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**Everyday negotiations of in/securities and risks:
an ethnographic study amongst
Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow**

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Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The post-accession migration to the UK from the eight Central and Eastern European countries that joined the European Union in 2004 has attracted a significant amount of attention in public discourse as well as from scholars and policy-makers. On the one hand, these migrants are praised for their contributions to the local or national economy, for their work ethic and self-reliance as mostly young and well-educated labour migrants; on the other hand, post-enlargement migration is depicted as a threat to local public services and the British welfare system, or to British society more generally. Our knowledge about the 'new European migrants' in the UK, however, is limited in so far as the existing literature tends to adopt these interests and perspectives of the 'host society' or analyse migrants' experiences through an ethnic lens. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted over a twelve-month period, this thesis provides an empirically-grounded, contextually rich and theoretically informed understanding of how Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants who arrived in Glasgow after 2004 negotiate insecurities and risks and build social security in their everyday lives in the city. The thesis offers novel insights and contributes to existing theoretical, methodological, and empirical research on the nexus of (post-accession) migration, social security, and risk. Methodologically, by focusing on a language-based group across ethnic, national, and cultural boundaries and by analytically probing the heterogeneity of the research group, the study challenges simplistic generalisations and the uncritical adoption of ethnocentric concepts and ideas. Each of the empirically-driven chapters develops both the theoretical and empirical argument in its own right, exploring, for example, the various processes through which a 'risk population' was produced in the field; my informants' notion of *zkancelovali* with regard to state-provided support in Glasgow; the significance of past experiences and everyday knowledges in negotiations of risk and in/securities; or the notion of 'exploring potentialities of care' in Glasgow and beyond. Theoretically, the thesis fruitfully integrates socio-cultural concepts of risk with an anthropological reconceptualisation of social security and refines these in relation to migrants' lived experiences. Overall, this ethnographic study argues for the value of shifting our gaze from a sole focus on migrants as research objects to wider processes and contexts in which migrants' specific meaning-making activities and everyday practices of negotiating in/securities and risks are situated and embedded.

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Author's declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature _____

Printed name: Taulant Guma _____

Introduction

"Oh aye, there's lots of Eastern Europeans coming in, and they like these," explained the South Asian proprietor of the little corner shop, pointing at a shelf filled with Czech and Slovak food products. These had just caught my eye as I walked up to the till to pay for a pint of milk; alongside the usual household essentials, there was a section with jars of jam and pickled cabbage, bake mixes, chocolate bars and so forth, quite distinctive with their Czech and Slovak brand names and labeling. The owner of the shop, which was around the corner from where I lived in 2012, in a residential inner-city area of Glasgow with row after row of three- and four-storey tenements, gestured out of the shop window and continued explaining: "Aye, many people here are now from Slovakia, Poland, Czech Republic... you see the little national flags [of these countries] that I've put on my signs outside?" (Field note Rivertoun¹ 18th February 2012, 11 am)

This enterprising shop owner (and, as I increasingly noticed, others in the area) had picked up on changes in the makeup and needs of the local population that had become pronounced with the arrival of people from the ten Central and East European countries that joined the European Union (hereafter: EU) in 2004 (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovenia) and 2007 (Romania and Bulgaria) and to which the UK government had opened its labour market. Between 2004 and 2011, Glasgow is estimated to have received the second largest number of migrants from the so-called A8 countries² in Scotland (McCollum *et al.* 2012, p. 15), with Polish, Slovak, and Czech nationals (in that order) constituting the three biggest groups. In many parts of the city, these new residents have been changing the face, sound, texture, and global links of Glasgow, alongside other newcomers: within a decade, the non-UK born population of the city rose from 6% in 2001 to 12% in 2011. They have contributed to a significant rise of the total minority ethnic population in the city, which has more than doubled from 7.2% in 2001 to 15.4% in 2011 (Glasgow City

¹ A pseudonym.

² The term 'A8' or 'accession 8' refers to the eight countries that acceded the EU in 2004; they are sometimes also called 'EU8'. Similarly, 'A2' means the two countries that joined the EU in 2007. Throughout the thesis, I use scare quotes for the expressions 'A8 migrants' and 'A8 migration' to problematise their homogenising and essentialising tendencies with regard to individuals coming from these countries and their movements.

Council 2013, p. 1).³ Nowadays, Glasgow does not only have Scotland's largest minority ethnic population but "two thirds of Glasgow's population live in electoral wards that are more diverse than Scotland as a whole" (Simpson 2014, p. 1).

This more recently acquired diversity has often been embraced in the official discourse as a sign of and potential for the city's renewal and international appeal:

Glasgow's scale and diversity makes it Scotland's liveliest city. It has Scotland's largest ethnic and student populations and is renowned for its 'buzz', creative, cultural and entertainment scene (Glasgow Economic Forum 2006, p. 48).

Glasgow is a hugely diverse city, with a rich mix of ethnicities, faith and religious groups, nationalities, cultures and age-related lifestyles present. The 100 plus languages spoken in the city's education establishments are just one indicator of this diversity (Glasgow City Council 2014a).

Glasgow is one of Europe's most vibrant and cosmopolitan cities and Scotland's only metropolitan area (Glasgow City Council 2014b).

The various efforts by tourism and business representatives as well as the local council to market the city as a destination for the likes of investors, leisure and business tourists, and international students are part of Glasgow's ongoing transformation from a "declining industrial to a reinvigorated post-industrial city" (Mooney and Danson 1997, p. 74), which constitutes a specific context of reception for post-accession migrants from Central and Eastern Europe.

Once the centre of colonial trade in 18th-century Britain (Mullen 2009) and then hailed as the 'second city of the British Empire' in the 19th century, Glasgow was a powerhouse of industrialisation with a huge workforce in the cotton and later the shipbuilding and other

³ These figures include the Census category 'Black and Minority Ethnic' (BME) as well as 'other white' (i.e. non-'White Scottish British Irish'). The other key factor that has been highlighted as having contributed to this demographic change is the decision by Glasgow City Council in 2000 to participate in the dispersal of asylum seekers across the UK by the then National Asylum Support Service (Glasgow City Council 2013, p. 1). This brought many asylum seekers to the city from the early 2000s onwards, some of whom have settled in the city upon receiving refugee status. The major countries of origin of asylum seekers dispersed to Glasgow have been changing over the years. For example, in 2005 most asylum seekers came from Turkey, Pakistan, Somalia, and Iran, while in 2011 the top departure countries were China, Pakistan, Iran, Nigeria, and Iraq (Piacentini 2012, p. 130). Other population movements in the form of international students and family reunions have also contributed to an overall increase in Glasgow's diversity.

heavy industries. After WWI, however, the city experienced a major economic downturn, and saw, over the following decades, a long-term decline in its population and status; while in 1961 more than 1.1 million people lived in Glasgow, this figure had dropped dramatically to 662,000 inhabitants by 1981 (Paddison 1993, pp. 343-344). With the city suffering greatly from the effects of de-industrialisation in the 1960s and 1970s, the following two decades were marked by an intensification of efforts to regenerate and revitalise its economy and image. The restructuring of the city's economy throughout the 1980s saw an expansion of service sectors such as banking, insurance and finance, hospitality, tourism and events (Paddison 1993, p. 344). Indeed, these key service sectors "have been a critical part of Glasgow's success in diversifying its economic base over the past twenty years" (Glasgow Economic Commission 2011, p. 21). At the same time, the city has remained the most deprived local authority area in Scotland across various indicators of poverty and deprivation (Glasgow Centre for Population Health 2014). While there have been debates about the extent to which the above rhetoric of 'success' reflects the realities and experiences of those living in the city (Paddison 1993; Mooney and Danson 1997), Glasgow is often promoted as a model of urban regeneration, having achieved a transition from "a 'problem' city to a city of opportunities" (Glasgow Economic Forum 2006, p. 11). Such a narrative of progress and optimism is gladly adopted by the City Council, for example, when taking pride in Glasgow being voted the "Most Welcoming City" in the UK or the "Friendliest City" in the world by travellers and tourists who have visited the city (Loxton 2014; Thomson 2014).

Jana Lazárová⁴ is looking tired today. She has only slept for 2 hours after her night shift as a receptionist at one of the big inner-city hotel chains in Glasgow, greeting and looking after the needs of late night guests, but did not want to miss the chance to "get out of town and into the woods". It's a Sunday morning in March 2012, and I am out in the hills around Loch Lomond with a group of 9 friends (7 Slovaks and a Polish couple), all of whom have come to Glasgow after 2004 and seem to thoroughly enjoy this day together in the outdoors. Miss Lazárová's partner Peter Molnár is handing her some hot tea from a flask. After years of working as a housekeeper at the same hotel, he has just started a part-time job as a sound technician at a prominent live music venue around

⁴ Throughout the thesis, all names of research informants are pseudonyms. In order to anonymise the data and thus avoid traceability of the informants, I chose to use randomly selected full Slovak and Czech names to capture the authenticity of the field and be respectful towards the informants.

Glasgow Central Station, not long after he qualified as a sound technician at a local college. Even though Mr Molnár is excited at the moment about having a lot more "free time to play gigs with [his] band", he hopes that he'll be given more hours in his new job, as the couple are thinking about buying a flat in Glasgow or back in their home town in Slovakia, and they'll need two full-time wages.

(Field note Loch Lomond, 25th March 2012, 10am)

The discursive notion of the 'welcoming city' has not been restricted to tourists and investors only; as a paper published by the local council in cooperation with the COSLA⁵ Strategic Migration Policy Group puts it, "Glasgow has a long history of welcoming migrants and in the last ten years has received significant numbers of asylum seekers under the Home Office's dispersal arrangements as well as migrant workers from the enlarging European Union" (COSLA 2011, p. 1). Attracting and encouraging skilled migrants to settle long-term in Glasgow/Scotland has been of great interest to both Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government, and is often highlighted in calls to the Westminster Government to allow for immigration and asylum policies that are responsive to the specific needs in Scotland (Scottish Government 2010). Halting the population decline of previous decades has been a vital part of both the local and national authorities' policy strategies to improve the standard of living in Scotland and strengthen its economy, in which Glasgow plays a central role (Clark 2014). Net-migration has indeed been the main driver of Glasgow's population growth in recent years, making it Scotland's biggest city with a population of around 600,000 people (Glasgow City Council 2013, p. 1). Over the years, Glasgow City Council and affiliated authorities have acted on their own initiative on several occasions, putting into practice the idea of Glasgow as a welcoming city for migrants. For example, in 2009, the City Council published a 'Welcome to Glasgow' information pack, mainly aimed at new European migrants (Glasgow City Council 2009b).⁶ Glasgow is also the only UK member city of ROMA-Net, a pan-European network of cities with significant Roma populations in which statutory and voluntary organisations co-ordinate projects and services to improve the situation of this population

⁵ COSLA is the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, a body representing local authorities throughout Scotland.

