This article uses the author's original concept of social anchoring, referring to the processes of finding significant footholds which enable migrants to acquire socio-psychological stability and security and function effectively in new life settings, to theorise adaptation and 'settlement' mechanisms that are utilised by migrants. Drawing on interviews and questionnaires with 40 Polish migrants in the U.K., autobiographical research and material from Internet blogs and forums, it focuses on processes playing a vital role in connecting migrants to British society and the mechanisms of developing them in social anchors. This article presents a more comprehensive approach to 'settlement' (understood as a state of stability) than the integration approach and adds to the prevalent understanding of adaptation. It moves our thinking beyond the concepts of identity and integration as well as linking the issues of adaptation, security and stability, highlighting, on the one hand, the psychological and emotional aspects of adaptation and 'settlement' and, on the other hand, tangible footholds and structural constraints. Its significance lies in the fact that it allows for complexity, variety, simultaneity and changeability of anchoring and the reverse processes of unanchoring to be included, thus helping in the analysis of increasingly complex, superdiverse and 'fluid' societies.

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