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of Glasgow

Experiences of social security and prospects for long-term settlement among migrants from CEE and FSU – preliminary findings

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The SSAMIS Project

(Social Security and Migrants in Scotland)

- 4-year ESRC funded research project
- Project aims:
 - to explore links between experiences and perspectives on ‘social security’ and longer term intentions regarding settlement in Scotland (→ focus on longer-term migrants/those intending to settle)
 - to deliver practical outputs, models for best-practice
- Project team: Glasgow University - Rebecca Kay (PI), Moya Flynn (Co-I), Paulina Trevena (RA); Swansea University - Sergei Shubin (Co-I), Alexa Szoke/Holly Porteous (RA)
- Diverse range of project partners: local authorities, voluntary section organisations, migrant organisations and groups



Research design and methodology

1. Pilot research – policy overview/analysis, expert interviews with representatives of LAs, NGOs, migrant organisations, service providers
2. Main fieldwork – extensive ethnographic research in 6-8 locations across Scotland, including observations, 200 in-depth interviews, 40 visual diaries (photo/video)
3. Participatory Action Research (PAR) involving local service providers, policy makers, migrant organisations and individual migrants; aims: better understanding of problems, developing solutions, developing policy recommendations, generating ‘action research sets’



Developments

- Completed pilot research (interviews with experts)
- Main research – ongoing (July 2014 - August 2015)
 - Completed research in Aberdeen
 - Angus (Brechin/Montrose/Arbroath) and Aberdeenshire (Peterhead, Fraserburgh, surrounding villages) – ongoing
 - Next stages: Glasgow
- Study participants mainly from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania but also other EE countries (e.g. Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Estonia, and non-EU FSU countries, e.g. Ukraine, Russia)



Trends in EE migration

- Decreased but continuing EE migration into Scotland
- Main reason for arrival: work, family reasons (also: parents/elderly relatives; children with learning difficulties/disabilities)
- Increasing importance of networks in choosing place of settlement (chain migration)
- Differences in composition of migrant populations in Angus vs. Aberdeenshire
- Noticeable differences in awareness/knowledge of the welfare system between the more and less established EE nationals
- Most EE reliant on personal networks/online sources in native languages for such information
- Growing interest in applying for British citizenship