⁶ More recently, in 2012, it passed a motion condemning the (now defunct) UK Border Agency's "policy of destitution as a tool to force refused asylum seekers to leave the UK." The motion, *inter alia*, called for a change in existing rules so as to allow local authorities to provide support to 'failed asylum seekers' (Glasgow City Council 2012).

(Glasgow ROMA-Net 2013). In 2009, for example, Glasgow City Council produced an informational DVD *Living in Govanhill* (in English and Slovak) "to welcome and inform the Roma Slovak community" living in the city (Glasgow City Council 2009a). More generally, the city has a reputation as a stronghold of advocates for migrants' and asylum seekers' rights, and this image is not least promoted beyond the city boundaries through cultural products narrating the solidarity of 'ordinary Glaswegians' with people coming from different parts of the world, for example, in the story of the 'Glasgow Girls' (English 2012). At the same time, many local voices caution against an overly rosy picture based on assumptions that Glasgow and Scotland are 'naturally' supportive and welcoming places for migrants and ethnic minorities (Kay and Morrison 2012, p. 4; Young 2012, pp. 4-5).

A lively conversation had sprung up between the seven individuals in the reception area of the Groundworks advice and support service for EU nationals in the South of Glasgow, while they were waiting for their appointments with one of the Slovak- (and Czech-) speaking support workers. One lady complained about some of her neighbours who seemed to be quite hostile towards her and especially her children. "They say we're too loud, that the children are too loud singing all the time, running around. They tell them to shut up and scream at them. I don't understand everything they say but it's scaring me." Another client joined in and advised her to move out if the neighbours caused her too much trouble. He then asked: "Do they take drugs? Are they that type of people? I've seen Scottish people coming into our close or trying to hide in the staircase drinking alcohol or something. That scares me."

(Field note Groundworks, 21st February 2012, 10 am)

This little montage of excerpts taken from my ethnographic field notes, statistical data and other snippets of information regarding the history of Glasgow conveys a preliminary sense of how the lives of migrants from the accession countries and the city of Glasgow are intertwined in multiple ways and on different levels. The above fragments of texts also hint at the various, sometimes ambivalent discourses on these migrants' role and situations in the city and at the discrepancies between such discourses 'about' these migrants and their lived experiences. These junctions and discrepancies set the scene for the complex, often contradictory and multifaceted field within which this study is situated.

Aims of the thesis and research questions

This thesis aims to offer an empirically-grounded understanding of insecurities and risk faced by Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants who arrived in Glasgow after their countries of origin joined the EU in 2004. It also seeks to inquire into the ways in which these migrants manage insecurities and risks and negotiate social security in their everyday lives in the city. This research interest in the nexus of social security, risk, and post-accession migration developed against the backdrop of the significant attention that the 'new' migrants from Central and Eastern Europe (continue to) receive from policy-makers and scholars as well as the general public in Scotland/UK. The often entertained images of the 'benefit tourist from Eastern Europe' vs. the 'hard-working Eastern European migrant' or the migrant as a 'source of urban cosmopolitanism' perhaps illustrate best how symbolically sensitive and politically contentious the arrival and presence of these individuals in (real/imagined) communities and cities across the UK have become. On the one hand, they are praised for their contributions to the local or national economy, for their work ethic and self-reliance as mostly young and well-educated labour migrants; on the other hand, post-accession migration is depicted as a threat to local public services and the British welfare system, or to British society more generally. In practical terms, local and national authorities have an interest in understanding the character of these migration flows, the needs of these new residents and their uptake of public services, so as to inform their policy-making and potentially adapt the allocation of resources and service provision to the changing population.

The growing body of academic literature on the 'new European migrants' in the UK reflects to some extent these particular interests and concerns with regard to issues around social security and risk.⁷ More specifically, much existing research on this migrant group is mired in perspectives and interests of the 'host society'. Methodological nationalism is a predominant feature in the literature on post-accession migration in the UK, for example, where research focuses exclusively on the question of whether the so-called A8 migrants present a fiscal drain or gain for the local/British economy; where migrants are primarily studied in relation to their potential for disrupting and putting pressure on public services; or where Scotland/UK are

⁷ A detailed discussion of the existing literature on post-accession migrants in relation to social security and risk is provided in chapter 1.

treated as the (only) relevant 'container' for the study of social phenomena such as risk, social security, and migration. Thus, while social security and risk are a common topic in research on these migration flows, our knowledge of what migrants themselves perceive and experience as insecurities and risks and how they negotiate in/securities in their everyday lives in villages and cities around the country is still remarkably limited.

On the other hand, studies which take into account the perspectives of migrants themselves and consider their histories and experiences prior to their arrival in the UK tend to employ an ethnic lens, often uncritically adopting and promoting essentialising notions of culture and ethnicity. Or where research indeed focuses on risks, problems, and challenges encountered by these migrants, all too often concepts prevalent in British society are taken for granted, and categories of immediate interest, for example, for service providers and other stakeholders are prioritised. This is particularly pronounced in studies which present descriptive 'snapshots' of problems and challenges faced by 'A8 migrants' at a particular time and place without considering wider contexts in which their empirical data are embedded. In general, the topicality and policy-relevance of questions touching upon risk and social security in relation to 'A8 migration' seem to have largely sidelined inquiries into the understandings, knowledges, and negotiations of in/securities and risk amongst these migrants. This is also mirrored in the fact that the nexus of social security, risk, and migration has remained largely under-theorised in the existing literature.

Given these limitations in existing research, this thesis aims to present both a contextually rich and a theoretically informed account of how Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants build social security in their everyday lives as active subjects *vis-à-vis* insecurities and risks they encounter in Glasgow. While the study foregrounds their understandings, practices, and lived experiences, it also seeks to offer insights into the complexity of their meaning-making activities, embedded in and shaping wider contexts and structures. Thus, importantly, the gaze 'zooms out' from a restricted view on the migrant as a research object to bring into view broader processes and various players implicated in the emergence and negotiations of in/securities and risk.

More specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:
In the everyday life of Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants living in Glasgow,

- what insecurities and risks do they perceive and experience?
 - Under what conditions and how do these insecurities and risks emerge?
 - What players and contexts are/become relevant in their formation?
- how do they negotiate these insecurities and risks and construct social security?
 - What services, resources, relationships do they draw on to secure themselves against these insecurities and risks?
 - How are these negotiations of social security shaped by migrants' experiences and knowledge as well as by wider processes and structures?

Contributions of the thesis

This thesis seeks to provide several contributions to existing theoretical, methodological, and empirical discussions and research on the nexus of (post-accession) migration, social security, and risk. Firstly, it contributes to language-based area studies by presenting research on the lived experiences of Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants, a group which has hitherto been understudied in the UK. Moreover, the thesis analytically draws on these migrants' individual experiences and collective histories in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, thus adding to our understanding of how migrants (re-)assess and (re)make meanings in an ongoing process. It also demonstrates the value of learning the language of the research informants both with regard to furthering an interpretative understanding of their experiences as well as to 'negotiating access'.

Theoretically, by drawing on two hitherto separate literatures, the thesis fruitfully integrates socio-cultural concepts of risk with an anthropological reconceptualisation of social security. The combination of these theoretical approaches to risk and social security seeks to add to anthropological and sociological debates on how risks are produced and contested and how and under what conditions individuals are able to construct social security for themselves and their families, particularly in the case of migrants. In doing so, the thesis also makes a

substantial contribution to migration research. The strength of the resulting theoretical approach lies in the fact that it does not prioritise the views and perspectives of the 'host society' over that of the migrants; moreover, it offers a processual view of everyday practices and experiences, rather than a 'snapshot' of problems and challenges. In addition, each empirical chapter of the thesis develops both the theoretical and empirical argument in its own right, exploring, for example, the production of ethnicity 'in the field'; the relationship between risk and positionality; or the notion of transnational 'care circulation' amongst family and kinship networks.

Methodologically, the thesis provides a concrete example of how the pitfalls of methodological nationalism and the ethnic lens can be avoided in research on migrants' everyday negotiations of in/securities and risk. The study is based on intensive ethnographic fieldwork amongst Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants in Glasgow conducted between January and December 2012. The main body of empirically derived data consists of field notes and transcribed open-ended interviews; I further draw on secondary data such as digital communication, leaflets and reports by numerous state and third sector organisations, as well as news reports, films, and radio programmes. Focusing on a language-based group across ethnic, national, and cultural boundaries and analytically probing the heterogeneity of the research group are suggested here as useful methodological strategies to challenge simplistic generalisations as well as the uncritical adoption of ethnocentric and/or predominant concepts and ideas.

Finally, the thesis offers insights that have relevance for policy-making and practice. In fact, Glasgow City Council has been involved as a collaborative partner in the ESRC-funded CASE studentship, contributing not only financially but also substantively through the advice and support of a third supervisor based in the Corporate Policy Unit of the council. As part of the collaboration agreement, I have given three presentations to members of Glasgow City Council on various aspects and preliminary findings of my research. Over the following months, I will produce a policy paper for Glasgow City Council based on the theoretical and empirical findings of this thesis that have practical implications for their policy-making and service provision.

