buildings - warehouses or real estate for example - are rented from Poles and the increase in their income increases the personal income tax proceeds) or development of complementary services. Attention should also be brought to the cooperation of the Lesznowola Municipality Office with the companies operating the trade centres. The cooperation allowed, among others, to widen the access road to the centres and modernize the community hall (W-25-WL). Additionally GD Poland and EACC companies are the main sponsors of the GD Dance Show tournament, which is the nationwide Mayor's Cup in ballroom dancing.

As a response to the presence of foreign entrepreneurs in the municipality, the authorities decided to prepare the clerks for working with customers speaking foreign languages by providing them with an opportunity to participate in English classes²². There is no data to confirm how much English is useful for the contacts with the foreign customers in the municipality, but according to the statistics the foreigners present are mainly of Vietnamese and Chinese origin. It is known, however, that regardless of the courses the employees of the offices still encounter communication difficulties. Partially these are connected to the language barrier, but they also result from the foreigners' lack of knowledge of Polish law and principles in the offices and the lack of preparation of the office employees to work with foreign customers, who often experience different issues than their Polish counterparts. Representatives of some of the institutions also mentioned cooperation with a psychologist who explained the employees the behaviours of some of the foreigners, such as avoiding eye contact (W-21-PR), however during the study no other activities which would facilitate the contacts between the foreigners and the local authorities were mentioned. These could include, for example, preparing information in the languages most often spoken in Wolka Kosowska about the most common issues the offices deal with.

The migrant interlocutors who cooperate with the clerks in Wolka Kosowska notice their positive attitude: "you can, for example, feel that in all the offices in the neighbourhood they treat the Vietnamese well and when you

²¹ M. Górski and others., *Strategia rozwoju gminy Lesznowola do 2021 roku (aktualizacja) [The development strategy of Lesznowola municipality by 2021 (updated)]*, Fundacja Promocji Gmin Polskich, Bałtycki Instytut Gmin, Lesznowola 2011, p. 74.

²² Delivered as a part of the project "A foreign language as a chance to increase the qualifications of the local authorities' employees in Lesznowola municipality" realized in 2007-2008 from the funds of the European Social Fund.

go there to arrange for some official matters they are aware how much they benefit from this Wolka, from the taxes" (W-39-Ek). According however to some of the foreigners the local authorities' activities regarding the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska could be intensified: "We would like the municipality to help more, so that the pavements and roads are better, because the traffic is heavy here and the roads are in fact local" (W-20-PR). In opinion of one of the leaders of the migrant community the local authorities may in fact provide them with a bare minimum, because the foreigners in the municipality are entrepreneurial: "one may say: the situation is, that out of a sudden there are strangers staying in our home, who are coping on their own, it is like having a guest we do not need to worry about - give him the bare minimum and he will take care of the rest" (W-30-Li). The Polish migrant policies are far more criticized due to, among others, restrictive visa policies, not using the economic potential linked to the presence of foreigners, rather hindering than facilitating economic activities of foreigners (among others W-30-Li).

4.2. THE RELATIONS OF THE FOREIGNERS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The relations between Poles and foreigners go beyond the relations in the trade centres alone. The first contacts had place when the GD company was seeking land for the investment - all the territory the companies currently own was purchased from private owners. It significantly improved the financial status of many Poles (W-25-PR, W-30-Li, W-39-Ek) - "some of them overnight turned into sheiks selling oil" (W-20-PR). The foreigners working in the trade centres have also become part of the local community by deciding to live in Wolka Kosowska itself (also in the trade centres' buildings) and in the surrounding towns (such as Piaseczno, Raszyn, Mysiadlo). These localizations were chosen due to the proximity to the workplace. This fact not only increases the frequency Poles contact the foreigners, but also, according to one of the respondents, makes them change the way they think: "I think that we now have to start thinking <<we>> and not <<them>>, because if I am here, then it is together, not for him, but for all of us" (W-30-Li).

The analysis of the statistics on the number of registered inhabitants in Lesznowola municipality indicates an increasing trend in the number of foreigners living in Lesznowola. The data shows that foreigners move to live in Lesznowola, which shows that the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are a significant factor attracting foreigners. In the end of 2000 there were 8 inhabitants having Chinese and 1 inhabitant having Vietnamese citizenship registered for residence in Lesznowola municipality. In 2005 these numbers were 38 and 21 accordingly. At the end of 2012 the three groups of foreigners most widely represented among the registered foreigners were the Chinese (871 registered), the Vietnamese (525 registered) and Ukrainians (143 registered)²³. The increase in the number of registered inhabitants may partially be linked to the close of the market at the 10th-Anniversary Stadium in 2007. The stadium was a workplace for many foreigners and many of them lived in its neighbourhood. However, it should be remembered that the above mentioned statistics do not fully represent the reality for two main reasons. Firstly, the actual place of residence not always coincides with the registration address²⁴ and secondly some of the foreigners lack residence permits which prevents them from registering for residence²⁵.

²³ Data obtained from the Lesznowola Municipality Office. Status at the end of October 2012.

²⁴ According to the estimates of the local authorities about 30% of the inhabitants of the municipality are not registered (see Górski M., J. Barchański, R. Wotosławski, J. Barchańska, K. Górka (2011), *Strategia rozwoju gminy Lesznowola do 2021 roku (aktualizacja)* [The development strategy of Lesznowola municipality by 2021 (updated)]. Lesznowola: Fundacja Promocji Gmin Polskich, Bałtycki Instytut Gmin, Wójt i Rada Gminy Lesznowola, p. 23).

²⁵ The above mentioned problems are described in many social studies dedicated to the foreign communities, especially in terms of communities spatially organized around migrant economic institutions.

Majority of the foreigners living in the area rent rooms or flats. Usually flats are shared by a few persons of the same nationality. Sometimes it happens that groups of 10–15 people rent whole houses (W–9–PR, W–31–SL). Some of the foreigners live with the persons who brought them to Poland to employ them in their companies (see 3.1.2.). Some of the foreigners decide to purchase real property, which may reflect their plans of a long-term stay in Poland (W–30–Li). The latter concerns the more affluent foreigners, because even though non-Polish citizens may obtain credit, it is still less available than in the case of Poles. Therefore the foreigners often make a large contribution in cash to complement the credit (W–19–PR).

Poles rather do not object to renting flats to foreigners. When it comes to the Vietnamese, according to one of the respondents, it is partially because they usually pay regularly and rent the flats long-term (W–30–Li). Some Poles also do not see any problems with multicultural neighbourhood. They sometimes even notice the benefits of the situation: “at this village meeting, one of the young inhabitants said during the break: <<And I like it here, I am really glad to live here, my son and a Vietnamese boy sit at the same desk at school. Where else would it be possible?>>” (W–25–WL). Some respondents think that Poles living nearby Wolka Kosowska became more open and tolerant (W–39–Ek).

There are, however, less positive opinions about the closeness of foreigners, which is why some inhabitants consider moving away: “(...) People in general are not disturbed by such trade centres. Trading from dawn to dusk, cars, untidiness, throwing away the cardboard boxes and rubbish, they have different sensitivity about this. But there were two persons who wanted to move, because they do not like the smells, they cook differently, everything is happening outdoors, in the backyard. But these are rather individual complaints” (W–18–PR). Some Poles even wonder whether they should move to places, where there are numerous foreigners present, they worry that there will be “the Asians and me on my own” (W–5–Ek).

The place of residence results from the socio-financial status of a foreigner. The worse off foreigners working in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska (probably in the lower positions) live in hotels for employees, rented rooms or small flats located in the buildings of the trade centres complex or nearby. A lot of these buildings include accommodation facilities in the first floor, while the ground floor serves as a commercial space. One of the representatives of the local authorities estimates that there are about 40 hotels for employees nearby Wolka (W–18–PR).

