



SSAMIS
Social Support and
Migration in Scotland

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SSAMIS project (2013-2017) explores experiences of migration and settlement amongst migrants from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) living in Scotland. As part of the project we have carried out extensive ethnographic fieldwork in four locations across Scotland, two urban (Aberdeen and Glasgow) and two rural (Aberdeenshire and Angus) which included interviews with migrants and experts as well as observations of key sites. This interim report is based on a preliminary analysis of our findings and will be of interest to a range of stakeholders and service providers including local authorities, community planning partners, ESOL practitioners, migrant associations etc.

Key themes

- **Process of migration and settlement.** Networks of family and friends have been of growing importance in facilitating migration to Scotland over recent years, while children are key to settlement decisions, especially as children who are growing up in the UK typically develop a strong sense of belonging here. Although migration remains an open-ended process and longer-term plans are often in flux, the likelihood of return to country of origin recedes over time.
- **Employment.** Job opportunities and work remain the main reason for migrating to Scotland; however, migrants from CEE countries are typically clustered in low-skilled, low-paid employment where working conditions are often bad. Therefore, supportive employers are valued highly. Career progression remains difficult, especially in rural areas. Affordable and flexible childcare is a major issue for migrant families, particularly single parents. Experiences with Job Centre Plus are mixed but it is not seen as supportive in finding work.
- **Welfare/Benefits/Rights.** Information about these is usually spread by word of mouth and is often incomplete or inaccurate. Formal sources of information are less likely to be used. Accessing services is often difficult due to the language barrier as well as the mismatch between services' opening hours and migrants' working hours. Translation/interpretation services are more available in some CEE languages than others (especially in Polish and Russian) limiting access for smaller CEE nationalities. Migrants have mixed experiences of and attitudes towards using services and claiming benefits, with some migrants feeling they do not deserve state support and others feeling there is 'institutional discrimination' against them. A combination of these factors often make accessing support in crisis situations difficult. Social housing is appreciated as generally available and accessible but is often of low-quality and located in areas of multiple deprivation.

- **Language.** We found relatively low levels of fluency in English amongst adult CEE migrants. Nonetheless, migrants believe that good knowledge of English is key to integration and progress in the labour market. However, many have limited opportunities for learning English. Segregation in workplaces often results in CEE migrants acquiring/re-learning other languages than English (typically Polish or Russian).
- **Education.** Migrants expressed mixed opinions of the compulsory school system but educational opportunities provided for young people and adults are valued with high levels of interest in these. However, many experience practical barriers to accessing further/higher education.
- **NHS.** Experiences and perceptions of the NHS are varied. The fact that healthcare provision is free is valued highly, yet it is often seen as inadequate. A common complaint was difficulty in accessing specialist care and migrants often continued to use such services in their home countries.
- **Social aspects of migration.** There is no homogeneous 'Central and East European community' or even national CEE communities – each is highly heterogeneous. Nevertheless, most CEE migrants establish friendships with co-nationals and/or other CEE migrants. This results from the language barrier as well as segregation in workplaces and limited contact between migrants and local communities. Migrants also commonly form virtual communities; these are especially important to migrants from smaller and newer CEE communities which have no established formal institutions in Scotland, such as national clubs and churches. Transnational connections with family/friends back home remain highly important. Nevertheless, social isolation in Scotland and loneliness are considerable issues for many CEE migrants, particularly those living in rural areas, stay-at-home mothers and older migrants.

1. INTRODUCTION

SSAMIS is a four-year project (November 2013 – November 2017) funded by the Economic and Social Research Council¹ to explore experiences of migration and settlement amongst Central and East European (CEE) Migrants² living and working in small towns and villages in Aberdeenshire and Angus and in the cities of Aberdeen and Glasgow.