Outline of the thesis

Chapter 1 critically examines the existing literature on the so-called A8 migrants in the UK and draws out its limitations. Furthermore, anthropological and sociological notions of social security and risk are introduced as the two key framing devices for the study. In doing so, I develop the specific research perspective adopted in the thesis and refine the research questions that this study seeks to answer. Chapter 2 deals with the methodology and empirical strategies that I employed. The chapter outlines the constructionist epistemology that underpins this study and details the ethnographic approach taken here. A reflection on the analytical process as well as on a number of ethical issues concludes the chapter. Subsequently, the empirical chapters are introduced. Chapter 3 situates my research in time and place as it reveals a specific temporal and spatial pattern with regard to my research informants' migration histories and employment-related experiences. Drawing on theories of economic globalisation, I argue that their employment insecurities in Glasgow should be understood in the context of the global movement of capital and labour, rather than only within the framework of the EU freedom of movement rules. Chapter 4 addresses the question of how ethnicity became relevant with regard to institutionally-provided support to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow. I adopt a boundary-making perspective to denaturalise and analyse various practices through which 'the Roma' are produced as an ethnic category and associated with neediness. I suggest that, as a consequence, Roma are defined as a 'risk population' which reinforces and furthers their stigmatisation and marginalisation in Glasgow. Chapter 5 is concerned with a specific risk that emerged amongst my research informants, that is, the risk of Roma children being forcibly taken away from their families. Drawing on socio-cultural conceptualisations of risk I discuss the varying perceptions and reactions to this risk among the actors in the field. I introduce the conceptual linkage between positionality and risk in order to account for the complex ways in which risk perception and management are shaped. Chapter 6 focuses on my informants' experiences of state-provided support, illustrated by their encounters with the HMRC⁸ and a local Job Centre. The discussion centres on migrants' understanding of the changing British welfare system and resulting insecurities. By combining the theoretical notions of the 'punitive state' and 'statecraft', I show that my informants' everyday experiences and encounters with state actors are part of nation-building processes. In

⁸ HMRC stands for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs which is the UK's main tax authority.

the final empirical chapter, I present a more systematic exploration of migrants' everyday negotiations of social security and risk. The analysis is developed using ethnographic examples relating to institutionally-provided healthcare and informal care-giving practices amongst family networks both in Glasgow and beyond. I develop the notion of 'exploring potentialities of care' to describe the specific ways in which my research informants drew on/offered various resources, ideas, and relationships in order to build social security. In conclusion, chapter 8 revisits the research questions and discusses the empirical and theoretical findings of the study. The thesis concludes with a reflection on the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 1: Researching social security, risk, and migration

The landscape of social scientific research on migration has diversified enormously since the now classic study *The Polish peasant in Europe and America* (Thomas and Znaniecki 1927) first empirically explored a migration process as a complex phenomenon. Especially since the 1980s, diverse aspects of and phenomena related to human migration have been researched from various perspectives (Heisler 2008; Brettell and Hollifield 2008). Despite its still relatively short history, the post-accession migration to the UK from the eight Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004 has also been increasingly studied across different disciplines, ranging from research into migration and settlement patterns and their effects, studies of life situations and migration experiences, to questions of identity, belonging, and intercultural encounters (see Burrell 2010 for a more extensive overview). This chapter discusses a selection of empirical studies from this vast and still growing body of literature as well as a number of key theoretical concepts with regard to their relevance for understanding the nexus of risk, social security, and migration which is at the heart of my research. Further theoretical and conceptual literature that I employed to analyse and interpret the specific migration experiences and trajectories that emerged from my empirical data is integrated into the empirical chapters that follow. While the selection of research reviewed here aims at providing at least a sense of the breadth of the existing literature, the review is mainly concerned with the broader question of whether and how the respective work may contribute to a better understanding of Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants' negotiations of in/securities and risks in Glasgow.

The chapter is structured in three parts. Firstly, I critically review various strands in the existing empirical literature relevant to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in the UK. It should be noted that studies of Polish migrants, as the numerically most significant group, form a large part of the available research on post-accession migration from Central and Eastern European countries to the UK, with only a few works focusing on Czech and/or Slovak migrants.⁹ The review thus includes studies which refer to this migrant group under

⁹ For example, Búriková's (2006) study looked at the experiences of Slovakian au pairs in London and highlights the emotionally challenging work situation of living with their employer families. Lášticová (2014) conducted a

various guises: for example, 'A8 migrants', 'EU8 migrants', 'new migrant workers', 'new EU migrants', 'East Europeans', 'Roma migrants', and 'Slovakian and Czech Roma'. In the second part of the chapter, I introduce theoretical concepts of social security and risk which have largely been absent from the existing empirical migration literature in the UK but which informed my approach to the research and the analysis of data. Drawing on these concepts and accentuating gaps in the literature, I conclude the chapter by restating my research aims and questions.

1.1 Post-accession migration, social security, and risk in the existing literature

A significant body of the academic literature on migrants from Central and Eastern Europe in the UK has been responding to wider social, political, and socio-demographic changes. Statistical analyses have estimated that between 2004 and 2010 1.48 million people came to the UK from the eight Central and East European countries that acceded to the EU in 2004 (McCollum and Findlay 2011, p. 79), with around 723,000 having been in employment in the UK in 2013 (The Migration Observatory 2014). In this context, one can identify several distinct, albeit sometimes overlapping, strands of research which (explicitly or implicitly) deal with interrelations of social security, risk, and migration: a major part of the literature centres on the question of how these post-accession migrants impact on the UK welfare state and public services (as well as on the British economy and labour market). Another body of research is mainly concerned with employment-related problems and insecurities this migrant population is faced with in the UK. A third strand comprises research with a strong policy-orientation that looks into the situation of 'A8 migrants' in specific locales and their relation with social services. Fourthly, in the context of Glasgow I consider several studies which look at Roma migrants as a particular group with specific needs and issues. Finally, I introduce studies which focus on social networks and transnational practices, particularly amongst post-accession migrants from Poland.

small pilot-study on the role and importance of social media such as Facebook amongst Slovak migrants in the UK.

1.1.1 Calculating the costs and benefits of 'A8 migration'

With regard to the first strand, in the context of a heightened political debate, media coverage, and public concerns about the large numbers of 'East Europeans' arriving in the country and tropes of 'benefit tourism' and pressure on 'the public purse' (Portes 2013), a considerable amount of literature has focused on the question whether 'A8 migrants' have had a negative or positive effect on the British social security system and economy. Early studies assessing the labour market impact after the 2004 round of EU enlargement found that 'A8 migration' had no negative effect on employment amongst the British-born population (Gilpin *et al.* 2006; Blanchflower *et al.* 2007; Pollard *et al.* 2008). Gilpin *et al.* (2006), for example, argued that the UK economy was capable of absorbing the large number of migrants without any significant economic consequences. Rather, as a study by Dustmann *et al.* (2008) concluded, the economic impact of 'A8 migration' on average wages was positive; because a majority of these migrants worked for low wages and in low-skilled jobs incommensurate with their qualifications, this occupational downgrading generated a 'surplus' that accrued to UK-born workers and employers (p. 24). Others, however, have warned of negative effects at the lower end of the labour market and youth unemployment (Scott *et al.* 2008).

More specifically relating to the welfare system, a quantitative study by Dustmann *et al.* (2010) for the years 2005-2009 found that 'A8 migrants' had higher employment rates¹⁰ than the UK-born population and were thus 60% less likely to receive state benefits and tax credits, and 58% less likely to live in social housing than their British-born counterparts. Therefore, the study concluded, "A8 immigrants have made a substantial net contribution to the UK fiscal system" (p. 26). This finding was confirmed in a recent paper by Dustmann and Frattini (2014) which examined the fiscal impact of recent EEA¹¹ migrants over an extended period from 1995 to 2011, among which 'A8 migrants' were found to be particularly strong contributors. These conclusions, however, were re-evaluated and questioned by MigrationWatch (2014) and Rowthorn (2014). In their report, MigrationWatch, a think tank lobbying for stricter immigration controls in the UK, argued that the financial contributions of recent EEA

¹⁰ 90% of men and 80% of women amongst 'A8 migrants' were in employment, thus showing a higher employment rate than the UK-born population (p. 9).

¹¹ EEA stands for European Economic Area which includes the EU member states as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway.

migrants had been overestimated and the calculations had not taken into consideration their impact on other public services such as education and health as well as the changing demographic characteristics of this migrant population. Contrary to Dustmann and Frattini's (2014) study, MigrationWatch (2014) thus claimed that the total net financial contribution of recent EEA migrants was negative, at GDP -2.5 billion. Rowthorn (2014) assessed Dustmann and Frattini's findings alongside the MigrationWatch report and suggested that the large positive effect that the former study had presented was "either smaller or non-existent" (p. 55), especially when the 'costs' of job losses of the native population due to migrant labour were quantified.

As these examples show, this ongoing debate in the literature is mainly concerned with quantifying the beneficial or damaging economic consequences of immigration from Central and Eastern European countries to the UK. Research focusing on this question involves largely survey-based, quantitative analysis by economists with little agreement on what measurements and what aspects to include in their cost/benefit-calculations for the UK. Whatever the often controversial conclusions of individual studies - which are prominently reported in the British mass media - what underlies this strand in the existing literature on the relationship between migrants and social security is a perspective that centres on the interests and boundaries of the nation-state (Breckner 2002; Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2002; Glick Schiller 2007). This 'methodological nationalism' takes the nation-state for granted and perceives nation/state/society as the natural form of the modern world (Beck 2000; Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2002). In this approach, 'A8 migrants' are understood and depicted as outsiders who are not (yet) part of the British nation and its mutual relationships of solidarity, and thus (potentially) constitute a burden to and problem for the British welfare system, public services, and society more generally. Even if they are not found to be a 'drain', their presence must be justified, and this is done in purely financial and economic terms.

1.1.2 Employment-related risks and insecurities faced by 'A8 workers' in the UK

A second strand in the existing literature on the nexus of social security, risk, and 'A8 migration' to the UK takes a slightly different starting point. Rather than focusing on the

impact of migrants from the eight accession countries on the British economy and public services, this part of the literature addresses the question of how this migrant population fares in the arrival country and what kind of insecurities and risks they experience here. Employment and work-related issues serve as a central theme for many studies: it has been widely acknowledged that 'A8 migrants' in the UK are characterised by a high employment rate but concentrated in low-wage, low-skilled employment (Anderson 2010; Sumption and Somerville 2010; CIPD 2013). The analysis of the most common employment sectors for all 'A8 migrants' who registered with the WRS¹² over its entire lifetime (from 1 May 2004 to 30 April 2011) revealed that almost 43% were grouped as working in 'administration, business and management'; however, the majority of these individuals were employed by recruitment agencies which are categorised as 'administration, business and management' but worked, in fact, in other sectors such as hospitality, the food or agricultural sector (McCollum *et al.* 2012, p. 8). Other important employment sectors were hospitality and catering (17.4% of WRS registrants), agriculture (9.6%), manufacturing (6.4%) and food processing (5.5%). With regard to the low levels of earnings, Pollard *et al.* (2008), for example, reported that in 2007 the weekly earnings of 89% of 'A8 migrant' workers was less than £400, compared to 57% of British-born workers. Another study found that in 2006/07 around 65% of A8 nationals were earning just about the minimum wage (Anderson 2010, p. 305). A recent report by the Migration Advisory Committee (2014, p. 106) confirmed that this overrepresentation of citizens of the A8 countries in low-wage and low-skilled work continues to the present.

It seems thus unsurprising that various studies have highlighted a range of employment-related issues amongst post-accession migrants in addition to poor pay, such as inadequate work conditions, insecure and short term contracts, lack of social protection (Anderson *et al.* 2006; McKay 2008; Scullion and Morris 2009a; Anderson 2010). A recent qualitative study by Scott *et al.* (2012), in which more than half of the interviewees were from A8 countries, reported experiences of forced labour amongst migrants working in the food industry across the UK. Practices of forced labour by employment agencies or employers included forms of debt bondage or the 'underwork scam' (when "too many workers [are] recruited and then [...] given

¹² WRS stands for Worker Registration Scheme which was introduced in 2004 by the UK government as part of transitional measures when the A8 countries - Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, and Slovenia - joined the EU. The scheme required citizens of these eight countries to register their employment in the UK with the Home Office for monitoring purposes (Home Office 2013).

just enough employment to meet their financial obligations to the gangmaster" (p. 68)), as well as the bullying or threatening of workers, illegal deductions from wages, and the denial of holiday and sick pay.