The real property market near Wolka Kosowska is also an additional area of activity for the companies managing the trade centres. This concerns not only building residential space for the low-level employees, but also, if not above all, the more affluent entrepreneurs who would like to live in a higher standard. The flats are offered to everyone, not only the foreigners working in Wolka Kosowska. An example of such an investment is the Osiedle Park Agat residential area in Wolka Kosowska built by the EACC Group (also involved in building the Rezydencje “Walendia” - residential area in Walendow near Lazy). The latter is a residential area of about 200 terraced houses (minimum surface of 120 square metres), located on a territory of about 12 hectares with a park, playground, two ponds and sports courts²⁶. However, one of the leaders of the migrant community remarked that the investment was not successful: “would affluent people move into and live in a shopping centre? The people who are involved in trading. The rich prefer to live in the suburbs. (...) And the poor cannot afford a house, so this is an ill-advised investment” (W–30–Li). Currently about 90% of the houses were sold, ¼ of which were purchased by foreigners, mainly the Chinese (W–19–PR). When purchasing a house in Park Agat the foreigner may only buy the building itself, as it is difficult for a foreign-

²⁶ The website of the PARK AGAT residential area: <http://www.parkagat.pl/oferta.html> (access on 01.12.2012).

er to be permitted to buy land (W-21-PR). Poles bought the offered houses at the beginning, but some of them are now dissatisfied. They mainly complain about the trade centres and other service providing undertakings in the neighbourhood.

The accommodation facilities currently missing, which cannot be substituted by hotels for employees and exclusive residential areas already existing, are small and medium flats up to 50 square metres. The exclusive residential areas cannot be considered their substitutes (W-30-Li). It seems that this gap may be bridged by the Global City undertaking. There will be one- and two-bedroom flats available in the complex, as well as commercial area, which may be purchased to create the feeling that you have "a place of your own"²⁷. The Global City complex is built near Krakowska Avenue in Marysin, about 500 metres away from Nadrzeczna road in Wolka Kosowska, where, among others, the GD and ASEANU trade centres are localized²⁸.

Even though the statistics indicate growing interest of the foreigners working in Wolka Kosowska to live in Lesznowola municipality, a lot of them continue to commute from Warsaw (for example from Ochota - a district in the south with convenient access to Wolka Kosowska, especially from its Szczesliwice part²⁹), where there are whole residential areas inhabited by the representatives of Asian community. It may also be expected that some of the Vietnamese remain to live in the places chosen at the time of working at the 10th-Anniversary Stadium, for example in the residential area Osiedle za Zelazna Brama [Behind the iron curtain]. Living in the same area as the family members or acquaintances may be justified socially and practically. It allows, for example, to take care of children or collect them from school (W-39-Ek). Living in Warsaw may also be connected with the willingness to ensure the children have access to the best schools (W-39-Ek). Foreigners of differentiated material status live in Warsaw - both the affluent and the worse off, who use the public transport to reach Wolka Kosowska. The study did not note any the foreigners commuting to trade centres in Wolka Kosowska from towns farther away, which is the case for the Polish employees.

Apart from the neighbourhood, Poles and foreigners also meet in the educational institutions near Wolka Kosowska. The foreign children, in majority from Vietnam and China, but also from Bulgaria, whose parents work in Wolka Kosowska attend public schools in, among others, Nowa Iwiczna, Mrokow, Lazy (W-25-WL). In some of the schools the foreign pupils appeared only a few years ago. Currently in one of the schools in Lesznowola municipality among 500 pupils there are 30 foreigners and 16 mixed nationalities children (W-20-PR). The children also go to kindergartens, though it now occurs more rarely than it used to, which is most probably connected with the opening of a private kindergarten mainly for foreign children. A lot of children, especially of Vietnamese and Chinese origin attend private schools, which may result from the fact that the education is perceived to have a significant value in these communities (W-30-Li, W-8-PR, W-39-Ek). The Vietnamese often invest significant sums for educating children and deciding to send them to private schools, including schools with English as the language of instruction. Moreover, the parents make sure the children focus on learning. They worry that their children will learn bad habits by maintaining too close relations with the Polish pupils (the Vietnamese parents perceive Polish pupils as dressing inappropriately, smoking, drinking alcohol, taking drugs and "partying" - W-40-Ek). Focusing on the education of the children is an

²⁷ The website of GLOBAL CITY: www.globalcity.com.pl/(access on 21.12.2012).

²⁸ The website of GLOBAL CITY: http://www.globalcity.com.pl/?page_id=10 (access on 21.12.2012).

²⁹ Szczesliwice as the place of residence of the Vietnamese was the subject of research such as the ethnic neighbourhoods and social ties research, realized in the framework of an international GEITONIES project, see Górny A., S. Toruńczyk-Ruiz (2011), *Integration of migrants from the perspective of social ties and neighbour relations*, "CMR Working Paper" No 48(106), Warsaw. This part of the city was also mentioned as a place of residence of the Vietnamese in the paper on the spatial concentration of the migrants from Ukraine and Vietnam in the Warsaw metropolis - see Grzymała-Kazłowska, Piekut (2007).

investment for future, which may show the plans of the foreigners working in Wolka Kosowska. Even though the parents do not plan leaving the country, they assume that their children, having graduated from schools and speaking foreign languages, will continue education at good universities and will go to countries such as the United States or Great Britain, or will start their universities there, which may give the parents an opportunity to join their children later on (W-40-Ek). Some of the young Vietnamese of the second generation living in Poland are also planning to leave Poland, because they are convinced it is unlikely they will find a job in the labour market other than in the ethnic niche, including trade, even having graduated in useful fields of study (W-39-Ek, W-40-Ek). Sometimes there are situations when a child is sent to the country of origin, such as Vietnam or China, before they start formal education and where they are taken care of by other family members while their parents stay in Poland (W-26-IL). Some of the children are left behind in the country of origin and it is assumed that the parents will return to them after reaching a certain level of earnings (W-29-Ek).

Majority of the respondents underline that the foreign children, especially the Vietnamese, get along with Polish children well, are successful at school and disciplined (W-25-WL, W-26-IL, W-32-IL, W-34-Mi, W-20-PR). It is worth mentioning, however, that these opinions are often based on a positive stereotype, which may be a burden for the children. The good results of the Vietnamese pupils do not stem from specific qualities, but hard work which they are often motivated to or even forced to with corporal punishment by the parents (W-40-Ek). One of the difficulties for the public school employees accepting foreign children is the knowledge of Polish, both of children and the parents. Lack of the language skills hinders not only the educational process, but also the contacts between the teaching staff and the parents, who sometimes come to school with interpreters (W-20-PR). Since the foreign children participate in the same classes as the Polish children (such as for example history or geography classes), there are additional classes in Polish organized for them and financed by the municipality (W-20-PR, W-25-WL). Some schools are also planning to organize lessons, which would acquaint the children with the culture of their foreign friends (W-20-PR). Even though the parents perceive the peer contacts between different nationalities positively, when they need to choose the peer group their children will learn in, they often decide not to have their children taught together with foreign pupils.

The signalled reluctance to contact the foreigners may have different grounds. One of the reasons may be the negative perception of the affluence of some of the foreigners professionally involved in Wolka Kosowska operations. „Poles sometimes envy the foreigners who got rich” (W-20-PR), the ones who “drive cars of certain value and certain makes” (W-32-IL). The reactions may be particularly negative, because some time ago the signs of affluence were not so visible among the foreigners - some of the respondents said that the foreigners used to use scooters and bicycles and now they drive “fine wheels” (W-20-PR), they also use expensive mobile phones (some of which are imitations). In this situation “there is a question where did the money come from, how did the Vietnamese get rich if some Poles also work very hard and do not get so rich, and here the Vietnamese become wealthy and they do not know the language” (W-40-Ek). When trying to answer such questions the Poles attach the affluence of the foreigners to dishonest business activities: “those who got rich do not pay taxes, they import containers of goods and pay only some of the taxes. Though now it has become more normal” (W-17-PR).

For fear of negative reactions of Poles some of the Vietnamese may be less eager to establish relations with them, therefore they enclose in their community (W-20-PR) and avoid showing off their possessions (W-40-Ek). The fear of presenting the wealth is now less widespread than when the market at the 10th-Anniversary Stadium was

open. At that time Poles denounced the successful Vietnamese to the authorities trying to eliminate competition. A wealthy Vietnamese can still be told from a poor Vietnamese only after hours. The wealthy Vietnamese in places such as clubs allow themselves to wear more extravagant clothes with large logos of renowned brands or behave distinctively (W-40-Ek).

At the same time some of the foreigners would like to be treated according to their financial status, claiming that their wealth is not enough appreciated by Poles. They cannot stand that Poles in principle treat them as “the poor”, with no funds, while the persons who came to Poland and successfully invested money are the elite among the migrants. Poles seem not to notice the potential and the capital of the foreigners: “we treat them tongue in cheek. Like - a poor Chinese whom we associate with a bowl of rice and working fifteen hours a day (...) we, on the other hand, think that the white race is the race of the masters” (W-27-IL). The representatives of the local institutions are aware that the Polish perception of the Asians is too oversimplified and stereotypical. It may be expected that the longer the migrants will be present in the municipality or in its neighbourhood, the more reflection will be invested from the community and local institutions when considering the complexity of the situation of the foreigners living in the neighbourhood.