The SSAMIS team has recently completed the project's main phase of fieldwork involving over 200 migrants as well as approximately 60 representatives of local authorities, service providers and migrant associations. This interim report draws together key themes emerging from in-depth, qualitative interviews with migrants, 'expert' interviews with other stakeholders, and researchers' fieldnotes and observations recorded during this 18 month period of fieldwork. Reflecting our methodological approach, data is location and context specific, and shaped by the particular clusters of migrants that we have spoken to (please refer to the sections on location for details of these).

This report is designed to be of use to a range of stakeholders and service providers including local authorities, community planning partners, ESOL practitioners, migrant associations etc. It should however be noted that the report draws on interim analysis only and that fuller and more detailed information will become available in due course.

We welcome any feedback on this report, particularly with regard to its value for your work and practice. We are also very willing to answer any questions which may arise. Please see back cover for contact details.

2. OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTION

Locations	Aberdeen (n27*); Glasgow (n37); Peterhead (n41), Fraserburgh (n9), other rural locations in Aberdeenshire (n25); Arbroath (n39), Montrose (n 12), Brechin (n9), other rural locations in Angus (n8)
Employment sectors	Beauty and hairdressing; care industry; cleaning services; hospitality & catering; construction; farm work; food processing; interpreting/translation; IT; office work; oil industry; retail; third sector
Employment status	Agency workers; employees; professionals; self-employed; stay-at-home parents; students; unemployed
Gender	Women (n129); men (n78)
Age group	18-24 (n13); 25-34 (n66); 35-49 (n91); 50+ (n36); unknown (n1)
Country of origin	Azerbaijan (n2); Bulgaria (n8); Czech Republic (n6); Estonia (n1); Hungary (n18); Kazakhstan (n1); Kyrgyzstan (n1); Latvia (n42); Lithuania (n28); Poland (n83); Romania (n5); Russia (n5); Slovakia (n4); Ukraine (n3)

* n = number of migrant interviewees (total 207).

¹ Grant no ES/J007374/1

² In the case of the SSAMIS project, this category encompasses both migrants from the 'new' EU countries of Central and Eastern Europe (specifically Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania) as well as non-EU countries of the former Soviet Union such as Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan etc.

3. OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES

In this section we provide an overview of key themes which emerged as common across all research locations. More specific issues and a more detailed breakdown of migrant interviewees relating to different locations are addressed in sections 4.1 – 4.4.

Process of migration and settlement

- **Importance of networks.** Informal networks (of family/friends) play a highly significant role in the migration process. Many migrants come over to people already here and get help from such networks during the initial period after arrival. In turn these migrants help other (newer) migrants at later stages of their own settlement.
- **'Settlement' as an open-ended process.** Initial uncertainty about future plans may last for a considerable period of time. Plans for longer term stays in Scotland emerge over time, often due to migrants having achieved what they term a 'normal life', e.g. stable accommodation, job, new relationships etc. Such plans may or may not include a sense of 'permanence'.
- **Children are key to settlement.** Projecting a 'better' future for themselves and their children plays a crucial role in migrants' decisions regarding longer term settlement.
- **Likelihood of return to country of origin recedes as time passes.** Reasons for this can be varied and include both positive attachments to locations within Scotland and weakening of emotional and practical ties to country of origin. For some migrants there can also be an experience of being 'trapped in place' where insecurities both 'here' and 'there' make return impossible.
- **Age at arrival can significantly influence sense of belonging.** Those who have arrived as teenagers typically identify strongly with Scotland and feel very much at home here in contrast to many of those who have arrived as adults.

Employment

- **Job opportunities and earnings.** These are commonly cited as a reason for migration, reflecting both insecurities in countries of origin and (perceived) securities in Scotland.
- **Migrants typically clustered in low-skilled/low-paid employment.** This is particularly the case in the initial stages of migration but often longer-term (especially in rural areas).
- **Lack of opportunity to develop careers in rural areas.** Even when gaining new skills/qualifications, migrants can find it difficult to escape low-wage, unskilled work in food processing/farming. Agency work can be precarious, especially given the seasonal nature of food processing/farming. Nevertheless, we have found some positive examples in this area, where migrants have moved on from manual work on farms, either to higher-level jobs still within the farm (e.g. office work, managerial level positions), or to another sector (e.g. care work). Although the problem of 'being stuck' in low-skilled and low-paid employment is particularly strong in rural areas (due to the restricted nature of local labour markets and limited educational opportunities), career change in urban areas is also often challenging.