The issues raised in this strand of the literature provide a more insightful picture of some of the risks and challenges faced by this group of migrants. Unlike some economists who have taken the high employment rate amongst this population as an indication of their successful integration into the British labour market,¹³ the largely qualitative literature on the situation and experiences of people who have arrived from the A8 countries in the UK has moved beyond cost-/benefit-arguments and drawn attention to various contexts in which their migration has taken place. Of particular concern has been the increase of employers' and recruitment agencies' controlling powers over workers as a result of the deregulation of employment relations in the UK labour market over the past two decades (Anderson 2010; Sporton 2013). Moreover, the UK government's immigration policies have been problematised: while the high labour demand for unskilled jobs prompted the UK government in 2004 to allow citizens of the accession countries full access to its labour market (Sporton 2013, p. 444), the government also introduced 'transitional measures' that restricted the social rights of 'A8 migrants' for the first seven years.¹⁴ Firstly, the Worker Registration Scheme was set up to monitor the impact of A8 nationals arriving in the UK, formally register the type of work they do, and limit their access to state welfare (Anderson *et al.* 2006, p. 2). The Scheme required nationals of these countries to register their employment (which included paying a fee of £90) with the UK Home Office if they wished to work for more than a month. Secondly, a 12-month employment rule was introduced, so that these nationals could access out-of-work benefits only after 12 consecutive months of being in employment¹⁵ and were entitled to in-work benefits only as long as they were working. This created the conditions for employers and employment agencies to recruit a 'hyperflexible' migrant workforce that could easily be hired (and fired) on short-term and temporary contracts (Anderson 2010). As various authors

¹³ Blanchflower and Lawton (2008) even went as far as stating that "the post-EU enlargement arrivals to the UK [...] appear to have had no difficulty assimilating into the native population, and have been welcomed with open arms" (p. 21).

¹⁴ These restrictions expired on 30th April 2011. See chapter 6 for more details and a discussion of the changing welfare policies in the UK with a focus on recent migrants.

¹⁵ That means that if someone lost their job, for example, after 11 months, they would also lose their entitlement to state benefits. See chapter 6 for an empirical example.

argue, it is in this context that 'A8 migrants' have proven to be 'popular' amongst British employers and recruitment agencies; their analyses thus challenge crude generalisations and explanations that see these migrants as having a 'better attitude' or "superior work ethic to British workers" (Migration Advisory Committee 2014, p. 3), and instead, consider this image as a social construct (Anderson 2010, pp. 212-213; Scott *et al.* 2012, Findlay *et al.* 2013). Thus, cautioning against insecurities and risks associated with low-skilled and low-paid jobs, these authors have called for more regulation of the UK labour market and protection of workers' rights. It is worth noting that while this body of literature has problematised a lack of regulations, obfuscated employment relations, and the role of recruitment agencies or government policies, the analyses tend to remain within the boundaries of the UK, giving little consideration to forces and processes beyond the boundaries of the British nation-state.

1.1.3 Local experiences of migrants' welfare needs and service provision

A number of locally-focused studies have reported issues in relation to post-accession migrants' access to public services or the ways services are provided. This body of literature is predominantly orientated towards providing evidence to policy-makers; these studies are mostly sponsored or commissioned by the relevant local authority or other public bodies who are keen to understand the numbers of migrants from the eight accession countries in their mandated area, migrants' longer-term intentions, welfare needs, and local uptake of public services. Although variations have been noted across different localities, many of these studies report similar findings (see Sumption and Somerville 2010 and George *et al.* 2011 for reviews), which is why I will only briefly discuss three selected examples from this part of the literature before I review, in more detail, studies conducted in Glasgow. Orchard *et al.*'s (2007) study of 'EU8 migrants' and their access to key services in the Scottish city of Edinburgh, for example, which was conducted for Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Government, found that housing and accommodation services, employment, welfare benefits, health, and language support (in this order) were the services most sought after. However, migrants' awareness of their entitlements varied, with them knowing least about their rights with regard to housing, health and social care support (p. 8). While the research design combined a small-scale survey of 67 'EU8 migrants' in the city with a survey of and qualitative interviews with service

providers, as well as a case study of a local shelter for homeless people, the reported findings seemed to draw mainly on the issues raised by those involved in service provision.

De Lima and Wright's (2009) qualitative study of post-2004 'EU migrants', on the other hand, focused on a rural area, the Scottish Grampians, and placed a greater emphasis on the experiences and agency of migrants themselves. Commissioned by Communities Scotland, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, Scottish Enterprise Grampian and NHS Grampian, the study of the welfare needs of 'new EU migrants'¹⁶ highlighted a range of factors. Differently from Orchard *et al.*'s study, whose research sample was comprised mainly of individuals working in the service sector, de Lima and Wright noted that migrants in the Grampians were predominantly employed in food processing and agriculture, hospitality and tourism, and social and health care. In addition, a majority of their research respondents had arrived and found employment individually, that is, without using recruitment agencies. Through qualitative interviews, focus groups and questionnaires with migrants, service providers, and employers, they found that service providers had little understanding of the needs of this relatively new migrant population, that many migrants were unaware of certain services, and that both sides experienced language and communication problems and lacked an understanding of differing cultural norms and expectations (pp. 398-399).

Scullion and Morris' (2009b) study of 'migrant workers' (again including Portuguese alongside Polish, Lithuanian, Slovak, and Czech nationals) in the Midlands city of Peterborough is noteworthy as they disaggregated their findings according to nationality and included findings for self-identified Roma (14%), predominantly from Slovakia and the Czech Republic, amongst their research sample. Commissioned by the City Council, the research used semi-structured questionnaires with 278 EU migrants as well as a survey with stakeholders in order to explore the situation of 'migrant workers' in the area and look into a range of issues, including employment, education and training, community integration, housing, access to services, and future plans. The study's findings were similar to those from other research on 'A8 migration': a prevalence of low-skilled, low-paid work, the English language as a major barrier to their progression in employment, as well as, more generally, to gaining a better understanding of their rights in the UK (e.g. with regard to rental contracts, work). However,

¹⁶ This category included recent Portuguese migrants which comprised a relatively large group in this area.

Scullion and Morris also presented differences between groups by nationality (and ethnicity with regard to Roma). For example, it is interesting that, while 32% of Roma respondents indicated they had no formal qualifications (p. 55), the unemployment rate for Roma migrants in the sample represented the sample average (37%); Czech and Portuguese migrants in their sample showed higher unemployment rates than all other groups. Finally, in the context of Peterborough having found itself in the spotlight of the British media about so-called migrant 'shanty towns', the study highlighted as a particular issue migrants' lack of knowledge about housing services and support.

With regard to Glasgow, a small number of studies has inquired into issues and challenges that migrants from the A8 countries face in the city. Most notably, a study commissioned by Glasgow City Council and conducted by research consultancy Blake Stevenson (2007) set out to "quantify the flow of A8 nationals into the city and to establish the impact of the migration on the local population, businesses, and on the migrants themselves" (p. 1) based on questionnaires with 262 nationals of the eight 2004 accession countries, interviews with 15 employers, and focus groups with 'A8 migrants'. While acknowledging the difficulty of quantifying the overall 'A8 migrant' population in Glasgow, the report estimated that more than 5,000 were resident in the city in 2006 and this number was expected to rise to around 8,000 by 2007. In terms of nationality, Polish were found to be by far the largest group in Glasgow, followed by a sizable number of Slovaks, "primarily Slovak Romas [sic]¹⁷" (p. 63); other A8 nationals were found to be present only in small numbers (pp. 62-63). With regard to characteristics such as age distribution, spatial concentration, as well as employment profile and qualifications, the post-accession migrant population in Glasgow roughly conformed to patterns found on a national level: predominantly young (between 16-34 years old) and with relatively high qualifications, they were scattered across the city with small concentrations in some locations and showed a high employment rate with individuals working mainly in hospitality and catering, 'administration, business and management'¹⁸, manufacturing and construction.

¹⁷ While the authors claim to "know that there are significant numbers of Slovak Romas [sic] in Glasgow" (p. 18), it remains unclear in the report on what evidence this statement is based. Moreover, the report concedes that "it was significantly more difficult to reach the Roma community through the survey" (p. 6) and their insights on Roma in Glasgow seem to be based mainly on discussions with a number of NGO workers and service providers.

¹⁸ See chapter 1, section 1.1.1, above for an explanation of this ambivalent category.

The report also highlighted some risks and challenges faced by 'A8 migrants' living in Glasgow that were noted in similar studies elsewhere in Scotland and the UK. This included employment-related issues such as low pay, poor working conditions, working unsociable hours, and denial of statutory sick pay. The study found that 61 per cent of the surveyed migrants spoke only "adequate or basic" English (p. 42) and suggested that a lack of English language proficiency constituted a major barrier to finding better employment and accessing services in Glasgow. Interpretation services were thus deemed of importance and were considered one of the areas in which service providers had experienced pressure. Other areas that were noted for facing a greater demand included schools, health services, policing as well as the private rental market in particular locales of the city. At the same time, the study reported that migrants had varying awareness of different services, thus leading to an ambivalent picture regarding migrants' impact on local services. Services that were less well known comprised benefit and money advice, childcare, career and business start-up advice, as well as housing support. It should be noted that, unlike Scullion and Morris' (2009b) Peterborough study which analysed and presented the data by national groups and the additional category of Roma, Blake Stevenson's (2007) report did not break down its survey findings by nationality/ethnicity and, instead, lumped migrants from the A8 countries together. Nevertheless, the Blake Stevenson study repeatedly singled out "Slovak Romas [sic]" as a problematic group with "complex needs" (p. 56) posing significant challenges for service providers, especially with regard to schools and health care, and they were often contrasted with Polish migrants who were reported as 'more integrated' and well-informed about services.

Before I assess other Glasgow-based studies focusing on Roma migrants as one specific group among the post-accession migrants who arrived in the city, several points can be highlighted with regard to the above strand in the literature. The reviewed studies brought to the fore a whole range of issues, challenges, and barriers faced by migrants from Central and Eastern Europe and signaled an interest of local policy-makers in gaining evidence to make their policies and service provision more responsive to this new population in their area. Employing similar research designs - often using surveys of migrants combined with interviews with service providers and other stakeholders, sometimes alongside a small number of qualitative interviews or focus groups with either migrants or stakeholders - these studies were able to raise a long list of issues and concerns drawing on different insights. However, caution should

be exercised with regard to the generalisability of their findings as they are not based on random sampling and/or have very small sample sizes, even though the studies often do not acknowledge this explicitly. Also, with few exceptions (such as de Lima and Wright (2009)), the findings seemed to overwhelmingly prioritise the views and perspectives of service providers and other organisations in the field rather than reflect the experiences and understandings of the migrant respondents. This can lead to questionable findings,¹⁹ and, more generally, to descriptive 'snap-shots' that leave us with little understanding of the meanings that such situations and events have from the perspectives of affected migrants and in the context of their lives. The question of how these migrants deal with problems in their everyday life does not come into view. Furthermore, these local policy-oriented studies tend to frame their research group as 'migrant workers' or 'labour migrants';²⁰ it is quite telling that all these studies included surveys or consultations with employers among the stakeholders. In some ways, this focus on employment diverts attention from people's lives as social beings (not only/primarily as labour) with histories, aspirations, and experiences beyond the realm of work.