The changes in the surroundings caused by the operations of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are not limited only to the ethnic diversification on a local level. The inhabitants of the surroundings, when asked about the influence of the trade centres on the situation in the municipality, often pointed to traffic jams and transportation difficulties, risk of collisions, all of which concern everyone, not only the persons working in the trade centres. Heavy traffic is visible not only in the roads, but also in the car parks and nearby the trade centres on work days, when cars also park in forbidden places such as bus stops (W-2-PR). Some of the inhabitants complain about the dangerous driving habits of the persons of Asian origin (W-26-IL). There are also situations of drink driving - for example near Wolka Kosowska the police stopped an intoxicated Chinese driver who caused a collision and tried to bribe the policemen afterwards. Due to the numerous accidents the authorities decided to install traffic lights in the centres neighbourhood. Even though the time to leave the crossing is short, because Krakowska Avenue is an express way, they improved the safety (W-25-PR).

Apart from traffic issues, another serious problem is rubbish, which is present as a consequence of the trade centres' operations: “this is the only thing we cannot cope with. What is left here on Friday evening is truly a pitiful sight” (W-32-IL). Even though the administrators of the buildings are responsible for tidiness and employ companies to take care of it and there are notices in the building about the obligation to keep the building tidy by, for example, throwing away cardboard boxes and keeping order (W-2-PR, W-17-PR), a representative of the local authorities remarks that the local authorities need to “discipline them [foreigners] in terms of tidiness” (W-25-WL). It is often explained by cultural differences: “For them, for example, it is not a problem to unpack the goods in the street and leave the packages behind. (...) For us these packages are a problem, because it does not look well. (...) here is the cultural difference, but it is all cleared away regularly. Well, it is obvious that such rubbish is owned by those who run businesses, not the municipality. You cannot work, earn and someone else will clean up after you” (W-25-WL).

4.3. INTEGRATION ON A LOCAL LEVEL

Due to the observed negative moods of some members of the local community, the respondents see the necessity to introduce activities to bring Poles and the foreigners closer: “soon we may experience the envy that strangers get rich here and we live off a pension of 1 600 zloty. (...) There are such fears and I think that if we do not counteract, if something is not done, something like I said in terms of multicultural policy, integration matters, local community and the foreigners, then I really think this negative process may grow stronger” (W-32-IL). Activities of this kind, bringing the Polish and foreign members of the local community closer are also important in terms of avoiding the excessive isolation of the latter group. According to one of the respondents “Lesznowola municipality has the second after Hanoi Vietnamese population” and the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are a “ticking bomb (...) and the right sappers are needed to neutralise the problem somehow” (W-32-IL). It cannot be ruled out that the persons who perceive Wolka Kosowska this way in connection with the presence on the territory of a large number of foreigners from, after all, culturally distant counties, remember what happened in other European countries such as France (the heat in the Paris suburbs), where there were conflicts between large groups of migrants and the local community.

The municipality authorities declare they see their role in the integration of Poles and foreigners living on its territory: “we want this integration and learning about other cultures to happen” (W-25-WL). The flagship project in this field was the program “My neighbours come from Asia” which was realized in 2007 and 2008 from the funds of the municipality. The program included lessons at school to “increase the cultural sensitivity” conducted by an intercultural psychologist (W-32-IL). Owing to the positive results of the project, according to the local authorities, the municipality is open to repeat similar activities (W-25-WL), however the difficulties in finding financial means are the obstacle (W-32-IL). According to a representative of one of the schools, these activities are necessary - the cultural awareness classes were organized when the educational institutions did not have a lot of foreigners present yet, but since then the situation has changed significantly, as there are more foreign pupils in the schools of the area (W-20-PR). The municipality also finances additional free of charge Polish lessons (W-25-WL) and is trying to, according to one of the officials, engage the foreigners to participate in the events organized in the municipality: “We are also trying (...) to propose participation in fairs, such as Lesznowola Days, which was organized in June, where a group of women performed and girls in the national costumes sang” (W-25-WL). It should be appreciated how quickly the authorities saw the importance of multiculturalism and the necessity to take proactive measures when the topic was not yet as popular as it is now. Similar activities should be permanent. The above activities are not the full catalogue of the forms local authorities may be engaged in facilitating consistent community, though the municipality certainly performs its local-government duties.

Regardless of the activities organized by the local authorities (a series of lessons at schools, inviting foreigners to participate in public municipal events), it seems that the potential for the integration activities has not yet been fully utilised and the multicultural activities aimed at bringing Poles and foreigners closer are few and between. One of the few examples is the series of events “Getting to know the national cultures” organized by the Municipal Community Hall in Lesznowola. The series included national evenings - Spanish, Italian, Roma, Ukrainian, Mexican, Greek, French, Irish, Cuban and old-Polish³⁰. The choice of these themes illustrates that there is not much interest in the culture of the nations represented neither in the municipality nor in the cooperation with the representatives of other

³⁰ The website of the Municipal Community Hall in Lesznowola: <http://www.gok.lesznowola.pl/index.php?id=287> (access on 01.12.2012).

nationalities and fostering mutual understanding. It is not difficult to imagine that the foreigners living in the municipality would present their culture facilitating the contact between foreigners and local community going beyond the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. The local media (such as the Lesznowola news bulletin) mentions the foreigners rarely, unless it concerns exceptional occurrences or events such as fires or visits of delegations from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Promising grounds for Poles and foreigners living in the municipality to meet on could be sports. A representation of the ASG trade centre took part in the football tournament organized by the municipality³¹.

In terms of the local integration, it is worth mentioning the plans for creating a centre of integration with Asian minorities in Lesznowola municipality as part of the project "Masovian partnership for cooperation, adaptation and innovation" organized by the Association of Employers of Warsaw and Masovia with participation of the Masovian Association of Employers in Lesznowola municipality. Non-governmental organizations are also engaged in the project³². It seems that opening such a centre could prove to be beneficial for the organization of events aimed at bringing the Polish and foreigner inhabitants of the municipality closer. The centre could also prepare an offer of free time activities, which - regardless of the long working hours - some of the foreigners in Wolka Kosowska have difficulties with: "when the trade centres are closed on Sundays, they do not know what to do with their time. The, let us call it, higher caste leaves for their flats and homes which are not necessarily located here. This sort stays here and sometimes out of boredom they come up with strange things. - Like what? - Picking a fight" (W-32-IL). In these situations "scrambles with the local boys" may happen in the local disco for example (W-12-PR).

It should also be taken into consideration that regardless of the integration on offer, some foreigners may not be interested and will prefer to continue spending time in their own group (see 3.1.1.). The respondents see some differences in these terms among the representatives of the separate nations: "the Chinese seem to be a more hermetic group, do not express (...) the need to integrate or activities aimed at it. The Vietnamese, on the other hand, are certainly pro" (W-32-IL). One of the respondents summarised "[the Chinese] know their value" (W-32-IL). The attitude of this group may be visible in the fact that the Chinese, instead of starting learning Polish, expect that other nationalities should learn Chinese if they want to communicate with them (W-32-IL). At the same time, according to the local officials, the Chinese are very open to cooperation, but only as long as it facilitates their professional life - for example by participating in road investments (W-25-WL). The Vietnamese, on the other hand, are perceived as very open and willing to use the available support in understanding the Polish realities, often different to the realities in their country of origin (such support was offered by one of the local institutions). Difficulties in the relations with the Chinese going beyond the communication issues are also noticed by local authorities: "they have this superiority, they feel they are the world's power, they focus on developing, learning Polish less" (W-26-IL). The foreigners themselves seldom initiate events they would invite the Poles to. The companies owning the trade centres sponsoring municipal activities are an exception, which, however, is probably aimed at creating a positive image.

Regardless of the differentiated attitude of different nationalities working in Wolka Kosowska towards the integration, there are some mixed marriages, both Polish-Chinese and Polish-Vietnamese, present (W-25-WL, W-26-IL, W-18-PR). While similar situations are not tolerated in the country of origin, the migrant community treats them less restrictively, "however they [mixed marriages] are not desirable. The parents of a woman can accept her marrying

³¹ ASG-PL's centre website: http://www.asg-pl.com/galeria.php?galery_page=3 (access on 10.10.2012).

