Acknowledgements
It’s been quite a journey with experiences beyond words, both professional and personal, full of highs and lows, discoveries and losses. Never been boring. The most important discovery so far? People are key. Dozens and dozens of supportive, patient, dedicated, enthusiastic, inspiring, and altruistic people have traveled together. Sometimes they were my teachers, sometimes we switched. I have learned an uncountable number of lessons, filled with excitement, happiness, and joy, along with a pinch of bitterness, sadness, and tiredness. The last three are of utmost value.

There are so many people I feel grateful to. It might be that I won’t be able to recall all of them but I will try my best.

Rita, thank you for the opportunity to explore a new topic that was very new in Lithuania at that time. Thanks for believing in me and supporting my ideas and choices, sharing your experience to help me navigate the academy, for encouraging me to explore and always move forward. One of the most exciting and thrilling experiences was writing the first project\textsuperscript{51} with you and the team (Goda K., Inga, Mykolas, Lina and Oksana), without which my thesis wouldn’t be really possible.

Goda P., thank you so much for agreeing to embark with me on this journey and patiently guiding me through the process. It means a lot to me. I’ve learned from you the secrets of text construction and the creative attitude towards problem solving. But the most important lesson I’ve learned is that there is always a way out and there is always a solution. I appreciate that you

\textsuperscript{51} Studies described in Chapter 4, 5 and 6 were funded by the European Social Fund according to the activity ‘Improvement of researchers’ qualification by implementing world-class R&D projects’ of Measure No. 09.3.3-LMT-K-712 – project GoGreen. Research of this PhD thesis wouldn’t be possible without the contribution of Rita Žukauskienė, Goda Kaniušonytė, Inga Truskauskaitė-Kunevičienė, Mykolas Simas Poškus, Lina Jovarauskaitė and Oksana Malinauskienė. I particularly would like to thank Mykolas Simas Poškus for his contribution in organizing and conducting Study 1 (Chapter 4). I also would like to acknowledge the input of Mykolas Simas Poškus, Eimantas Balundis, Lina Jovarauskaitė, Goda Kaniušonytė, Oksana Malinauskiene, Vaida Gabė, Kristina Pliučienė and Rita Žukauskienė in gathering data for Study 2 and 3 (Chapter 4).
encouraged me to do things and go for experiences I wouldn't be able to motivate myself for.

Linda, thank you so much for your insightful reviews of my papers and thesis. It was a great honor to be part of your team and it was truly rewarding to learn from you.

Sincere thanks to the members of the reading committee at the Mykolas Romeris University prof. Rasa Valickienė and prof. Saulė Raižienė for critically reading the initial version of the thesis and providing valuable suggestions. Also, to the reviewers prof. Silvia Collado and asst. prof. Andrik Becht, who read the final version of my thesis and shared a lot of encouraging words. Many editors and anonymous reviewers provided feedback for the papers; I am genuinely grateful to them for their assistance in the process of improving the papers.

Sincere thanks to the members of the reading committee at the University of Groningen prof. Susan Clayton, prof. Ellen van der Werff, prof. Nina Hansen and prof. Danielius Serapinas.

Barbara and Dianne at RUG, Loreta and Dovile at MRU, and many others, thank you so much for guiding me through the dark corridors of the double PhD process. I think it was a challenge for all of us, but it seems that we made it.

Mykolai and Goda K., I lost count of how many times I turned to both of you with questions on methodology and statistics. Sometimes in the middle of the night... I was never turned down - I couldn’t thank you enough.

Goda K., Mykolai, Oksana, Vaida, Aiste, Aleksandrai, Gintautai, Rimantai, Laura, Dainora, it was quite a number of chats, lunches and venting... in some cases gym or bar 😊 I’m happy we met and lucky to be part of such a great team.
Susie, Angela, Annemijn, Steph, Lu and all the EP team at RUG, thank you for your hospitality, dinners, lunch breaks, apple time... Special thanks to my amazing paranymphs Anne and Robert who helped me to navigate the way to the promotion ceremony.

Kristina and Juliau, Zuzana, Irina G., Irina K-B. Daiva G-K., thank you for simply being there for me. Always ready to offer a shoulder and ears. Your support kept me going; it was and is invaluable.

Eimantai, thank you for your unconditional support and love, cheering me up and always believing in me. This meant a world to me.

Gilê and KeiKei without your silent presence and timely purrs and meaws I wouldn’t be able to endure long hours of work.