1.1.4 (Slovak and Czech) Roma as a group with 'specific welfare needs'

A number of studies on risks and challenges faced by recent migrants from Central and Eastern Europe in Glasgow have focused on a particular group within this population: Roma (Poole and Adamson 2008; Paterson *et al.* 2011, Sime *et al.* 2014; Clark 2014). Poole and Adamson's (2008) study inquired into the problems and issues faced by Roma migrants, who had come mainly from Slovakia, when accessing various services in Glasgow. Based on semi-structured interviews with service providers, the report identified a number of barriers and difficulties that Roma encountered when accessing employment and employment support,

¹⁹ For example, Blake Stevenson's (2007) report stated that 55% of the surveyed migrants "had experienced some form of homelessness" upon their arrival in Scotland (p. 52). Yet, on closer inspection, this high percentage was composed of people who had been "living temporarily with friends or family" or had been "living in [...] hostels, or other temporary accommodation" (p. 78), and only 1% had slept rough. Without knowing when and under what circumstances people had stayed in such temporary accommodations - one could think, for example, of the first days and weeks after people arrived in Scotland before finding themselves their own accommodation - representing these survey results as a high level of 'hidden homelessness' seems to be rather rash as it is only one possible interpretation amongst others.

²⁰ The practice of construing these migrants mainly through the lens of work appears to be also promoted by the widespread usage of the Home Office Accession Monitoring Reports (based on WRS data) and the Labour Force Survey as "probably the most accessible source of information on recent migrants" (Burrell 2010, p. 300) in many studies.

welfare benefits, health services, and schooling and education services. The large concentration of this group in low-paid, temporary, and agency work was noted as a significant problem, leading many Roma to have an insecure and irregular income as well as being exposed to exploitation from employment agencies. The study emphasised that this was an issue affecting especially Roma as "the only takers" (p. 6) of jobs involving poor working conditions, long shifts, and unsociable hours. Thus, the introduction of temporary restrictions to welfare entitlements for the citizens of the A8 countries, the authors argued, particularly impacted on Roma migrants, impairing their access to unemployment support and compelling them to live on low incomes and "pool their meager resources and share sub-standard accommodation in order to maintain a roof over their heads" (p. 6). What is more, the restrictions on their access to social welfare put them at risk of homelessness and destitution. In terms of access to health services, the report mentioned language and cultural barriers as the two main issues affecting Roma. It was argued that the lack of English language skills prevented Roma from being able to register with GPs and attend appointments without the presence of an interpreter. Whereas interpreting services for Roma (mainly in Slovak and sometimes in Romani) were available, the authors noted that such services were inadequate, especially considering a high degree of health concerns amongst Roma.

Finally, Poole and Adamson's (2008) study outlined issues and challenges with regard to schooling and education services. The authors reported that low educational attainment still remained a major problem amongst Roma children, even though some progress was being made. This issue was attributed to "Roma culture" (p. 9), arguing that Roma gave less importance to formal education, as well as to the discrimination and exclusion that Roma had historically suffered with regard to state education. The authors drew attention to the Slovak education system and its exclusionary practices of placing Roma children in 'special' schools. It is in this historical context, the authors pointed out, that Roma were suspicious of state agencies and institutions. Thus, they argued, it would require additional efforts for service providers and support agencies in Glasgow to engage and build trust with the "Roma community" (p. 13). Overall, pointing to the various barriers and challenges faced by Roma, their cultural expectations, specific history of persecution and exclusion, the study defined Roma as a group with specific needs which thus required continued care and attention by stakeholders and service providers in the city as well as the Scottish and UK government. The

recommendations made by the study included, for example, calls for the Scottish/UK government to legally recognise Roma as an ethnic minority group in the UK (p. 10).

Although conducted several years later, Sime *et al.*'s (2014) study of Roma families' engagement with service providers in Glasgow reiterated some of the issues and risks identified by Poole and Adamson's (2008) earlier study. This included the prevalence of poverty, poor health, unstable employment, lack of English language skills, and low levels of educational attainment amongst Roma children. Similarly, the study emphasised cultural barriers and previous experiences of exclusion and discrimination against Roma as major factors affecting these migrants' access to services and engagement with service providers such as teachers and health practitioners. With regard to education, which was a central concern in the study, it noted, for example, that Roma "parental attitudes and low expectations for their children are often justified through parents' own negative experiences of schooling and beliefs that Roma children would not go far in education" (p. 47). Differently from Poole and Adamson (2008), Sime *et al.*'s study included interviews and focus groups with Roma families (22 adults (predominantly female) coming from Slovakia (16), Romania (4), and the Czech Republic (2) and 10 children) alongside interviews with service providers. Nevertheless, while the interview accounts of Roma families covered a wide range of topics, from education, parenting and aspirations, to migration, religion, and identity, with regard to issues around securities and respondents' experiences of service provision, which were the main topic of the research, priority was given to the concerns of stakeholders (rather than that of migrants). Their policy recommendations - including raising awareness of the importance of formal education amongst Roma families; establishing better links between the Roma population and service providers; forging cooperation between organisations working with Roma and Roma communities themselves; employing "different approaches to working with Roma families, less formal, focused on one-to-one interactions, rather than written materials" (p. 49) - again did not seem to reflect the concerns and understandings of the interviewed migrants.

Very few studies pertaining to the Roma population in Glasgow have taken a more critical view and focused on the mechanisms that have led to the (ongoing) exclusion and marginalisation of Roma migrants in Glasgow (Paterson *et al.* 2011; Grill 2012; Clark 2014). One is a non-academic report by Paterson *et al.* (2011), conducted by a local law centre, which

examined 66 case files of their Roma clients (who came predominantly from Slovakia and the Czech Republic but also included individuals from Romania, Lithuania, and Latvia) and identified several barriers that their clients had faced when accessing welfare benefits. The report criticized the UK authorities' administration of welfare benefits and highlighted the resulting insecurities and risks for their clients. In their close analyses of these cases, the authors found various administrative failings, delays, inefficiencies as well as discriminatory practices with regard to the processing of their Roma clients' benefit applications by authorities such as HMRC, the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions), and local authorities. This included unreasonable delays in making a decision; erroneous decisions on applications and the incorrect application of law by the authorities; the unexplained suspension of payments or refusals of applications; as well as the lengthy and unexplained retention of applicant's supporting documents such as passports and other identification documents. As part of the report, the authors also surveyed the affected Roma clients to assess the impact of these administrative failures and neglect. They found that individuals were affected in various ways, for example, they struggled with rent payments, fell into debt, were evicted from accommodation, faced homelessness and destitution, and were unable to travel back home (due to the UK authorities holding their documents) (p. 20). The report thus concluded that the UK authorities treated their Roma clients "differently from benefit claimants of other races" (p. 35) and found these authorities to be in breach of the public sector duties prescribed by the Equality Act 2010.²¹

Overall, with regard to studies focusing on post-accession Roma migrants in Glasgow, it should be noted that these were mainly conducted in one particular inner-city locale in the south of Glasgow - which had become known as an area with a large population of Roma migrants - and typically drew on small convenience samples, so should not be understood as representative of the wider 'Roma population' in the city. As was emphasized above, many studies, in fact, considered Roma migrants as 'hard-to-reach' or as a group 'difficult to engage with', and thus their views were often absent from research findings. In this respect, Sime *et al.*'s (2014) study provided a welcome insight into the views and experiences of a number of Roma families themselves by including their qualitative accounts in the research report, even

²¹ The Equality Act 2010 stipulates that public sector authorities have a duty "not to discriminate against, harass or victimise people with a protected characteristic" (Paterson *et al.* 2011, p. 11). According to these authors, "Roma, as an ethnic group, are protected by the duty by virtue of their race" (p. 10).

though this did not extend to areas more immediately relevant to my research on negotiations of risks and securities. Furthermore, in most studies it remained unclear how migrants were identified as Roma by the researchers or stakeholders that they consulted/interviewed; these works displayed what Wimmer and Glick Schiller have criticized as 'the ethnic lens' (Glick Schiller *et al.* 2006; Wimmer 2007), by taking the category of 'Roma' for granted and treating it as the natural and most significant characteristic of individuals.

This point has also been problematized in a paper by Grill (2012) who conducted ethnographic research which included participant observation among Slovak Roma migrants in Glasgow. His research looked into the categorisation processes that led to the "crystallisation" (p. 42) of the Roma category in the city. According to Grill, references made with regard to Roma as a distinct group were less prevalent in the first years following the post-accession migration of many Slovak nationals to Glasgow. The author identified a discursive shift around 2006-7 when Roma began to be marked out and their Gypsiness was emphasized. This shift was realised through "a fusion of well-established representations of British Gypsies and Travellers, locals' own experiences and encounters with Roma in Glasgow, accounts produced by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), British state institutions, and EU organizations, and by Czech and Slovak interpreters and media-fuelled notions about post-socialist Eastern European migrants" (p. 43). With the category of Roma becoming associated with Gypsiness, negative images of Roma migrants such as being involved in "anti-social" or "criminal" behaviour, and being "disconnected" from formal institutions, began to take hold (p. 43). At the same time, "cultural" explanations of actions and practices of Roma migrants started to be emphasised. According to Grill, two contrasting images emerged: Roma were depicted as either poor or as a problematic group and a menace to the local population.

In general, as the reviewed examples show, among the post-accession migrant population in Glasgow, 'the Roma' have attracted heightened attention by policy-makers, academics, and NGOs. Often, they have been treated as a specific group distinct from other Slovak or Czech nationals (and sometimes grouped together with Roma from other countries such as Romania) and their "cultural traits", traditions, and historical experiences have been used as explanations for issues they faced in the UK. While studies such as Paterson *et al.*'s (2011) and Grill's (2012) provide helpful critical perspectives, with regard to the specific theme of everyday

negotiations of risk and social security they offer little insight into the mundane experiences and practices of Roma migrants in the city.