- **Changing perceptions of 'migrant workers'** – some of the migrants in this study, who had been in Scotland longer term complained that workers used to be 'more respected' because there were less of them and therefore demand was higher. Nowadays employers can take their pick and some workers feel working conditions have deteriorated and workers are 'less valuable' than before.
- **Working conditions.** Only available employment is often precarious with poor working conditions (zero hour contracts; unstable agency work; difficult working conditions; long/night shifts etc). This is compounded in rural areas by the seasonality of available employment. Migrants working in such forms of employment are highly vulnerable and especially affected by recent changes in benefits (e.g. the necessity to prove having 'reasonable prospects of finding work' in order to claim JSA and other benefits). This places a lot of pressure on finances and family life (especially in relation to childcare).
- **Need for affordable childcare.** This issue relates to the majority of parents working in low-paid jobs. In many two-parent families, parents tend to try to organise their working lives around sharing childcare responsibilities (e.g. one parent working day shifts, the other night shifts). In some cases, migrants bring over other family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles) to help with childcare. The latter strategy and/or sharing childcare responsibilities with friends are common among single parent families. Notably, finding affordable and flexible childcare options is particularly challenging for single parents and often limits access to employment.
- **Supportive employers.** Some positive experiences of employment have emerged from the research. There is evidence that a number of employers (particularly in more rural areas) have made a concerted effort to improve the experience of migrants working for them, for example, in the provision of transport and in the improvement of general working conditions.
- **Job Centre Plus.** We found mixed experiences amongst those migrants who had experienced periods of unemployment. However, there was a general sense that Job Centre Plus does not support people in finding work and in these terms does not fulfil migrants' expectations.

Welfare/benefits/rights

- **Information about services.** Migrants tend to have a reasonable general knowledge of which services exist and how to access them e.g. social housing; crisis support (e.g. GREC/ CAB); job centre plus; social work services. However, more detailed knowledge of how things work often comes through word of mouth, mainly from co-nationals/other CEE migrants, and is often partial or inaccurate.
- **Accessing services and advice.** Language/cultural barriers can be intimidating when accessing services. Opening hours of services do not always fit with migrant work patterns, especially for those working in agriculture, or needing to travel from more rural locations to services located in nearby towns/hubs.
- **Staff who speak EE languages or have cross-cultural understanding are useful.** This has been one of the most helpful ways that service providers have been able to address migrant needs. However, there is a need for some caution, as this can result in too much pressure being put on those members of staff.
- **Translation/interpretation services and advice services in national languages.** These are more available to some nationalities than others (most widely available for the largest communities, i.e. Poles and Russian-speaking nationals).
- **Using services/claiming benefits.** Migrants have mixed experiences and seem to use some services and benefits more than others. Social housing, in-work benefits (e.g. Working Tax Credits – due to low earnings) and Child Benefit appear to be the most commonly used. This may also be linked to attitudes towards claiming benefits and ‘deservingness’ (see below).
- **Mixed attitudes towards claiming benefits.** Many people (especially families with children) do access benefits; others (especially singles or couples without children) have a critical view of any welfare use. In general, migrants express negative attitudes towards welfare abuse and stories of some people ‘working the system’ and very negative attitudes towards other migrants who are ‘living on benefits’ and ‘bringing shame on/giving a bad name to the whole community’. Some migrants also express negative attitudes to perceived ‘welfare dependence’ amongst locals. This can have the effect of discouraging people from claiming benefits to which they may be entitled.
- **Some migrants feel there is ‘institutional discrimination’ against them.** This relates to employment conditions offered (especially for those working through agencies) as well as the welfare system (many migrants had encountered problems when applying for benefits to which they are in fact entitled).
- **Crisis management.** A minority of migrants end up in complex crisis situations. When one service/agency is unable to help (due to language issues and/or formal barriers, such as specific regulations relating to EU citizens and/or regulations resulting from recent welfare reforms), migrants can end up being referred from place to place and it can take a while to find help (if it is found at all).
- **Social housing.** This is generally available and accessible although availability varies by location. Migrants often express gratitude for the opportunity to apply for such housing. However, the quality of social housing offered is mixed and migrants are sometimes critical of where the housing is located (e.g. areas of high social deprivation, especially in Glasgow). Some see social housing as a stepping-stone to private ownership (i.e. low rental costs allowing to save up for a deposit for a mortgage); however, many people happy to remain in social housing and do not have plans to buy property.