³² The website of the Dialogue-Education-Culture centre: <http://www.fdek.org.pl/index.php/14-centrum-integracji-z-mniejszosciami-azjatyckimi-w-gminie-lesznowola-2> (access on 11.12.2012).

a European, but the men are brought up and it is underlined that they should find a wife in their own culture. It is justified by the survival of the family and the direct blood line" (W-2-PR). Unfavourable perception of the relationships of the Vietnamese and Poles may be the reason why some of the Vietnamese, when staying in Poland, plan and pay for a wedding ceremony in Vietnam and choose a spouse who is of the same origin and lives in Vietnam. After getting married they plan to return to Poland with the spouse, who will then be employed in their company (W-12-PR). Even though according to the cultural norms the Vietnamese should marry persons of the same nationality, the migrants sometimes decide to marry a person of different nationality. It is also worth mentioning that among the motives why some mixed relationships are formalized is the foreigner's access to the benefits of marrying a Polish citizen (such as acquiring the grounds for legalizing stay, no necessity to obtain a work permit). It is difficult to estimate what percentage of the mixed couples marry solely to legalize stay (and therefore maybe also work) of a foreigner.

4.4. TRADE CENTRES IN WOLKA KOSOWSKA IN TERMS OF THE PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

The police admit that the scale of the offence and crime is higher than in neighbouring municipalities, though the police statistics certainly include only some of the offences which occur in the centres. A representative of the police estimates that about ¾ of the cases are reported to the police; however, the estimation seems optimistic. In the trade centres the local police most often encounter theft, burglary, assault and battery and unlawful menace. Majority of the occurrences are not dangerous, but there are instances of serious offences such as assault and battery or manslaughter³³. It is difficult to identify any national patterns in these occurrences. A police representative mentioned that the background for all of them is money and commercial transactions. In the County Police Headquarters in Piaseczno there is an Organized Crime Control Department which deals with matters such as business fraud. There are other institutions fighting crime, business fraud and tax offences also active in Wolka Kosowska. The interest of different bureaus in Wolka Kosowska caused a slight decline in offence and crime: "the beginning, when they were growing, it was more like... I would say, do whatever you want, now there are more bureaus and bodies present there, so they are also afraid to stick their neck out too much" (W-28-IL). According to many respondents currently the scale of crime in Wolka Kosowska is adequate to the scale of the trade centres: "These are normal, let us call them, drawbacks of such a gathering of persons from different cultures, with different norms and values and the ones who have not yet fully adapted in the current situation" (W-32-IL). One of the respondents said: "if [there is] a road in the mountains and no one drives it, there are no accidents, but if you drive it a hundred times a day, there must be accidents (W-30-Li)."³⁴

An article in one of the weekly magazines exposed the issue of additional payments the companies connected with Wolka Kosowska made into the municipal budget for solutions such as "additional police patrols" dedicated for the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska to improve the safety in the surroundings of the centres. The matter was very controversial and it was said that the foreign traders from Wolka finance the police. One the Vietnamese leaders em-

³³ lis, *Chińczyk zabił Chińczyka* [A Chinese killed a Chinese], published on Gazeta.pl website on 19.06.2008, http://warszawa.gazeta.pl/warszawa/1,95192,5331501,Chinczyk_zabil_Chinczyka.html (access on 10.10.2012).

³⁴ Similar views could have been heard about the market at the 10th-Anniversary Stadium and the reasons for common crimes (theft, assault and battery, unlawful menace) were connected to a large concentration of people (from different countries and speaking different languages), money and goods in place (Szulecka 2007).

phasizes that such situation should not be perceived as extraordinary, however, it requires creating a transparent mechanism of transferring the funds by the entrepreneurs to the municipal budget for safety matters.

An important event related to safety in Wolka Kosowska trade centres were three large fires at their premises³⁵. Similarly to the opinions about the crime in the centres, the interlocutors tried to compare the fires with the scale of this economic institution - as one of the officials said: "you cannot say there was a fire every half a year. These buildings are large with goods more or less flammable, because these are goods" (W-25-WL). Even though arson was suspected, the analysis of the fires turned attention to construction errors (lack of firewalls) and not observing safety measures: "the fire was extinguished in one store. We started looking for a reason. And we only lifted some textiles which were in the store to see a cobweb of improvised electrical wiring" (W-18-PR). To reduce the risk of similar events in some of the buildings, switching off the electricity between 5 p.m. and 1 a.m. was announced to make sure there are no blow-outs. A new insurance for the sum of 300 thousand zloty per store was also introduced (W-17-PR). After the last fire (in August 2012) there was one-off property tax remittance, in line with the declaration that in cases of incidents the local authorities will try to make an effort to meet the needs of the entrepreneurs operating in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska (W-18-PR).

The issue arousing strong emotions among Poles in terms of public order and safety is business fraud and tax offences. It may be observed, among others, among the businessmen: "I used to own a company trading in textiles a few years and I bought all my supplies in Wolka (because owing to that place majority of sewing business went bankrupt), (...) I am very surprised by the fact that no one seems to notice how devastating for the local entrepreneurs this wild trade is, black market in this pseudo-commercial centre and in fact a large fencing hidey-hole! Almost everyone there is a criminal! No one issues invoices (invoices may be purchased in practically every store for 10% of their value), no one accounts for taxes honestly, drug trafficking flourishes, the Asian employees work illegally and when the Tax Office or some other bureau wants to control them, suddenly no one speaks Polish (...). I know many persons, including myself, honestly running their businesses for whom it was not profitable any longer, because I need to pay my taxes, legally employ and the Asians do not do it! And they do not have to!³⁶ However, as some notice, the customers of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, where the irregularities are observed, are often Poles. They are not interested in recording the transactions, but try to negotiate the lowest possible price. The mutual interests cause that "no one is really interested in pulling Wolka out of the grey market. Neither the state, the <<producers of the designer goods>> nor the consumers. At least until it does not reach a certain, too large a scale"³⁷. The unfair practices allowing to reduce the product prices enable the Polish entrepreneurs-retailers sell the goods in Warsaw with a high margin.

An offence often observed in the trade centres of Wolka Kosowska is selling counterfeit products and using illegal computer software (the computers present in every store are used not only for professional purposes, but also for entertainment or communication with others): "most often they counterfeit clothes, backpacks, sometimes toys, more rarely items such as fishing rods. Counterfeit shoes are now very seldom. Perfumes sometimes. But often the trademark differs - for example puma has a longer tale, or the shoes brand is abibas and then this is not crime. It all depends on trends, when among the children there is a trend to have, for example, Hello Kitty, then suddenly there

³⁵ Some of the interlocutors also mentioned that there were small, quickly extinguished fires which did not cause significant damage to the buildings in Wolka Kosowska were far more frequent (W-18-PR).

³⁶ <http://www.polityka.pl/forum/1086144,duzy-problem-z-azjatycka-mniejszoscia.thread>, a statement from 25.05.2011 (access on 25.11.2012).

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

are a lot of such fakes available" (W-21-PR). The detected counterfeit goods are most often confiscated and a statement of the aggrieved party is issued (the company owning the trademark in question). The prosecutor's office charges the counterfeiter, the court proceedings start then and usually a forfeiture of property on the State Treasury is introduced and the goods are transferred to the tax office (W-21-PR).

As far as other types of crime mentioned in terms of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska there are: drug production³⁸, drug trafficking³⁹ and money laundering by understating the customs value of the goods imported in containers from Asia to Europe and then sold in Wolka Kosowska, as well as transferring the money earned from sales abroad. Money laundering may be practised on a wide scale. In 2011 a large international network was broken up. The group transferred to Ukraine about 30-40 million dollars monthly and in parallel money was paid into bank accounts of a few dozen Vietnamese companies in one of the banks, whose employees were in league with the foreigners. The money was later transferred to Ukraine⁴⁰. According to one of the Internal Security Agency experts: "today the Asian criminal proceedings do not take forms of the Chinese Triad or the Japanese Yakuza. Today this is a gentleman with a bag full of money, cashing it into an account to later transfer the money outside the EU"⁴¹. The State Treasury losses resulting from the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are estimated at billions of zloty⁴².