1.1.5 Social networks and transnational ties amongst Polish migrants in the UK

Questions of negotiating risks and dealing with problems have been examined through a number of qualitative studies which inquired into social networks amongst post-accession migrants from Poland in the UK (White and Ryan 2008; Ryan *et al.* 2009; Ryan 2010; White 2011; Moskal 2013). This body of literature has drawn mainly on the concepts of transnationalism and social networks, notions which have been fruitfully paired in migration research in recent decades. Starting from the 1990s, various empirical studies have shown the significance of social networks in facilitating and containing migration flows between countries and in easing migrants' settlement and adaptation processes (Brettell 2008, p. 124). They have pointed out that transnational networks, be it in the form of 'strong' or 'weak' ties between people, not only connect individuals with each other across space, but also reduce risks that migrants might face throughout the migration process (Basch *et al.* 1994). These positive effects were thought to be based on social capital - expressed and realised, for example, through the exchange of information, remittances, and the provision of social or emotional support and care (Ho 1993; Parreñas 2001) - that migrants used to deal with problems and maintain family and collective links.

Looking at the strategies employed by Polish migrant families living in London, Ryan *et al.* (2009) identified various ways in which these families drew on kin support transnationally. This included maintaining everyday communication with family members in Poland, which became a source of emotional support especially for those migrants who had migrated alone. Support also took material forms, maybe best captured in migrants' remittances to their families in Poland. At the same time, these migrants were found to pay regular and sometimes extended visits to Poland to meet with their relatives and friends. Visits occurred also in the other direction, that is, family members travelled from Poland to London to offer support, for example, with childcare. Drawing on family networks transnationally enabled Polish migrants living in London to uphold family relationships and cope with life 'at a distance'.

The importance of social networks and transnational ties amongst Polish migrants has also been documented elsewhere in the UK. In her qualitative study involving narrative interviews with 65 Polish migrants living in different cities and rural areas of Scotland, Moskal (2013) found that, regardless of age or family status, all her participants were "involved in transnational networks of family and friends in diverse ways" (p. 369). The relative proximity and affordable transportation between the UK and Poland have been highlighted as factors explaining the high mobility of Poles and their transnational linkages connecting these two countries (White 2011, p. 15). Some researchers have pointed to the large size of the Polish population in the UK as a key factor contributing to the 'natural' development and prevalence of social networks amongst this group. In this context, qualitative as well as quantitative studies have discussed the 'pros' and 'cons' of Polish migrants' reliance on informal networks to find employment (Sumption 2009; Sumption and Summerville 2010). Others have highlighted specific historical factors to explain the strength of social networks amongst these migrants: based on qualitative interviews conducted in different locations in the UK and in Poland, White and Ryan's (2008) study, for example, argued that networks of family and friends amongst Polish migrants living in several cities in the UK (London, Bristol, Bath) had become particularly important due to their embeddedness in the socialist past and postsocialist transition. According to these authors, during the socialist period social networks played an important part in compensating for the shortages and shortcomings characteristic of the socialist economy and have continued to provide crucial social support for many Poles following the collapse of communism (p. 1468).

However, revisiting an earlier qualitative study (Ryan *et al.* 2007) of Polish migrants in London, Ryan (2010) has cautioned against the 'celebratory' view of mobility and transnational ties amongst Poles. Firstly, she argued, a too positive evaluation of migrants' social networks neglected the "emotional costs" associated with transnational family life. Based on interview accounts, she showed how some of her research respondents, far from being content with a "dual life" and at ease with a transnational way of living, expressed their sadness and a sense of loss about living away from their family members (Ryan 2010, p. 91). In some cases individuals sought to overcome this separation, for example, by either returning to Poland or getting their families to join them in London. The latter case involved a shift from

transnational to more localised social networks (p. 97). More recently, Ryan (2011) has pointed out the need for a more dynamic approach to migrants' social networks, one that does not take them for granted but explores their formation and change over time and in space. Her changed approach seems to reflect wider criticism within migration research of studies focusing solely on networks between co-ethnics and thus presupposing the existence of 'ethnic communities' while bracketing out the various relationships beyond ethnic and cultural boundaries that migrants engage in in their everyday lives (e.g. Wise and Velayutham 2009).

The research on social networks and transnational ties amongst post-accession migration reviewed here offers a perspective that is more closely aligned to my interest of understanding migrants' quotidian negotiations of securities and risks. Rather than construing people who arrived in the UK from Central and Eastern Europe through the economic lens (as, for example, 'migrant worker' or 'economic migrant'), this strand in the literature draws attention to their social lives, questions of belonging, and their backgrounds in the country of origin. As the post-accession migration of Czech and Slovak speakers that I am interested in shares the same legal and temporal framework with the Polish migrants studied, the insights on transnational practices connecting Poland and the UK and the potential relevance of post-socialist experiences for the formation of social networks in the UK are considered useful here. However, as no comparable studies seem to exist on Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in the UK, it remains an empirical question whether and how transnational relationships and social capital play a role amongst this research group in Glasgow. More importantly, in contrast to the policy-oriented studies which focused almost exclusively on existing social services and service provision by organisations and authorities, studies using a social network approach have mainly restricted their analysis to informal ways of caring and providing support while omitting the role of organisational and institutionally provided support. In this sense, these bodies of literature have remained largely separate, each somehow tied to its own perspective and interests.

1.2 Theoretical concepts of risk and social security

Upon reviewing the existing empirical research on social security and risk with regard to the post-accession migration in the UK, I noted the virtually complete absence of more systematic engagements with the notions of risk and social security. This is quite remarkable given that there are well developed conceptual works on both social security and risk in the social science literature, especially within anthropology and sociology. While these literatures cannot be presented here in full, in the following section I introduce theoretical approaches to risk and social security that I have employed as key framing devices for this study. I introduce different approaches to risk, drawing on the works of Ulrich Beck (1992), John Adams (1995), and Mary Douglas (1992), before discussing the notion of social security as suggested by Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann (1994; 2007). These sources, I argue, provide fruitful perspectives to study how post-accession migrants deal with, mitigate and overcome risks, and build securities in their everyday lives in Glasgow.

1.2.1 Socio-cultural approaches to risk

It seems almost banal to think of adversity and risks as significant aspects of (international) migration: the movement from one place to another, across national borders, will in most cases entail some degree of uncertainty, as on the individual level this spatial movement usually involves moving from the known to the unknown. Arriving and having to set oneself up in a new environment, maybe even away from family and friends, posits a challenge for those on the move, and it is in this context that migrants are often seen as being particularly exposed to certain risks and experiences of insecurity. Even though studies of migration often explore challenges and risks faced by migrants - be it in reconstructions of the dangerous journeys some (are forced to) undertake, in models of potential migrants' rational decision-making weighing up the risks of migrating versus staying, or be it in studies of migrant integration or settlement in the destination country - rarely are risk and insecurity and their role in the migration process explicitly addressed. As we have seen in the above review of empirical studies on post-accession migration to the UK, the term risk was mainly used loosely as a synonym for problem, challenge, adversity, insecurity, or threat; another common usage

related to ideas of probability or likelihood of migrants being disadvantaged in social policy areas such as the labour market, education, or housing. Rather than considering how migrants experience their situation, assumptions were often made about the risks that migrants face based on the perspectives of the 'host country'. For example, Sumption and Somerville (2010) stated that the risks that the 'new European migrants' face, "including worklessness, isolation, lack of language ability and vulnerability to exploitation[,] all reduce the ease of integration" (p. 33). Or migrants were queried as threats to the British welfare state or the British-born labour force (e.g. Scott *et al.* 2008), or considered as "public health risks" due to low child immunisation rates, "overcrowding and infestation" (Poole and Adamson 2008, p. 9). Overall, the nexus of risk and migration has remained largely under-theorised, a problem which Williams and Balasz (2012) have also highlighted with regard to the general migration literature.

This lack of a more systematic engagement might also be due to the fact that while social theorists of risk such as Ulrich Beck, Mary Douglas, and John Adams have provided important impulses for conceptualising risk in modern societies, they made little explicit reference to migration in their discussions. Nevertheless, they provide interesting conceptualisations of risk that I consider useful for developing a research approach which avoids prioritising the 'host' society's perspective. Centrally, even though these authors make different intellectual arguments, they all arrive at the fundamental idea that risk cannot be taken for granted as an objective reality but is socio-culturally constructed. This idea was developed by the sociologist Ulrich Beck in his influential book *Risk society: towards a new modernity* (1992). Beck sets out his key argument that today we live in (or are making the transition to) a "risk society", that is a society characterized by a heightened awareness of and reflexivity towards risks. The risks we are faced with now are qualitatively different from previous times, and, he argues, set modernity apart from industrial society. While, previously, risks were associated with dangers that were external to us, in risk society they are phenomena of our own making; the extended use of technology and the loss of traditional markers of certainty have led to the emergence of new risks which have their origin in modernisation processes. The previous concern with the production of goods has been replaced by a concern with the production of 'bads'. The types of risks that Beck models his analysis on include environmental hazards such as radioactivity, toxins and pollutants (in air, water, or food) and the unpredictable transnational or global

effects that these have with regard to the environment and humans. We thus require new ways of dealing with risks, both as individuals and as a society. These involve self-reorientation and social reorganisation; in risk society "the ability to anticipate and endure dangers, to deal with them biographically and politically acquires importance" (Beck 1992, p. 76). Therefore, a second central component of risk (as a concept) is acting upon knowledge: "risk may be defined as *a systematic way of dealing with hazards and insecurities induced and introduced by modernisation itself*" (p. 21, original emphasis).

The greater knowledge requirement and reflexivity, according to Beck, mark a new era of modernisation which he calls "reflexive modernisation". From this point of view, the notion of risk as a neutral and 'objective' category cannot be upheld. Previously, the division between those who 'determined risk', i.e. the scientists and experts, and those who 'perceived risks', i.e. the 'normal' population, was unquestioned. It was experts, engineers, and technicians who, through the provision of technical details and information, informed the 'ignorant' masses about potential threats and future adversities. It was believed that the fears and worries of ordinary people signified a lack of information; the more scientific knowledge people would be given, the more their view of the world and its dangers would resemble that of experts. However, as Beck argues, scientific knowledge no longer has a monopoly over risk definitions and management precisely because science is itself implicated in their creation and growth. As he puts it, the "tables are turned" (p. 58) now, and "there is no expert on risk" (p. 29). Far from being 'objective', risks can thus "be changed, magnified, dramatized or minimized within knowledge, and to that extent they are particularly *open to social definition and construction*" (Beck 1992, p. 23, original emphasis).