Language

- **Multi-faceted nature and importance of language abilities.** English language skills are viewed by migrants as an asset. Many migrants express hopes that their children will become fluent English speakers and state that improved English language skills can facilitate a sense of belonging, provide access to better jobs and facilitate the making of friends.
- **Fluency in English.** We found relatively low levels of fluency in English amongst adult CEE migrants, especially amongst many new arrivals. For a significant number, despite the emphasis and value placed on language (as noted above), their own English language abilities do not improve a great deal even over time.
- **Many migrants have limited opportunities for improving their English.** This is the case for stay-at-home mothers of young children and people who work (and/or live) predominantly with other migrants. Many migrants experience barriers in accessing ESOL courses such as limited provision, childcare issues, transport, etc. Access to English-language media is helpful but not sufficient, especially for beginners, to significantly improve their English language skills
- **(Re)learning other ‘migrant’ languages.** Some migrants are learning (or reactivating previous knowledge of) other languages than English due to the nature of their workplace and social connections to other CEE migrants (e.g. Bulgarians or Czechs who have learnt Polish through working in factories dominated by a Polish workforce, Polish migrants who have reactivated their knowledge of Russian to communicate with co-workers/neighbours from former Soviet states).

Social aspects of migration

- **No homogeneous ‘CEE community’ or homogeneous national CEE ‘communities’ exist.** Differences of class, ethnicity, life-style, family status and age produce diversity and divisions within the various national communities. By the same token there can be affinities and similarities across national divides (e.g. ‘Russian-speakers’ from the Baltic States, Ukraine, Moldova, Russia and other former Soviet states). Some migrants actively choose to avoid people from their home country; and often resent being categorised as a ‘migrant’ due to the perceived low social status of this term.
- **Friendships. Migrants’ closest friendships appear to be with other CEE migrants.** However, there are examples of good friendships/relations with Scottish neighbours, co-workers and employers. Friendship networks are typically quite limited, but can include a wide range of nationalities in a local context.
- **Limited contact between migrants and local communities, especially in rural areas.** A lack of public spaces where newcomers could mix with locals makes initial contact difficult. This is due to language and also cultural barriers (being shy, not knowing how and where to approach people). Many people say they would like to have (more) Scottish friends but they don’t know how to go about establishing contacts with Scottish people. It was stressed, however, that in some of the smaller places, migrants were able to get to know people living locally, even if this was on a more superficial level, and that this created a more positive feeling of belonging.
- **Migrant ‘infrastructure’ and virtual communities.** Smaller and less established groups of migrants (e.g. Hungarians, Czechs) tend to form more informal, often internet-based, communities but also make use of migrant associations and services e.g. Polish shops which cater for other nationalities. Those CEE groups that are more established in the UK (especially Poles) have access to more organised structures, e.g. Catholic Church, Polish Associations, Polish schools – however, the majority seem not to make use of these and turn to web-based communities for advice/support (e.g. Facebook forums, websites for Poles in the UK etc.).
- **Transnational connections.** Migrants maintain connections with family/friends back home, and on an emotional level often retain a sense that ‘home’ is ‘there’. However, this does not stop the development of a sense of belonging ‘here’ and feelings of being at ‘home’ in Scotland.
- **Social isolation and loneliness.** This is a considerable issue for many migrants, especially stay-at-home mothers and older migrants. Virtual communities and informal networks, mentioned above as a source of advice/support, can also help to mitigate against feelings of loneliness.