The controls of the legality of stay and other regular controls carried out in Wolka Kosowska indicate that the trade centres are the destination and workplace for some foreigners who illegally cross the borders of the Republic of Poland⁴³. The high risk of business fraud on the centres' premises triggered the creation of the Organized Crime Control Department in the County Police Headquarters in Piaseczno. Authorities such as the Internal Security Agency, the Border Guard, the Customs Office and the Tax Office often carry out controls in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. These are also supported by the local police. Sometimes prosecuting authorities or tax institutions with headquarters in different cities, where the entrepreneurs are registered, conduct proceedings in Wolka Kosowska (W-28-IL). Moreover sometimes international operations aimed at breaking up criminal groups of citizens of different nationalities are also carried out as a consequence of the operations of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska.

³⁸ PAP, *Straż Graniczna zlikwidowała uprawę konopi* [The Border Guard seized cannabis plants], published on TVP.pl website on 16.05.2010, <http://www.tvp.pl/warszawa/aktualnosci-z-regionu/kryminalne/straz-graniczna-zlikwidowala-uprawe-konopi/1806242>, (access on 10.10.2012).

³⁹ PAP, *Udaremniono gigantyczny przemyt - 10 mln papierosów* [Gigantic load of 10 million contraband cigarettes was detected], published on Wirtualna Polska website on 28.05.2010, <http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,1342,title,Udaremniono-gigantyczny-przemyt-10-mln-papierosow,wid,12315472,wiadomosc.html> (access on 10.10.2012).

⁴⁰ Zieliński R., *Polska rajem dla azjatyckiej mafii* [Poland as a paradise for the Asian mafia]. *Codziennie milion dolarów* [One million dollars every day], Dziennik daily from 06.09.2011, <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/wydarzenia/artykuly/354585,polska-rajem-dla-azjatyckiej-mafii-codziennie-milion-dolarow.html> (access on 10.10.2012), Nisztor P., *ABW kontra mafia z Wietnamu* [Internal Security Agency against the Vietnamese mafia], Rzeczpospolita daily from 15.09.2011, <http://www.rp.pl/artykul/717354.html?p=1> (access on 10.10.2012).

⁴¹ zew, PAP, *Azjaci z Wólki okradają państwo* [The Asians from Wolka steal from the State]. *Straty idą w miliardy* [The losses are worth billions], published on WPROST.pl website on 25.11.2011, <http://www.wprost.pl/ar/280625/Azjaci-z-Wolki-okradaja-panstwo-Straty-ida-w-miliardy/>, (access on 10.10.2012).

⁴² *Ibidem*; R. Zieliński, *Polska rajem dla azjatyckiej mafii* [Poland as a paradise for the Asian mafia]. *Codziennie milion dolarów* [One million dollars every day], Dziennik daily from 06.09.2011, <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/wydarzenia/artykuly/354585,polska-rajem-dla-azjatyckiej-mafii-codziennie-milion-dolarow.html> (access on 10.10.2012)

⁴³ The evidence may be found in media coverage – for example Bielec Janas D., *Straż Graniczna zatrzymała w Warszawie nielegalnych migrantów* [The Border Guard detained illegal migrants in Warsaw], published on Wiadomości24 website on 22.08.2012, <http://www.wiadomosci24.pl/artykul/straz-graniczna-zatrzymala-w-warszawie-nielegalnych-240314.html> (access on 20.12.2012); aż, *Prawie stu nielegalnych cudzoziemców* [Almost one hundred illegal migrants], Kurier południowy newspaper, Piaseczno-Ursynow issue (No 234), <http://www.kurierpoludniowy.pl/wiadomosci.php?art=1734>, 22.02.2008 (access on 10.10.2012) - as well as in the press services of the agencies and administrative bodies, for example the information portal of the Border Guard, as well as in the social studies on the forced work and undocumented migrants in Poland (for example Szulecka 2011, Dąbrowski ed. 2012).

Some of the investigative activities are conducted with regard to marijuana cultivation. These are now often associated with the Vietnamese after some cases of cannabis cultivation managed by these nationals have been detected. A lot of the interlocutors mention that the criminal behaviours are usually found among the Vietnamese who came from the Czech Republic (W-5-EK, W-6-EK, W-38-Ek, W-40-Ek), where they had already been involved in criminal activities. To some degree it results from the fact that a lot of the Vietnamese working in Czech factories were downsized due to poor economic situation. They felt a strong urge to earn and send money to their families left behind in Vietnam and to return to their country of origin as soon as possible by reaching a certain financial status. Therefore they often got involved in illegal activities such as drug trafficking, frequently getting involved in the activities of the SAPA market on the outskirts of Prague (W-40-Ek). The Vietnamese with Czech residence cards were involved in practices such as money laundering and the criminal activities were also carried out at the premises of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. The detection of the criminal activities (in 2011) was accompanied by a quite large-scale process of search and detention proceedings.⁴⁴

The influence of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska on the local community may also be examined in terms of whether they lower the sense of security of the community members. Poles living in or running their businesses in the neighbourhood do not feel that the centres influenced their lives in this aspect: "there was some crime, but they do it all internally" (W-27-IL), "they stick together and that is how they manage some things" (W-32-IL). Very rarely these "things" are revealed and make their way to the local community. However, sometimes the internal tensions are visible externally, an example of which was the widely commented in the media protest of the lessees against the boards of some of the centres (see. 3.2.2.). A representative of the local police confirms that even though there are a lot of occurrences reported in Wolka Kosowska the police deals with, they rarely affect the members of the local community who are not engaged in the operations of the centres: "there are some, like we say, individual cases when someone complains about them, but there are no reports that they would hurt someone or the community" (W-28-IL). Such individual cases concern situations when a driver of Asian origin leaves a petrol station without paying (W-32-IL) or when "someone throws out rubbish from their cargo. But reports on more serious issues, we did not have any" (W-28-IL). Reportedly Poles are not afraid to report offences and crime committed by foreigners, "it is more the foreigners who are afraid to report another foreigner" (W-28-IL).

Regardless of numerous activities verging on illegal or breaking the law carried out in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, it is worth mentioning that, as many respondents emphasize, the economic success of many Vietnamese is the effect of hard work. The foreigners employed in the trade centres often arrive with an objective to earn money and commit to achieving it by working hard (W-40-Ek). The Vietnamese are aware of the effort invested in work and successes achieved; therefore they sometimes emphasize their wealth and at the same time build their socio-economic status in the eyes of others by presenting different attributes of wealth (W-40-Ek). One of the interlocutors of Chinese origin remarked that the pressure to emphasize wealth is less developed outside Asia: "[in Europe] you do not need to present your wealth to be someone. There is no such cult of wealth like in Asia, where there is large pressure to show what a big fish you are" (W-34-Mi).

⁴⁴ Nisztor P., *ABW kontra mafia z Wietnamu [Internal Security Agency against the Vietnamese mafia]*, Rzeczpospolita newspaper from 15.09.2011, <http://www.rp.pl/artykul/717354.html?p=1> (access on 10.10.2012).

4.5. DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES

One of the respondents said that some time ago in the centres' buildings "there were even no gastronomic establishments" (W-20-PR). Currently the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska and their surroundings are a place where trading activities, as well as services provision are carried out. Some of the services are offered by foreigners for the representatives of their nationality (mainly in the Vietnamese community). Sometimes representatives of other nationalities and Poles also start using them. Similar processes were observed at the 10th-Anniversary Stadium when the real Vietnamese food was in vogue. At the beginning the traditionally prepared and seasoned Vietnamese dishes were offered to other Vietnamese. But with time the Vietnamese cuisine, very close to the traditional cuisine, became interesting for Poles. It also partially replaced the popular among Polish consumers "five spice chicken" - a European version of a reportedly Vietnamese dish, which had little to do with Asian cuisine.

In the vicinity of the centres in Wolka Kosowska there are also places such as a "bubble tea" café, serving a tea-based drink served with ingredients such as small tapioca balls. Even though mainly the Vietnamese visit the place, it may be expected that, in connection with the current trend for all such products, the café will also become popular among Poles. It also became a part of a wider phenomenon - the conquest of the European markets by this drink of Taiwanese origin⁴⁵.