The social construction of risk is an important premise that geographer John Adams (1995) also arrives at, even though his work is developed from a very different starting point, that of the individual decision-making process. Crucially, for Adams risk-taking is a natural human tendency, when considering our everyday ability to act in the face of danger or uncertainty. He argues that attempts to 'objectively' measure risk are futile because human behaviour in anticipation of adversity cannot be reduced to numerical or rational calculations. Mainly drawing on issues around road safety and dangers resulting from road traffic in the UK, he elaborates a dynamic model to explain risk-taking decisions, built on an analogy with a

thermostatically controlled system. Adams suggests that "individual risk-taking decisions represent a balancing act in which perceptions of risk are weighed against propensity to take risk" (p. 15). While everyone has a risk propensity, it varies individually and is influenced by the anticipated rewards. At the same time, past experience (e.g., of accidents) shape one's risk perception. Such experiences can be specific to an individual but also shared amongst members of a group or a culture and thus channel the ways in which people deal with risk. To use Adams' analogy, different experiences can set people's risk thermostats differently. The interaction of the different elements of his conceptual model and the circularity of their relationships make an objective assessment of risk improbable.

What makes risk further slippery and thus complicates any attempts to quantify it, Adams argues, is its reflexivity. Because of our different risk perceptions and propensities, we value risks and respond to them in different ways. But as we respond and act, our perception of risk also changes continuously; what may initially be perceived as a risk by many, in the process of acting upon it, may diminish for some, persist for a few, while for others it may disappear altogether. Therefore, for Adams, "risk perceived is risk acted upon. It changes in the twinkling of an eye as the eye lights upon it" (p. 30). This resonates with Beck's definition of risk discussed above. However, an important difference to Becks' modernist stance, which treats the past as irrelevant in his theoretical formulations, is Adams' explicit reference to past experiences as co-shaping risk and risk perception.²²

A further theoretical perspective that challenges the notion of risk as a neutral category and enriches our understanding was developed by Mary Douglas (1992). In her prominent book *Risk and Blame* (1992), Douglas' anthropological approach exposes the ethnocentrism of the notion of risk. While she would agree with Beck's observation of an increased awareness of risk in contemporary societies, she does not interpret this phenomenon as a universal, globally occurring feature of late modernity brought about by new risks, but mainly as symptomatic of

²² Although Adams acknowledges Beck's claim that the development of technology has led to the creation of new risks, he considers Becks' distinction between modern/ 'new' risks and 'old' dangers or hazards as "somewhat exaggerated" (Adams 1995, p. 179). Other scholars have also questioned the clear-cut differentiation drawn by Beck between 'old' and 'new' risks and, more broadly, between tradition and modernity, industrial and risk society and have criticised them as simplistic (Day 2000; Nugent 2000). For Nugent (2000), for example, this aspect of Beck's analysis seems to neglect the ongoing academic debate over the definitions and temporalities of different historical periods.

Western culture. Dangers and threats, she argues, are not new phenomena; humans have faced them throughout history and have found ways to cope with them. For Douglas, the crucial change encapsulated in the concept of risk refers to new ways of allocating blame in the face of adversity (pp. 15-19). Discussing the rise of the insurance industry and risk reduction concerns especially in the US, she posits that when faced with a risk, the first question an affected group will ask is: Whose fault is it? Who is to blame, what are the damages and what compensations can be claimed? However, blame allocation is not a free-flowing process since persons occupy different positions in any given culture/system. Attributing blame is thus not only an act of excluding oneself from responsibility but also a way of legitimising one's position. From this point of view, blaming is also about control; "[b]laming is a way of manning the gates through which all information has to pass" (p. 19). Morals and politics are thus both implicated in risk. In this sense, just as cultures are based on shared values, they also imply consensus about their fears and dangers, selecting and ranking which dangers are to be dealt with, which ones must be tolerated, and who is to blame. Risks, then, "should be seen as a joint product of *knowledge* about the future and *consent* about the most desired prospect" (Douglas and Wildavsky 1983, p. 5, original emphasis).

In contrast to Beck and Adams, Douglas (1992) reminds us that the concept of risk constitutes a culturally-specific way of thinking about and acting in anticipation of the future. She shows that starting from the seventeenth century, probabilistic thinking formed the basis of scientific knowledge and transformed the way in which evidence and knowledge was produced in Western societies. Lay persons, but also entire ('tribal') populations outside the West were now considered incapable of making accurate predictions about the future. Douglas argues that in the pre-industrial West, the notion of sin was widely employed when dealing with dangers, but the transition to an industrial society required a new cultural language as part of building a "homogenous culture": "If Western industrial democracy were to build a homogenous culture using a uniform vocabulary for moralizing and politicizing the dangers around, it could not use the vocabulary of religion" (Douglas 1992, p. 26). Unlike the association of sin with religion and therefore backwardness, risk's neutral, forward-looking, secular and forensic nature was well suited to the industrialisation drive and the culture of individualism it promoted (p. 22). At the same time, Douglas argues, while risk previously also connoted chance and potentiality, in the contemporary world it has increasingly come to mean danger,

with a rather negative connotation.²³ Adams agrees with this point when he emphasises the empirical significance of risk-taking which is often overlooked by the focus on risk elimination. For Douglas, the term danger, however, cannot replace the concept of risk as the former "does not have the aura of science or afford the pretension of a possible precise calculation" (p. 25). Thus, as Douglas concludes, the ethnocentric concept of risk which accompanies the idea of the individual as a rational decision-maker weighing up danger against reward is "an extraordinary constructed idea, essentially decontextualised and desocialised" (quoted in Fardon 1999, p. 157), one that negates emotions and obscures the social and cultural context involved in its production.

The perspectives on risk by Beck, Adams, and Douglas introduced here emphasise the need to explore what Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow experience as risks rather than use pre-determined, taken-for-granted categories. The conceptual approaches suggested by these authors draw attention to past experiences of migrants - both in individual biographies and as collective histories - that acquire significance in processes through which risks emerge, gain traction, are responded to, and lose force. At the same time, the inherent connection between risk and knowledge highlights that risk perception based on the past cannot be divorced from action in the present to avert risks that lie in the future. Thus, the notion of risk as a social construct is engaging for this study as it offers an approach that does not unwittingly or intentionally disqualify migrants' previous and current experiences, existing and changing knowledges, nor their aspirations for or fears of the future. In this study, I take this as an invitation to aim for a qualitative understanding of meaning-making activities around risks and to empirically examine how and under what conditions certain risks are produced, contested, shared, acted upon and to what effect.

1.2.2 Social security as a multi-referential concept

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2009), social security is defined as a "state-run system providing financial support for people who are unemployed, sick, retired, or otherwise

²³ There are exceptions, for example, in the realm of finance where risk-taking is constructed as a common, incentivised, and culturally glorified male practice to produce profit (Griffin 2012).

in need" or as the "money paid out under such a system" (unpaginated). As these definitions suggest, social security is commonly understood as referring to institutionalized forms of support, i.e. social measures, programmes, and services provided by the state (Sabates-Wheeler and Waite 2003, p. 5). This conceptualisation of social security is based on an 'institutionalist' approach which is dominant in social policy research. From this perspective, it is the state, conceived of in terms of concrete institutions, that acts as the main regulator and provider of social security and protection to persons who are deemed to be in social and economic distress. Such a notion of social security is what underpinned the great majority of empirical studies on migrants from the A8 countries that I have reviewed above; for example, in macro-economic studies of migrants' fiscal impact on the UK, the focus was on pecuniary benefits and other welfare offered by the British state; locality-based studies of 'A8 migrants' mostly looked at access to social services and potential issues with existing state-provided support and people's entitlements to the former. More recently emerging studies of Polish migrants' social networks, on the other hand, exemplified a methodology and perspective that brought to the fore how migrants coped with problems and adversities in informal ways through their social relationships. However, this strand in the literature in turn displayed a tendency to bracket out institutionally provided forms of support.

The conceptualisation of social security originally proposed by anthropologists Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann (1994) offers a perspective that can bridge these hitherto separate literatures. The von Benda-Beckmanns provided new theoretical impetus to the notion of social security through their critique of 'institutionalist' concepts of social security as ethnocentric. Their reconceptualisation of social security drew on empirical research conducted in rural populations in so-called developing countries in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period social security was high on the international development agenda, as 'traditional' forms of support in non-western societies came under attack from (Western) economists and policy-makers. The latter argued that local, kinship- and community-based sources of assistance and protection were inadequate for shielding rural communities from poverty and hardship and thus should be replaced by 'modern' social security institutions. What was particularly notable about these debates, as von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann point out, was the extent to which they were framed in terms of modern/traditional, formal/informal binaries; the existing 'traditional' systems were portrayed in a negative light as

problematic, 'outdated', and inhibiting economic growth (1994, p. 24-25). However, studies conducted in rural areas of Indonesia, Mali, Cameroon, and Swaziland showed that these so-called traditional systems were valued by the rural population and constituted important resources for their negotiations of insecurities. In this sense, studies inquiring into non-western societies have argued that the absence or weakness of institutionalised forms of social security do not necessarily mean that people are left insecure; instead, they have shown how people draw on various resources and relationships which extend beyond state-provided security in order to negotiate securities for themselves and their families (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 1994; 2007). Read and Thelen (2007), for example, suggested that in post-socialist societies the provision of and access to care are incorporated in broader practices and relationships transgressing institutionalised forms of support. Importantly, von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann (1994) argued that the very notion of 'formal' or institutionalised forms of support, i.e. the idea that social security should somehow be the sole responsibility of the state, was in itself problematic. As they pointed out, this was a Western construct that had initially emerged in the United States with the US government's introduction of the Social Security Act in 1935 as part of the New Deal policy (pp. 18-19) and was then consolidated in Western Europe with the establishment of welfare states in the aftermath of WWII. Thus, the authors considered state-provided support systems not as social security *par excellence*, but as one specific form of protection amongst others; and this applied not only to countries without state-centred social welfare but also to industrialised western societies, where informal practices continue to play a role alongside/intertwined with formalised ways of providing/'receiving' social security (pp. 43-44).

Social security, then, comprises not only material support provided by institutions and actors of the state but also informal and immaterial forms of support and care in varied assemblages. Broadly speaking, social security refers to a plurality of

efforts of individuals, groups of individuals and organizations to overcome insecurities related to their existence, that is, concerning food and water, shelter, care and physical and mental health, education and income, to the extent that the contingencies are not considered a purely individual responsibility, as well as the intended and unintended consequences of these efforts. (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 2007, p. 36).

In this sense, the term becomes multireferential in that social security points to both an "abstractly conceived field of problems, and to the actual social phenomena within this field" (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 2007, p. 6); it denotes a relative state of an individual's or a group's security or insecurity, the social relationships through which securities are built, as well as normative rules or ideas about "what is a situation of need, who is entitled to receive, and who obliged to provide goods and services" (p. 6) to construct social security. There is also a strong temporal element inherent in the notion of social security: it relates to ideas and evaluations of the past and the future as well as people's sense of in/security in the present, and connects providers and recipients of social security in temporally extended cycles of support (pp. 19-24). Studies following this functional approach may thus consider all kinds of ideas, institutions, and relationships that come to fulfil a social security function; the analysis can look at social security arrangements at different layers of social organisation or the conditions under which certain arrangements emerge, and both *ex ante* and *ex post* perspectives of social security negotiations can be explored.