Education

- **Mixed opinions about quality of education in Scotland.** Migrant parents expressed both positive and negative opinions of schooling at primary and secondary levels. However, opinions appear to become more positive over time.
- **Appreciation of educational opportunities for young people and adults.** Free/affordable education at colleges and universities. There is considerable interest among adult migrants in further education opportunities (ESOL courses as well as specialist courses), but often limited knowledge about access to further/higher education. Issues regarding working hours and local accessibility (especially in rural places) make it difficult to combine work and study.

NHS

- **Perceptions of NHS services vary.** Migrants relayed both positive and negative views and experiences. Opinions do appear to become more positive over time although some migrants continue to use health services in their home countries (especially specialist and dental care) despite having lived in Scotland for several years.
- **Aspects regarded positively include:** CEE migrants generally appreciate the fact that NHS Scotland provides free care and have a good opinion of specialist care (e.g. maternity services) and emergency services.
- **More negative appraisals include:** care at GP level is often felt to be of unsatisfactory standard and complaints about length of referral time (for specialist care) are common.

4. LOCALLY SPECIFIC THEMES AND FINDINGS

4.1. Aberdeen

Migrant interviewees (27 in total)

Locations	Aberdeen City
Employment sectors	Care industry; catering; cleaning; interpreting/translation; IT; office work; oil industry
Employment status	Agency workers; employees; entrepreneurs; professionals; self-employed; stay-at-home parents; students
Gender	Women (n21); men (n6)
Age group	18-24 (n2); 25-34 (n8); 35-49 (n13); 50+ (n3); unknown (n1)
Country of origin	Czech Republic (n2); Hungary (n13); Latvia (n1); Lithuania (n1); Poland (n9); Romania (n1)

Characteristics of location and fieldwork:

Aberdeen is a port city, the third largest in Scotland by population (c. 229,000 in 2014)³ with strong links to the North Sea oil and gas industries. These industries in addition to a thriving retail district and café/restaurant culture provide many opportunities for migrants to find work. However, due to the city's wealth the cost of living is relatively high, compared to Glasgow for example. Partly due to this, many migrants have clustered in areas of multiple deprivation such as Torry or Tillydrone.

The CEE populations in Aberdeen are mixed but Polish migrants are by far the largest national group. Also, there is a high percentage of migrants from Hungary in Aberdeen City as compared to other regions of Scotland.⁴

Due to the language abilities of the SSAMIS researcher who conducted fieldwork in Aberdeen we were able to access a previously little researched group of Hungarian migrants living in the city and reveal some of the specifics of their experiences. Other clusters of migrants included a group accessed through contacts at a local Central East European restaurant, and through a local community centre.

Specific themes:

- **Employment.** There is a general trend of precarious, un-skilled work in the early period after arrival, but opportunities exist in the city for progression. This allows greater opportunities for improvement of language and instances where migrants can move into white collar jobs.
- **Housing.** Rental property is expensive in Aberdeen, and many migrants live in sub-standard accommodation, especially when they first arrive. Social housing is available but subject to a considerable waiting list, and is often located in less desirable areas with high levels of social and economic deprivation. Migrants express mixed opinions about social housing and some prefer to rent privately if possible.
- **Settlement in the city.** Whilst this is certainly an active choice for some, circumstances in their country of origin also affect people's choices. e.g. many Hungarians had lost their homes and given up everything in Hungary due to the mortgage crisis which began in 2010. With 'nothing to go back to' they presented settlement in Aberdeen as a matter of fact rather than a choice.