As far as restaurants and gastronomic establishments are concerned, there are two types to mention. The first offer their services to the representatives of a specific nationality, the Vietnamese gastronomy facilities serving as an example. Mainly the Vietnamese are the customers, so the sign, menu and all the notices inside the gastronomic establishment are only in Vietnamese. The Polish customers are not encouraged to dine there, because the Vietnamese think the dishes they serve will be too controversial for the Poles or simply they will not like them. Some examples of such typically Vietnamese dishes are: a soup of fresh, not boiled goat's blood, fried offal and fertilized duck eggs. The staff of such Vietnamese facilities has very low competencies in terms of Polish language (W-22-PR). The second type of the gastronomic establishments was opened to attract Polish customers as well. Therefore elements such as menu in Polish, Polish staff trained in describing and presenting the served foods and dishes adjusted to the Polish tastes were introduced. It does not mean, however, that these facilities are not frequented by foreigners. Some gastronomic establishments offer delivering meals to the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, which is popular among persons of different nationalities. An example of such a gastronomic establishment focused on both Poles and foreigners is a Chinese restaurant adjacent to one of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. The interior décor and the cuisine give this restaurant an air of an authentic restaurant in China. The menu is in Chinese, Vietnamese and Polish. This gastronomic establishment has a good reputation - often Poles from remote towns come here to eat the Chinese specialities. At the same time the restaurant owners do not forget about their main group of customers - the Chinese. These customers are offered special large sets for more persons, because the Chinese like to have meals together, in a large group (W-1-PR). An interesting fact is that apart from the many decorative elements used in the interior décor of this gastronomic establishment (such as fountain, intensive colours and decorations), there are elements probably surprising for a potential customer, such as an illuminated chart with Chinese signs used for eye exams.

A lot of services which appeared in connection with the operations of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are offered by Poles. The potential customers include the entrepreneurs as well as the customers of different nation-

⁴⁵ Krowicka B., *Biznes na bublach z Tajwanu [Success of the bubbles from Taiwan]*, WPROST No 35/2012; <http://www.wprost.pl/ar/341423/Biznes-na-bublach-z-Tajwanu/> (access on 27.12.2012).

alities. Some of the service providers were established at the very beginning owing to the initiative of the owners of the buildings, others appeared gradually when the centres developed. The centres attract large groups of potential customers, which not only facilitates the establishment of the service points, but also competition between them, such as the competition between different banks with branches in the trade centres or their vicinity. The banks offer a whole range of financial products - they operate the entrepreneurs' bank accounts, establish cash machines used not only by the employees of Wolka Kosowska, but also the customers, grant credit and loans, operate exchange offices and safety-deposit boxes (W-27-IL). Due to the frequency of foreign currency transactions, the exchange offices in the centres, less formal currency exchange points and persons dealing in currency exchange play an important role in the centres' operations. During the observation in one of the stores, for example, Poles and the Vietnamese exchanged dollars for zloty (the value of the transaction was 4 000 zloty – W-2-PR). Other services which appeared in Wolka Kosowska in connection with the large scale commercial operations are the courier services and post offices, which allow the entrepreneurs dispatch the ordered goods. In the centres and their neighbourhood there are also grocery shops, computer repair points, fruit machines, car washes, garages and pubs.

Usually the services offered by Poles are not addressed to the foreign customers, which may be proved by the fact that the service in other languages is not provided. In principle, however, all the services are available for all the customers, regardless of their nationality. According to a representative of one of the banks, sometimes Poles are less willing to use services of service points located in the trade centres which are also frequented by foreigners. Even though the interlocutor's branch is located in one of the buildings and therefore more convenient for the inhabitants of the surrounding areas, a lot of Poles did not move their accounts and continue to use the services of branches located farther. Partially this may be caused by the traffic jams which are caused by the centres' traffic and partially probably due to stereotypes and "small-town mentality" (W-27-IL).

The managers of some of the service points decide to attract the foreign customers more actively - Western Union for example employs the Vietnamese⁴⁶. Some of the Polish employees of the companies and institutions operating in Wolka Kosowska know basic words and expressions in Vietnamese, which sometimes results from their supervisors' initiative (W-39-Ek). In the neighbourhood there is also a driving school, which helps access materials in Vietnamese and Chinese to learn driving. In Wolka Kosowska there is also an international kindergarten mainly for children from China and Vietnam, though it is also open for Polish children. Sometimes it happens that parents commute with children from Warsaw and leave them in the kindergarten for their working day (W-26-IL). It was established as an answer to a deficit of education institutions in the neighbourhood. Since its beginning it has been actively seeking customers from among the foreigners - at the beginning there was a Vietnamese teacher employed to contact the parents. The kindergarten's website was translated into Vietnamese and Chinese, but it is also available in Polish.

The services particularly interesting for the foreign entrepreneurs are often provided by Polish companies acting as intermediaries in legalizing stay and work, law firms and accounting firms. Reaching foreign customers, especially of Asian origin, is a complex matter and requires going beyond ordinary marketing activities. It is caused by the fact that in some cultures, especially the Asian cultures, doing business is based on personal relations and outsiders are not trusted (W-37-Ek, W-38-Ek, W-39-Ek, W-40-Ek). The foreigners may mistrustfully approach services offered

⁴⁶ Pałka Ł., an interview with Konrad Olszaniecki, *Western Union zarabia na imigrantach z Wietnamu [Western Union cashes in on immigrants from Vietnam]*, published on Money.pl website on 31.05.2012, <http://m.money.pl/wiadomosci/artykul/western;union;zarabia;na;imigrantach;z;wietnamu,49,-1,1095729.html> (access on 10.10.2012).

by Poles, also due to their poor experiences: “I thought that when I open⁴⁷, they will immediately come here, they will flock in. However, it is not this way, because they are prejudiced against us. I know why. Very often the Border Guard, the Police too, raid the centres, they do these things which I think should not happen” (W-26-IL). Knowing the foreigners' culture enables to reach the foreign customers. One of the mobile operators, when preparing an offer for Vietnamese customers, cooperated with a Vietnamese company, which offered him advice. The companies operating in Wolka Kosowska often cooperate daily with the foreigners - mainly the Vietnamese, who play a role of intermediaries in contacts between Polish service providing companies or their employees and foreigners. These persons may work on commission. The contacts established during such assignments may be the source of valuable knowledge about potential customers, which may be later sold to other companies (W-22-PR). The information made available for a fee includes more than only the mere contact details - it is sometimes long-established trust, years of maintained relations, knowledge of the customer and their needs.

Even though there are numerous services provided in Wolka Kosowska and nearby, it seems that there still is some potential for the development of new services. The respondents thought that the development of the services offered rather than the trade activities themselves may be the future of Wolka Kosowska. An example of a growing service area is translations - one of the Chinese respondents said that a certified translator of Chinese is active in Wolka Kosowska and her services are popular among the Chinese (a lot of formalities require presenting a certified translation of documents). However, her customers are very dissatisfied with the quality of her translation and the level of language skills, but thanks to some improvements, such as a ready form for driver's license (which limits the mistakes made in the document) and lack of alternatives, the Chinese still use her services (W-34-Mi). Limited offer of Polish lessons is also worth noticing and, although it may partially result from little interest in such services (see 3.2.4.), it may constitute another area of unrealized potential. Especially in connection with the new law on citizenship, which requires the applicants to speak Polish⁴⁸. Some Polish entrepreneurs are considering opening businesses offering opportunities to learn Polish, such as a school of Polish for the Vietnamese⁴⁹.

5. AN ATTEMPT TO DESCRIBE THE FUTURE OF THE TRADE CENTRES IN WOLKA KOSOWSKA

A lot of employers and employees of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska mention a decrease in the number of customers in the recent years and decline in the goods they purchase, which results in the decline in turnover of the entrepreneurs operating in Wolka (W-3-PR-1, W-3-PR-2, W-12-PR, W-30-Li, W-39-Ek). The customers, on the other hand, have noticed price increases (W-28-IL). The entrepreneurs with stores in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska complain about the high rental costs - a lot of stores are empty and their windows display notices about their rental or sale. Moreover a lot of the store owners in Wolka, trying to maintain the business, employ less staff than they used to when the business was better. Not everyone, however, manages to “stay in the game” - some Vietnamese, who have spent years in Poland, leave both suddenly, overnight, or as a result of planning. The foreigners returning to their country of origin sometimes leave behind in Poland unregulated matters (W-39-Ek, W-40-Ek). According to some interlocutors these returns are not yet occurring on a mass scale: “We are now experiencing stagnation, some families returned, but it is not the phase when the Vietnamese say - stop, let's close the business and leave, it is stagnation

⁴⁷ The interlocutor speaks about an educational institution they manage

⁴⁸ Art. 30 p. 2 of the Polish citizenship act of 2 of April 2009 (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 161).

