Acknowledgements

The thesis has been carried out while I was a PhD student at the Department of Economics, Aarhus School of Business (ASB), in the period 2003 to 2005. I would like to thank the Department for providing excellent working conditions. My scholarship was financed by the Danish Social Science Research Council (Forskningsstyrelsen). I gratefully acknowledge this financial support.

Many people contributed to the thesis and to what I learned during my studies. First, I am very grateful to my PhD supervisors, Professor Nina Smith and Professor Peder J. Pedersen, for their competent and caring supervision, as well as for a constructive criticism and suggestions on all parts of the thesis. I also wish to thank Associate Professor Helena Skyt Nielsen for her supervision during the first half year of my PhD studies.

I owe special gratitude to my main PhD supervisor Professor Nina Smith, who gave me valuable lessons and inspiration within the migration research already in the years 2001 and 2002, when I was working as a research assistant. She was also the one encouraging me to apply for the Danish PhD program and the scholarship. I am very thankful to her for that. In spite of being a very busy person, she has always had time for reading my work, for helping, supporting and sharing her knowledge with me. Through her contacts I got the opportunity to visit one of the most prominent researchers within my study area, Professor Barry R. Chiswick. I appreciate all that a lot. Last but not least, thank you for keeping me on the right track and setting the deadlines during my PhD studies.

I am deeply thankful to Professor Tor Eriksson for stimulating discussions and valuable comments on all parts of the thesis, for believing in me and encouraging me during all the years of my stay in Denmark. He was actually the one, who made it possible for me to come to Denmark, which changed the course of my life in a great manner. He also introduced me to the fascinating world of empirical research and gave me many valuable lessons to learn from. For all that I'm very grateful to him.

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Barry R. Chiswick for his warm welcome and for all the inspiring discussions during my 6-month stay at the Department of Economics, University of Illinois Chicago (UIC). I'm also thankful for the possibility of attending professor Chiswick's Graduate Labor Economics Course, which gave me lots of inspiration and further fascination in Labor Economics. I also benefited from the Brown Bags seminars and discussions with the staff at UIC, especially with Professor George Karras, Assistant Professor Alicia Adsera, Professor Robert Kaestner and Professor Carmel U. Chiswick. Carol Martell was very helpful with all the practical matters concerning my stay in Chicago. Finally, I wish to thank graduate students at UIC for all the discussions and for making the stay in Chicago so enjoyable, in particular Sara Borelli, Davide Furce, Sarinda Taengnoi, Narsid Golc and Ewa Werchola.

In the spring 2004, I participated in the IZA Summer School 2004. I would like to thank IZA Bonn for giving me the opportunity to attend and financing the week with excellent lectures and a good training in presentation techniques. Thanks to all the participants for making it such a joyful and memorable experience.

I would not be able to write the thesis without the migration data that I started to gather already during the years of my work as a research assistant. Here, I would like to thank the employees of the statistical offices in 27 OECD countries, with whom I was communicating, for being helpful with providing the data and explaining the methodology and definitions behind the data figures. I owe debts to Anna Maria Kossowska and Ole Juul Kristensen for a help with constructing the unique migration dataset.

I wish to thank the staff at the Department of Economics, ASB, for creating a stimulating research environment. In particular, I benefited from discussions with Associate Professor Jan Bentzen and Associate Professor Valdemar Smith. I'm also indebted to the secretaries for always being supportive and especially to Susan Stilling for her valuable help with editing my English language and making the final layout.

Further, I am grateful to the members of the PhD committee, Professor Thomas Bauer, Associate Professor Jan Bentzen (chairman) and Professor Torben Tranæs, for all the valuable comments and suggestions they have given to me.

I would also like to thank Iben Bolvig, Jingkun Li, Odile Poulsen, Aycan E. Celikaksoy, Karsten Bjerring Olsen, Sebastian Buhai, Konrad Pawlik, Antonio Rodriguez Andres, Elisabetta Trevisan, Johan Moritz Kuhn, Nicolai Kristensen and other colleagues and fellow students for fruitful discussions on the topic and not only, for their friendship, for being around and sharing the up and down sides of the studies.

My final words of gratitude go to my family and my friends, especially to my parents for their love and support. Above all, I would like to thank Ole, to whom this thesis is dedicated, for his love, understanding, patience and encouragement.

Aarhus, February 2006.

Mariola Pytliková