4.2. Glasgow

Migrant interviewees (37 in total)

Locations	Glasgow city (n31); Greater Glasgow area (n6)
Employment sectors	Catering/hospitality; cleaning services; creative industries; food processing; third sector
Employment status	Agency workers; employees; professionals; stay-at-home parents; unemployed
Gender	Women (n20); men (n17)
Age group	18-24 (n4); 25-34 (n14); 35-49 (n9); 50+ (n10)
Country of origin	Azerbaijan (n1); Czech Republic (n4); Hungary (n2); Kazakhstan (n1); Lithuania (n7); Poland (n17); Romania (n1); Slovakia (n3); Ukraine (n1)

Characteristics of location and fieldwork:

Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland with a population of 596,550 (2015).⁵ The city is home to a wide array of third sector and statutory organisations working to support migrants but few across the city focus specifically on work with/for CEE migrants. Glasgow provides a wide range of employment opportunities, though CEE migrants are often clustered in low-skilled jobs, especially in factories, hospitality, and cleaning services.

The population of Glasgow included 22,938 'White Other' inhabitants in 2011⁶, many of whom are CEE migrants with Poles constituting the largest national group. The CEE communities are widely spread throughout the city. The presence of the Polish community is most obvious across the town (with Polish institutions, e.g. Catholic churches and a Polish club as well as Polish businesses, especially Polish food stores), however, the presence of other CEE migrants is also visible, especially from Russia and the Baltic States (e.g. Baltic food stores, a Russian restaurant and cultural centre). There is also a substantial CEE Roma community in Glasgow, resident predominantly in the Govanhill area.

Within Glasgow our chosen research areas were Govan in the Southside and Tollcross in the East End of the city (both characterised by high levels of social deprivation and considerable numbers of CEE migrants living in the area, especially Poles). Apart from clusters of migrants connected with these locations via work or residence, we accessed a cluster of employees at food processing factories, a cluster of women who are members of a Polish online support group, a cluster of workers in the hospitality sector, and a cluster of highly-skilled workers (various professions).

Key themes from interviews:

- **The labour market experiences of migrants coming to Glasgow are mixed.** The majority begin from low-skilled and low paid jobs. Some migrants access professional/skilled employment yet this is typically a longer process involving the acquisition of new skills and/or local qualifications. Many do not manage to move out of low-skilled employment even with time. This may be due to the language barrier as well as affordability of further education courses, childcare responsibilities, transport issues etc.
- **Accessing services.** Despite the existence of many formal support structures (council services, third sector) problems still arise with accessing these. This is often due to language barriers and/or lack of knowledge of available services and lack of clarity about which services deal with which issues.
- **Social housing across Glasgow is widely available.** CEE migrants are often eligible for social housing due to their low levels of income. However, although the option of living in affordable accommodation is generally appreciated and taken advantage of, especially by families with children, it brings its own challenges. Social housing within Glasgow is typically available in areas of high social deprivation, complex social problems and high crime rates. Many migrants therefore feel trapped in living in areas which they perceive as dangerous and unwelcoming but cannot afford to buy or rent a property and move into other areas. At the same time, some migrants who have managed to buy their own property but are not high-income earners feel that their precarious financial situation might jeopardise their ownership status. Nevertheless, migrants also spoke of the positive aspects of the places where they lived, for example, the parks, the pleasant architecture, feelings of safety.
- **The 'Polish dominance' is clearly felt among CEE migrants in Glasgow.** This relates both to local visibility (many Polish shops and other Polish businesses scattered across the city) and to the reality of the workplace (in many factories the majority of employees are Polish) and perceptions (e.g. Lithuanians being routinely taken for Poles). However, there are also more positive interactions, for example Czechs and Slovaks learning Polish to facilitate communication and interaction.

³ National Records of Scotland (2015), Council Area Profiles: Aberdeen City Council Area – Demographic Factsheet.

⁴ Migrant Workers in Aberdeen City and Shire. Briefing Paper 2015/08 (2015), Aberdeen City Council.