⁴⁹ BiznesForum.pl website - a threat *Szkoła języka polskiego dla Wietnamczyków [A school of Polish for the Vietnamese]*, <http://www.biznesforum.pl/szkola-jezyka-polskiego-dla-wietnamczykow-vt68616.html> (access on 27.12.2012).

now - stay or leave" (W-33-Mi). Some of them manage to succeed and establish their position: "looking at the neighbouring stores, which have been here for four years, they stay here and I think that if you settled in and your business is quite well, there are no grounds to leave. Out of ten or fifteen companies I know one was closed so far, but it was more due to the way it was managed" (W-32-SL). Representatives of majority of the boards do not declare willingness to develop the current centres further claiming it will not be profitable (W-20-PR), the GD company, however, informs on the website about the plans to build two subsequent buildings⁵⁰. It may all prove the worsening economic situation, but also to some extent the saturation with a large number of buildings and entrepreneurs offering similar products.

Regardless of the widely noticed economic slowdown and stagnation in the trade centres, there are new investments made in Wolka Kosowska and its surrounding areas. Ballada building was opened in 2012, construction of the Global City mentioned before - a combination of a residential area with space for the provision of commercial and service activities - is proceeding. Some other undertakings are also mentioned, such as an Indian investment in Marysin located in Wolka Kosowska (W-21-PR). Building land is available in the surroundings. Wolka Kosowska also remains to attract foreigners, both entrepreneurs and low-level employees, who see their opportunity for economic success in this town. Some of the foreigners leave, when it turns out that trade requires hard work, there is no much free time left (W-39-Ek), others stay and replace the persons who have left, which in turn is the reason for high turnover in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. Some of the foreign traders decide to change the area of activity and start providing services, which is exemplified by Vietnamese women who start taking care of Polish children.

The services may be the future of Wolka Kosowska (W-20-PR) - even with the current number of companies and employees of the centres, there is a high demand for non-trade-related offer, such as courier services, accounting or renting flats. A significant potential target group for such services are also foreigners who have managed to improve their financial status. A change of the area of activity from trade to services will probably, however, be the matter for the youth, who often have high language skills, are modern, skilfully recognize the needs and opportunities to satisfy them in terms of services accompanying the commercial activities. The young migrants, especially the Vietnamese, whose migration history in Poland is quite long, are often the representatives of the second generation living in Poland. They are flexible, often more at ease around Poles and other foreigners, not always willing to be professionally engaged in the trade activities, and therefore they may highly influence the services market in Wolka Kosowska. Some of the representatives of the older generation, trying to maintain their businesses, may also increase their efforts to be more competitive than others. However, taking into account that the trade centres in Wolka include hundreds of stores offering similar product range, it may be difficult and to some extent costly (the need to invest in décor, introducing elements increasing the comfort of shopping and maintaining or attracting new customers).

The question of what the future of the companies operating in trade centres in Wolka Kosowska will be in a few or a dozen years is still open. "Wolka Kosowska is not a place where everyone would like to wait for their pension" and at the same time the persons who spent majority of their professional lives in the commercial sector, working in fact within an ethnic niche, will find it difficult to acquire new competencies allowing to change area of their economic activity (W-32-SL). Some of the members of the older generation will probably decide to return to Vietnam, having achieved their main, economic migration objective or will decide to leave for other countries where they sent their children, such as the United States or Great Britain (W-40-Ek). The young Vietnamese sometimes also decide,

⁵⁰ <http://www.gdpoland.pl/plan.php> (access on 15.12.2012).

similarly to the satisfied with their income parents, to return to their country of origin. However, the young generation also decides to leave for other reasons. The Vietnamese women, for example, sometimes return to get married. The young people who graduated from universities in Poland and are perceived as persons who have completed education at a European university may be offered tempting professional perspectives together with a respectable professional position in the country of origin (W-40-Ek).

Not all the professional aspirations may be satisfied in Wolka Kosowska - the trade centres do not offer an attractive development path and the career ladder is short (W-31-SL). One of the respondents thinks that work on commission may be an answer to the non-motivational system of the professional career development in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. It is particularly significant for the employees of the services sector who, knowing they would earn certain share of profits, would invest more efforts to acquire customers and cooperate with them (W-22-PR).

Returns to the country of origin observed in both the younger and the older generation also involve negative consequences. The returns may be difficult due to the problems of getting accustomed again to the principles and norms of the country of origin: "they came back to Vietnam and were disgusted, disgusted with Vietnam and the customs (...). There are customs which we find appalling: blowing nose onto the street, littering, dropping cigarettes" (W-40-Ek). The returning person, who has spent a larger part of their life in emigration, is treated as a "foreign Vietnamese", who may be exploited because they, for example, do not know the prices, are expected to have the money and therefore to do certain things such as paying restaurant bills, buying presents (W-40-Ek). In extreme cases, when it is problematic to adapt to the norms prevailing in the country of origin, the migrant may decide to return to Poland (W-39-Ek).

Apart from the development of the services market in Wolka Kosowska, when taking into account the growing competition, it may be expected that the current business models, including promotion and product presentation strategies, will change. An increase in the volume of Internet sales, which is currently on an initial development stage, may be expected. The online sales may be executed by means of the websites dedicated to the Wolka Kosowska trade centres or by means of intermediaries such as allegro.pl platform. A recipe for success may also lie in specialising in one type of products, for example trousers. In the next few years the currently observed two nationalities present in the centres in Wolka Kosowska in large numbers - the Vietnamese and the Chinese, may further strengthen their share in the business. The latter have access to the distribution channels and can therefore impose prices and terms of sales to the remaining entrepreneurs working in Wolka Kosowska. The centres mainly trade in Asian goods. Their main advantage is price and since they are produced in China no change may be expected in terms of the Asian domination in Wolka. Especially since the Chinese are trying to eliminate the competition - for example the Vietnamese importing the goods directly from China. An additional argument for the further increase in the significance of the Chinese in Wolka Kosowska may be the fact that the Vietnamese migrants are perceived as a nation of low initiative in economic terms, rather preferring to imitate others. Only a success of someone else, who decides to implement changes, causes others to follow their lead. Without a higher level of innovativeness the Vietnamese may become even more dependent on the Chinese, who are trying to emphasize their advantage in many respects - the professional, social and cultural.

6. SUMMARY

6.1. THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research allows to draw the following conclusions on the studied migrant economic institutions in terms of their influence on the local community and the internal and external relations in the institutions:

- The trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are the largest functioning migrant economic institution in Poland in terms of the size, number of foreigners, national diversity of the entrepreneurs, sales persons and service providers employed, as well as the socio-economic significance among the foreigners and the Poles living in its vicinity.
- The trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are a significant workplace both for Poles and foreigners, who run trade and service-providing businesses and employ others. The Poles working in the centres live both in the vicinity and in locations farther away from Wolka Kosowska. The trade centres play also an important part in supplying goods to entrepreneurs in Poland and abroad, both wholesalers and retailers, working in small shops or in the markets.
- The foreign investments in the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska created significant demand for services connected not only with trade activities within this economic institution, but also other types of services. On the local scale they contributed to the development of real estate market, financial market and all kinds of agencies, accounting offices and translation offices. Due to the fact that the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are attractive not only for entrepreneurs and employees of different nationalities, but also for customers from the whole of Poland and from over the eastern border, they also created additional demand for services such as gastronomy, accommodation, security, computer services and car repairs. The development of these services resulted in creation of subsequent work places for both foreigners and Poles. It seems there is still some room for the development of services and broadening the centres' offer in terms of such complementary services. The development of services accompanying the operations of Wolka Kosowska trade centres is profitable for the local community, which can use these services, engage in their provision or development and achieve certain benefits.
- The trade centres in Wolka Kosowska also contributed to the development of ethnic services, mainly within the Vietnamese community. This, in turn, was the reason why this economic institution became in fact a self-sufficient organism, guaranteeing the possibility to meet almost any migrants' needs, whether within the centre itself or in close vicinity. The foreigners living in Wolka Kosowska or its surroundings lack the need to seek different kinds of services outside this economic institution, which may prove to hinder their development in terms of establishing contacts externally, getting to know the country of stay, gaining language and cultural competencies by participating in the life of communities other than the migrant community gathered around the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska. The resources of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska and the well-developed services available (such as hotels for employees) and the frequently family character of the economic activities conducted in the centres cause that, at least in case of the Vietnamese, the professional life is mixed with the private life. The migrants live their family and social lives at work. This cross influence of the functions of this economic institution does not concern the Poles and the persons who live farther away.
- According to the community and the local authorities, the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are not an important factor influencing the sense of security, even though they trigger certain consequences influencing the comfort of living in the surroundings such as traffic, traffic jams, noise and untidiness. Even though the national groups gathered around Wolka Kosowska usually keep a distance between one another, not showing the willingness to establish relations (apart from strictly professional relations), sometimes conflicts burst between the representatives of

these groups or within the communities. These are, however, solved internally and do not influence the functioning of the local community and its sense of security.