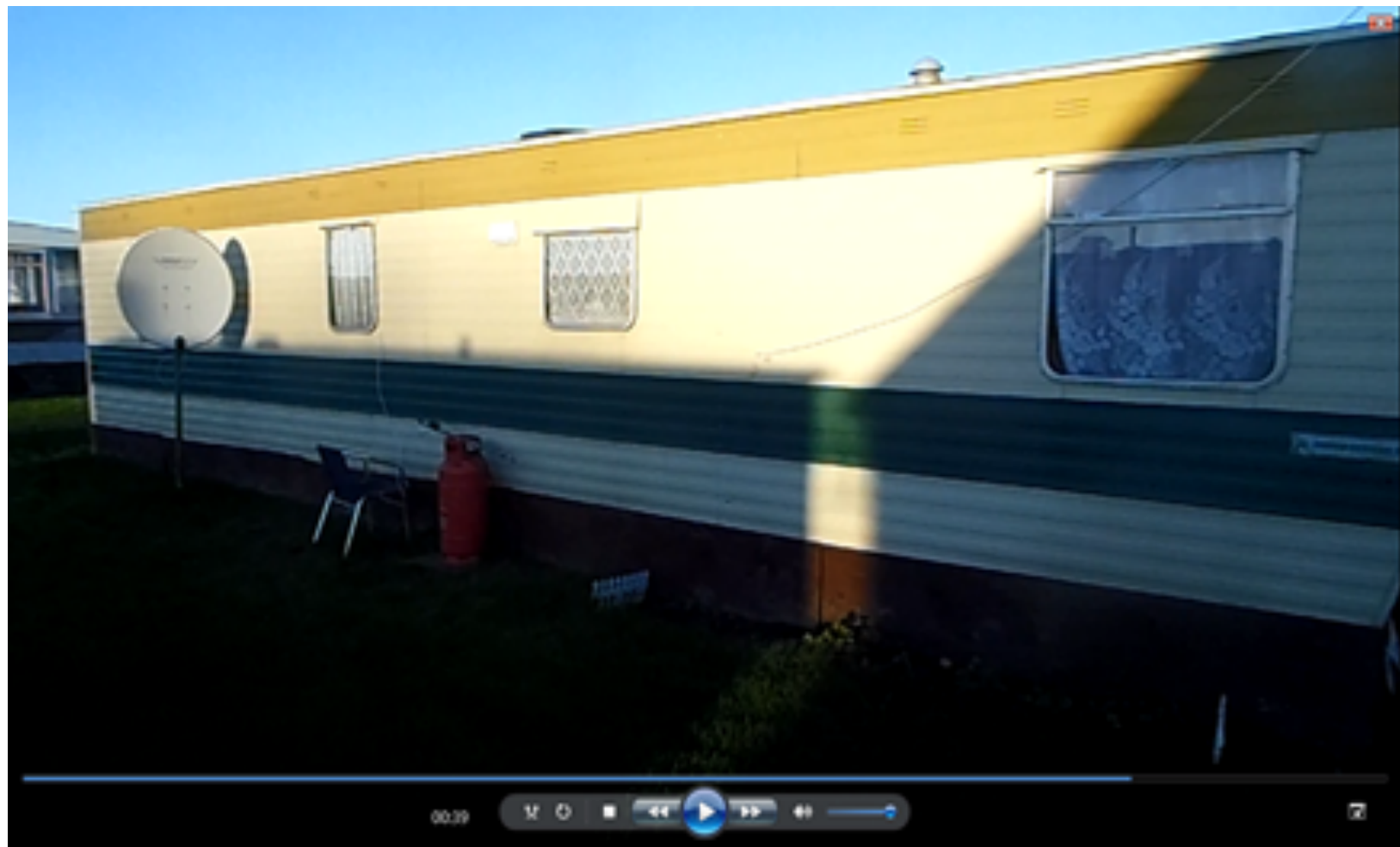


Housing

Differences between Angus and Aberdeenshire

- Angus – many EE migrants in social housing or on waiting lists; others private rent or (less) ownership
 - for some – social housing as stepping stone to private ownership, others happy to stay in social housing long term
 - problematic: neighbourhood safety; neighbourhood clustering
- Aberdeenshire – lack of quality housing (e.g. Peterhead); large volume landlords who sometimes pay little attention to problems (e.g. broken appliances, mould, overcrowding). Also long wait for social housing



























Work

- Limited employment opportunities and precarious working conditions (seasonal and/or agency work)
 - Angus – mainly farms, local fish and chicken factories
 - Aberdeenshire – mainly fish industry
- Limited opportunities for career progression
- Workers 'less respected' nowadays, deteriorating employment/work conditions
- Self-employment, migrant-centred businesses
g. shops, mechanics, car washes, hairdressers, beauticians, translation services)

	ВОПРОС	УТВЕРЖДЕНИЕ	ОТРИЦАНИЕ	
WILL →	I } YOU } WE } THEY } HE } SHE } WORK?	I } YOU } WE } THEY } HE } SHE } WILL WORK	I } YOU } WE } THEY } HE } SHE } WILL NOT WORK	5 4 3 2 1
DO →	I } YOU } WE } THEY } HE } SHE } WORK?	I } YOU } WE } THEY } HE } SHE } WORK	I } YOU } WE } THEY } HE } SHE } DON'T WORK	5 4 3 2 1
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(e.)



Self-Employment



L-R: tanning salon/car
(inside car valeting
business); dental
technician; airport transfer
minibus; food import
service/shop





POLISH SHOP PAULA POLSKI SKLEP

OFF-LICENCE
POLSKI
SKLEP

BEERS
WINE
SPIRITS

新

Yellow sign with red text



DOPPIES
florist & gift centre

ARMOUR

LITTLE POLAND

POLSKA
SKLEP

ROBERTSON

STEPH

P
Blue Box
Blue Box
Blue Box

SP14

SP60



Language

- EEs often arrive with poor levels of English but even if good – need time to adjust to Scottish accent
- Poor English major barrier to integration/career progression
- Barriers to improving knowledge of English
 - difficulties in accessing lg provision due to working patterns, childcare obligations, financial restraints etc.
 - gaps in ESOL provision
 - limited opportunities outside lg classes (e.g. speaking other EE languages at work)
- Language services and info in other lgs more accessible for some nationalities than others



Social ties

- No homogenous EE community or national communities
- Most EEs have limited social networks, especially families
- Discourse of competition among EEs, both intra- and inter-national (can be reflected in workplace conflicts)
- ‘The Bold and the Beautiful’ atmosphere in small places.
- National ‘ghettos’ or ‘quarters’
- Transnational ties & lifestyles - Skype/phone/travel to stay in touch with family/friends
- Limited contact with established communities (lg barrier, cultural barrier, lack of public meeting spaces)
- Established communities seen as generally friendly but also experiences of xenophobia (overt but also subtle)
- Churches one way of integrating into local community in Aberdeenshire



Welfare/benefits

- Mixed attitudes towards welfare use
 - the safety net of welfare provision very much appreciated, especially by families with children (opportunity to live ‘a normal life’)
 - generally negative attitude towards those ‘living on benefits’ and hence ‘giving all of us a bad name’
 - accessing social housing generally not perceived as welfare abuse (but – resentment among the established communities)
 - surprise at support the state provides to people with drink/drug issues (‘the unworthy’)
- Effects of recent welfare changes



Services (use of/access to)

- Main barriers to accessing services:
 - language (spoken but also written communication)
 - opening hrs
 - lack of knowledge about them
 - sometimes attitudes of service providers
- Examples of good practice:
 - services tailored towards migrants (e.g. mother and toddler groups; libraries)
 - employing migrants as volunteers (route into paid employment)
- Main service used: NHS – varied opinions and experiences



Needs/gaps in service provision

- More information in native languages e.g. about rights and responsibilities, the education system, where to look for further information etc. (online resources and/or booklets – info on these made available in main council offices)
- Wider language provision and opportunities to learn outside the classroom (e.g. buddy scheme)
- Community building/combating social exclusion (e.g. public spaces, social events)
- Crisis management - addressing the 'black hole' (via stronger links between existing agencies?)



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