[Accessed 12/01/2016; file:///F:/AAA%20MAIN%20FIELDWORK_12%20Jan%202016/Migrant_Wokers_Briefing_Aberdeen%20and%20Shire_2015.pdf]

⁵ National Records of Scotland (2015), Council Area Profiles: Glasgow City Council – Demographic Factsheet [accessed 11/01/2015, <http://nationalrecordsofscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/stats-at-a-glance/council-area-profiles>]

⁶ Freeke, J. (2013). Population by Ethnicity in Glasgow. Glasgow City Council, Briefing Paper by Director of Development and Regeneration Services.

4.3. Aberdeenshire

Migrant interviewees (75 in total)

Locations	Peterhead (n41); Fraserburgh (n9); other rural locations in Aberdeenshire (n25)
Employment sectors	Beauty and hairdressing; care work; farm work; food processing; hotels; interpreting/translation; retail
Employment status	Agency workers; employees; professionals; self-employed; stay-at-home parents; unemployed
Gender	Women (n42); men (n33)
Age group	18-24 (n3); 25-34 (n18); 35-49 (n37); 50+ (n17)
Country of origin	Azerbaijan (n1); Bulgaria (n4); Estonia (n1); Hungary (n3); Latvia (n31); Lithuania (n18); Poland (n11); Romania (n1); Russia (n3); Ukraine (n2)

Characteristics of location and fieldwork:

Aberdeenshire is a predominantly rural region with a population of 260,500 (2014)⁷. It comprises many smaller villages and hamlets to which migrants have come, mainly to work in local agriculture. In some instances this is due to a lifestyle choice and/or the availability of social housing. Two mid-sized towns in the region, Peterhead and Fraserburgh, serve as hubs for surrounding rural areas as well as their own populations offering services and employment opportunities in fish processing, retail services and the care sector. Key services are located within the towns but there is little support tailored specifically to the CEE migrant population.

The population of CEE migrants living in Aberdeenshire is mixed, however, unusually for Scotland, Russian-speaking migrants, mostly from Latvia and Lithuania, are particularly prominent. In Peterhead and Fraserburgh, East European shops and services tend to be provided by this group of migrants rather than by Poles as is more often the case elsewhere in Scotland.

Within Aberdeenshire we have focused on the towns of Peterhead and, to a lesser extent, Fraserburgh. We also recruited participants from a variety of villages and hamlets/farms, chiefly from the Banff and Buchan region. Particular clusters of migrants included: migrants accessing local ESOL provision; agricultural workers; migrants who had accessed both third sector and private services ranging from the Citizens Advice Bureau to local self-employed interpreters.

Specific themes

- **Realities of rural life and issues of integration.** Many migrants do not believe they will stay in Scotland, or do not identify with the local area and so have less motivation to learn English or take part in the community. The pressures of low-skilled, low-paid work may affect their ability to attend language classes or community activities, and certain industries (e.g. fish/meat processing, agricultural labour) can be more alienating as they provide little interaction with local English speakers. However, many migrants find rural/town life appealing in comparison to Aberdeen, for example, and some find more opportunities to integrate in smaller, local workplaces where there is more comradeship.
- **Transport.** Many migrants considered it very difficult to live and work in rural Aberdeenshire without the use of a car, due to sparse/inconveniently timed public transport services. Procuring a car could have knock-on benefits such as being able to get social housing more quickly via accepting a more rural location. It could also offer greater opportunity to socialise and spend leisure time in Aberdeen, especially for younger migrants.
- **Pressure on rural services is reflected in migrant experiences.** Although translation services such as Language Line are nominally available, often migrants are not able to access these due to budget cuts or the lack of a suitable translator. Some third sector services lack any translation service whatsoever, beyond volunteers/ad hoc arrangements.
- **Use of paid interpreters/advisors.** Several independent advisors, charging for advice/help, are in operation in Aberdeenshire. During our research period, new people were setting themselves up in this kind of role in rural areas. Often, these people have become de facto advisors for free, and discovered a gap in the market for this kind of service. Charges are typically around £20 per hour.