- The operations of the economic institution in Wolka Kosowska are connected with breaching the law, due to, among others, illegal employment (of Poles and foreigners, including undocumented migrants), avoiding taxes and duties or theft. The delinquency is usually the subject of media coverage on the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska as well as the topic of comments about this institution posted in the Internet.
- Regardless of the fact that the economic institution in Wolka Kosowska attracts large groups of different nationalities, the local community links it mainly to the migrants of Asian origin, mainly the Vietnamese. Only the persons professionally connected with the centres are aware of the presence of different nationalities. The relations between the separate national groups are considered neutral or correct, apart from the Chinese-Vietnamese relations which are attributed tension, mainly caused by the economic dependencies (the conditions of retail space rental, distribution channels). The foreigners gathered around the trade centres barely establish social contacts with the local community, however there are some exceptions. Sometimes, as the study shows, the Chinese seem to be perceived as persons presenting superiority over Poles and other foreigners.
- The long-standing operations of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska are the reason why the surroundings of the centres are populated with a significant number of foreigners using the public services such as education, local offices or health care facilities. A considerable number of foreigners and the perspective of its growth (growing families, bringing to Poland following foreigners) cause the need to stimulate proactive integration activities directed at building correct relations between the migrant communities and Poles.
- Regardless of the weakened economic situation and position of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska, one should expect they will keep prospering, attracting more foreigners. It is expected that the position of the Chinese, who control the goods' distribution channels, will strengthen further at the cost of the Vietnamese, who mainly distribute the goods. Probably the market of services accompanying the operations of the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska and the employment of a large number of foreigners will develop further.

6.2. THE CONCLUSIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The conducted research, although considerably broadens the knowledge of the chosen migrant economic institutions, does not entirely cover the issues which are worth studying further from the point of view of the foreigners' presence not only in the economy, but also in the society. Some more attention could be brought to the migrant communities which are not at all or well enough present in the migration literature or the perception of the society, regardless of their functioning in Poland. Certainly it is worth dedicating some further attention to the Chinese, especially from the point of view of the self-organization of this community, its role in the Polish economy and the relations with the host society. When researching communities of migrants attention should also be turned to other nationality groups such as the Turks and Indians and studying the role of the economic institution in the migration of the representatives of these communities.

Even though a lot of research was dedicated to the Vietnamese in Poland, it is still worth studying the development of the Vietnamese community, its transformations, and the role of the economic institutions such as the trade centres in Wolka Kosowska in the life of different generations of migrants from Vietnam. Especially in terms of the second generation of the Vietnamese living in Poland, who are now adults and start following their professional carri-

ers. In the context of the knowledge about the adaptation models of the Vietnamese migrants, it is worth analysing to what extent the paths of the second generation of the Vietnamese will be similar to the paths chosen by their parents, how much they will keep functioning in the ethnic minority niche and to what extent they will have the willingness or opportunities to function in the Polish economy independently, outside trade or gastronomy. Another element worth attention is the difference between the Vietnamese who are the second generation in Poland and their peers - newly arrived migrants from Vietnam and the importance of these in the economic and social integration process.

It is certainly worth focusing on migrant economic institutions as elements of the environment, which may be attractive in Poland for subsequent migrants (in specific localizations), not necessarily coming from the countries which are already numerously represented by the entrepreneurs working in Wolka Kosowska. The studies could also turn some attention to the previous countries of stay of the migrant groups of specific nationalities. The carried out research confirmed for example, that the migrant economic institutions in Wolka Kosowska became a workplace for migrants from Asia, who lived in the Czech Republic before coming to Poland. Developing this topic further could uncover the factors influencing the migration flows from outside of Europe, for example within the European Union, but also indicate the consequences of such processes in the areas such as the language of communication between the Poles and the migrants, propagation of certain behavioural patterns, for example in the economic terms.

Furthermore, it would be valuable to further observe the influence of the operations of the migrant economic institutions and the role they play in the local and wider scale, identify the challenges in terms of integration, or securing safety and public and legal order.

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APPENDIX 1. – BASIC INFORMATION CONCERNING INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS CONDUCTED WITHIN THE STUDY

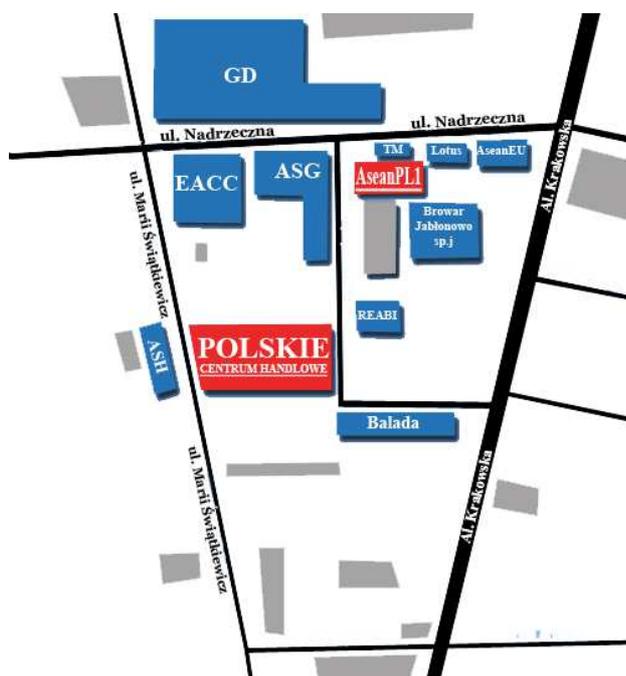
Table 1. List of interviews and observations

L.p.	Code ⁵¹	Type of material	Nationality of the respondent	Localisation
1	W-1-PR	Observation protocol	N/A ⁵²	Wolka Kosowska
2	W-2-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
3	W-3-PR-1	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
4	W-3-PR-2	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
5	W-4-PR-1	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
5	W-4-PR-2	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
6	W-5-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
7	W-6-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
8	W-7-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
9	W-8-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
10	W-9-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
11	W-10-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
12	W-11-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
13	W-12-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
14	W-13-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
15	W-14-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
16	W-15-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
17	W-16-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
18	W-17-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
19	W-18-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
20	W-19-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
21	W-20-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
22	W-21-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
23	W-22-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
24	W-23-PR	Observation protocol	N/A	Wolka Kosowska
25	W-24-PR	Notes from the content review of portal for Chinese living in Poland	N/A	N/A
26	W-25-WL	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
27	W-26-IL	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
28	W-27-IL	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
29	W-28-IL	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
30	W-29-Li	Interview notes	Vietnamese	Wolka Kosowska
31	W-30-Li	Interview transcript	Vietnamese	Wolka Kosowska
33	W-31-SL	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
34	W-32-IL	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
35	W-33-Mi	Interview transcript	Vietnamese	Wolka Kosowska
36	W-34-Mi	Interview notes	chińska	Wolka Kosowska
37	W-35-Mi	Interview notes	chińska	Wolka Kosowska
38	W-36-Mi	Interview notes	chińska	Wolka Kosowska
39	W-37-Ek	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
40	W-38-Ek	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
41	W-39-Ek	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska
42	W-40-Ek	Interview transcript	Polish	Wolka Kosowska

⁵¹ The codes used in the table refer to: Ek - expert/researcher; SL – representative of a local community; WL - representative of local authorities; Li – leader of a migrant community; Mi - migrant, IL – local institution (e.g. bank, police, employment office), PR – observation protocol.

⁵² N/A stands for Non applicable, however while conducting most of the observations, interviews were also conducted.

APPENDIX 2. – MAP OF TRADE CENTRES IN WOLKA KOSOWSKA



Source: www.aseanpl.com

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