4.4. Angus

Migrant interviewees (68 in total)

Locations	Arbroath (n39); also Montrose (n12); Brechin (n9); other rural locations (n8)
Employment sectors	Beauty and hairdressing; catering/hospitality; cleaning services; construction; farm work; food processing; retail and other services
Employment status	Agency workers; employees; professionals; self-employed; stay at home parents; students; unemployed
Gender	Women (n46); men (n22)
Age group	18-24 (n4); 25-34 (n26); 35-49 (n32); 50+ (n6)
Country of origin	Bulgaria (n4); Kyrgyzstan (n1); Latvia (n10); Lithuania (n2); Poland (n46); Romania (n2); Russia (n2); Slovakia (n1)

Characteristics of location and fieldwork:

Angus is a predominantly rural region with a population of over 116,660⁸. There are currently no organisations with a particular focus on supporting migrants in the region (there used to be such provision but it has been discontinued due to budget cuts). Advice and support is provided by local council organisations (e.g. job clubs; ESOL) and the Citizens Advice Bureau which are available in the larger towns. Agriculture and food processing are key employment sectors for CEE migrants living in the area.

The population of CEE migrants living in Angus is very mixed, with the majority coming from Poland but also many from smaller CEE countries, especially Latvia but also Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Russia. The Polish presence is visible across Angus with Polish shops in each of the towns researched (Arbroath, Montrose, Brechin), all of which also stock goods from other CEE countries. There are also other small businesses in the area run by migrants (e.g. a hairdresser salon, a tattoo studio, a garage).

Within Angus we have focused on the towns of Arbroath, Montrose and Brechin; our study participants also resided in smaller towns/villages/farms in the area. Particular clusters of migrants include: students of a local FE institution; migrants accessing evening ESOL provision; migrants living in a particular social housing development; farm workers; migrants working in local food processing factories.

Specific themes

- **Changing patterns in migration and settlement processes.** Migration to Angus was initially steered predominantly by recruitment agencies but currently depends more on social networks between migrants. However there are variations in the types of networks and support migrants can access. More settled CEE communities (e.g. Poles or Latvians) typically access information and support through personal networks (e.g. family and friends). More recently arriving groups of migrants (e.g. Romanians or Bulgarians) are still largely dependent on employers and co-workers and are typically less well-informed.
- **Transport.** Lack of transport to work is an issue for many migrants in Angus, especially those living or working in more remote locations.
- **Social housing.** This is widely available in Angus and in some cases draws migrants to the Angus Council area, e.g. from Aberdeen. However, it is often offered in low-quality accommodation and in areas viewed as undesirable. Some respondents were happy with the housing they had received, and with the wider security this offered to them. Others had been placed in housing that was in very poor condition and which they struggled to renovate and furnish. In some areas CEE migrants were clustered in particular developments which evoked mixed reactions: some people appreciate the opportunity to live among compatriots, others feel ghettoised.
- **Accessing local services.** Due to budget cuts in Angus, frontline support staff who speak CEE languages are no longer available while the possibility of using telephone interpreting services is also limited.
- **Considerable barriers to improving knowledge of English.** ESOL provision is limited and uneven across the region and migrants struggle to attend regularly due to transport issues, family/work commitments etc. More intensive provision at local colleges cannot be easily combined with employment. Local initiatives in the area of language learning do exist, for example, activities outside of the classroom (e.g. hillwalking) and buddying initiatives.

⁷ National Records of Scotland (2015), Council Area Profiles: Aberdeenshire Council Area – Demographic Factsheet. [Accessed 12/01/2016; <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeenshire-factsheet.pdf>]

⁸ National Records of Scotland (2015), Angus Council Area – Demographic Factsheet. [Accessed 11/01/2015; <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/angus-factsheet.pdf>]



SSAMIS

Social Support and
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For more information about any aspect of the project or to contact the team, please visit our website: www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/gramnet/research/ssamis or contact our Project Administrator, Bernadette Laffey ssamisadmin@glasgow.ac.uk

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