While the von Benda-Beckmanns noted that migration can lead to insecurities as much as it can result in securities for those migrating and those left behind (2007, p. 29), it is somewhat surprising that with regard to the situation of migrants in Western societies, no empirical studies seem to have explicitly built on this perspective. Keebet von Benda-Beckmann's (1991) study of Moluccan migrants living in the Netherlands provided an earlier account that traced changing patterns of social security arrangements within this group of migrants. The study focused on the Moluccan community's social organisation, provision of care in everyday life as well as solidarity amongst members of the community. It showed how care and support in these migrant families were a mutual and shared responsibility amongst kin members and relatives. On the community level, social occasions such as weddings were of great importance for bringing families and the community together and for celebrating and thus keeping Moluccan culture alive in the Netherlands (p. 47).

However, one has to note that the migration of Moluccans from Indonesia to the Netherlands took place under highly specific circumstances: in the aftermath of World War II and amidst Indonesia's struggle for independence, between 1950 and 1951 the Dutch colonial government relocated around 10,000 Moluccans who had served in the Dutch army to the Netherlands as a

temporary measure, as their lives were considered to be at risk in light of a politically volatile situation (p. 39). Initially, these migrants and their families were accommodated together in camps, then later on, the Dutch government re-housed them in villages and a number of neighbourhood areas. According to von Benda-Beckman (1991), while help and support at the community level had been prevalent during the time when the Moluccans lived in close proximity in the camps, this diminished once they became more dispersed. Nevertheless, the author argues that these changes were not fundamental in that they rather represented a shift of "emphasis from a multiplicity of relationships towards an emphasis on the family" (p. 45). The study also saw continuity in these mutual ways of providing support and care, linking back to forms of support among Moluccans in their place of origin, which they maintained in the Netherlands through passing on to the next generations their normative structure in form of customary laws and ways of living.

Given the Moluccan's specific migration history to the Netherlands, they were studied in ways similar to anthropological studies of territorially bound, small-scale communities by looking predominantly at their internal social organisation. In my study of social security negotiations among Czech- and Slovak-migrants living in Glasgow, however, I do not adopt this concept of community - that is, as a specific form of social organisation (relatively) distinct or isolated from other migrant or non-migrant groups - as it runs the risk of reproducing the 'ethnic lens' (Glick Schiller *et al.* 2006) (see also chapter 2). Nevertheless, the extensive notion of social security suggested by the von Benda-Beckmanns is considered helpful here in various ways: it substantially widens the scope for studying how people negotiate insecurities and risks to include state and non-state actors such as a community, neighbourhood, friends, and family. It enables a shift of emphasis from institutional regulations and policy-makers' perspectives towards people's practices "through which social security is provided, claimed, planned or withheld" (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 1994, p. 21). Rather than *a priori* focusing on migrants' lack of knowledge of or non-membership in the UK social welfare system and thus reproducing 'methodological nationalism' (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2002), it provides a conceptual avenue to take as a starting point the routine, ordinary ways of overcoming problems in migrants' everyday life that may stretch temporally and spatially well beyond the migrants' present in the UK and well beyond the local, for example, through

transnational linkages, as studies of migrants' social networks have pointed out.²⁴ Overall, I draw on von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann's perspective in order to put migrants' agency, meaning-making, and experiences of in/securities at the heart of empirical research and to guide my approach to the field of insecurities and risks amongst Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants and the ways in which they negotiate these insecurities in their everyday lives in Glasgow.

1.3 Conclusion

By reviewing the existing research and critically examining its relevance for this study, I have highlighted several limitations in the literature on the nexus of social security, risk and migration processes. Firstly, a significant amount of the existing literature has focused on assessing the impact of 'A8 migration' (or of subgroups defined by nationality or ethnicity such as 'the Poles' or 'the Roma') on the UK welfare system and public services, often with the aim of informing policy-making on both the local and national level. As I have argued, by (sometimes unwittingly) adopting the perspective and interests of the 'host society', this strand in the literature tended to problematise migrants as a potential rupture or strain on British social services, and by extension, on British society. Secondly, while the mainly qualitative studies concerned with employment-related insecurities experienced by post-accession migrants pointed in the other direction, thematising the specific labour market and legal conditions in the UK as producing insecurities for migrants, in this body of research 'methodological nationalism' manifested itself in a different way; in their analyses, scholars paid little attention to forces and processes beyond the UK context.

Where scholars have turned their attention towards risks and problems faced by migrants in a specific locality, social security has largely been identified with institutionalised forms of support, that is according to social policies, services, and benefits provided by the state. While this type of study raised numerous issues and challenges, I critiqued their overly descriptive and 'snapshot' character, which said little about how insecurities and risks emerge and change

²⁴ I discuss the literature on transnational practices and care arrangements amongst migrants and their families in greater detail in chapter 7.

in the migration process as well as how they are negotiated over time. The predominant notion of 'migrant worker' inhibited explorations of people's everyday lives and experiences outside the workplace. Furthermore, this strand in the literature which predominantly used mixed-methods approaches rarely drew extensively on the views and experiences of migrants themselves but rather employed concepts and categories used by service providers and other stakeholders. This was even more pronounced in the literature on Roma migrants in Glasgow. Here, the majority of studies presupposed the existence of a 'Roma community' as a distinct group with complex needs which were mainly evidenced through stakeholder accounts. Again, the literature review revealed varying perspectives on the causes of problems experienced by Roma but offered little insight into how these migrants perceived and negotiated risks in their everyday lives. Finally, studies on the role of transnational ties and social networks amongst Polish migrants in the UK offered alternative approaches through their interest in social relationships and migrants' lives beyond the realm of work. While these works centered on migrants' perspectives, the focus on informal ways of providing support and care resulted in the bracketing out of other forms of support.

Overall, the literature review showed a lack of engagement with existing theories on risk and social security. Drawing on theoretical works by Beck, Douglas, and Adams, I argued that the notion of risk as a socio-cultural construct provides a frame that challenges the objectivity of risk and thus raises questions about who defines migrants' risks and to what effect. The conceptual approaches to risk proposed by these authors thus emphasised the need to place migrants' past and present experiences, their existing and changing knowledges, as well as actions and wishes for the future at the centre of studying risks amongst Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow (perhaps in contrast to risks as defined and pointed out by others). Von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann's (1994; 2007) theorisation of social security provided a possibility to consider and explore social security as an extensive field both of problems and of negotiations of these, and to bring together the relatively fragmented literature on the problems and challenges 'A8 migrants' face in the UK and how they cope and deal with them. Importantly, their approach calls for a perspective that takes into account migrants' experiences, multiple practices and resources through which they build, plan and draw on social security. This study thus aims at providing an empirically grounded understanding of risks and insecurities amongst Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants living

in Glasgow from the perspective of migrants' themselves and to shed light on how and under what conditions certain risks and insecurities arise, are contested or shared, and with what consequences. The research seeks to explore how these migrants negotiate insecurities and risks and build social security for themselves and their families through multiple practices and meaning-making activities in their everyday lives in the city and beyond. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology and empirical strategies which I developed and employed in order to answer these central questions.

Chapter 2: Methodology and research process

In this chapter I discuss key methodological and ethical considerations that guided this empirical study of negotiations of insecurities and risks amongst Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants living in Glasgow. I begin by outlining the epistemological approach that underpins the empirical strategies of this research. I then give a brief description of the ethnographic approach that I employed to gain an understanding of the everyday life and practices of my research informants, before providing a more detailed account of how I delineated the field. Subsequently, I describe the selection of participants and discuss the types of data produced as well as their analysis. I conclude the chapter with some reflections on ethical issues that arose during this study (and may do so in the future).

2.1 Epistemology

This study of negotiations of insecurities and risks amongst Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow is underpinned by a constructionist epistemology. The term constructionism covers a wide range of perspectives across various disciplines that have emerged over the last decades since Berger and Luckmann (1966) introduced the notion of social construction (Gubrium and Holstein 2008). The perspective I adopt here follows Charmaz's (2008) formulations of constructionist epistemological principles.²⁵ Contrary to a positivist paradigm that considers reality as objective and external, waiting to be discovered by neutral and distanced researchers, Charmaz advocates an approach that conceives reality as "multiple, processual, and constructed" (2008, p. 402). It rests on the basic tenet that our

²⁵ Charmaz uses these to revisit and reinterpret grounded theory. She critiques the idea that until the early 1990s grounded theory, an inductive method "for collecting and analyzing qualitative data for the purpose of developing middle-range theories" (2008, p. 397), was underlined by objectivist and positivist assumptions about social reality. Varying versions of this method as set out by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1984) shared an understanding of reality as being a single entity existing 'out there' (Charmaz 2008, p. 401). In this sense, Burawoy used grounded theory as an illustration for participant observation oriented towards the positive science model (1998, pp. 25-26) and as a counterexample for the extended case method which follows a reflexive model of science. Charmaz' constructionist grounded theory, however, shows many parallels to Burawoy's extended case method.

knowledge of the world is produced in and through our everyday experiences and interactions (Schütz 1967; Berger and Luckmann 1966). From a constructionist position, social realities are understood as achieved in and through processes in which human actors negotiate and produce meanings of actions and situations. Therefore, social science research should aim to grasp these social realities - here, for example, insecurities and risks - as perceived and experienced by those participating in the research and pay attention to their interactions and the symbolic meanings that they derive from them (Charmaz 1996; Prus 1996). However, Charmaz's (2008) 'caveat' that social realities are "constructed under particular conditions" (p. 402) is important, as it draws our attention to wider contexts and structures in which specific situations and individuals are embedded and which constrain individual actions. As she puts it, "people make their worlds but they do not make them as they please" (p. 409). This prompts us to consider not only interactions and activities observed/observable at the micro-level - for example, how Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants deal with insecurities and risks in their everyday lives - but also to consider processes and forces beyond what is immediately apparent.

The constructionist perspective calls for quality criteria that differ from those of positivist social science; rather than adhering to a stance of a 'neutral' observer of social phenomena and 'reporter' of social facts, the researcher is understood as enmeshed in and as a key part of the research process. Instead of aspiring to detachment, replicability and representativeness, reflexivity about one's own position, involvement and the limitations of knowledge produced is considered as the central standard of knowing (Baert *et al.* 2011, p. 479). Research is acknowledged as an open-ended, dialogic and interactive process that emerges from and in interactions with the field (Creswell 2003, pp. 37-39). Thus, research data are not merely 'collected' from or in the field but are jointly constructed by researcher and research participants (Charmaz 2008, p. 402). In problematizing our ability to arrive at 'the truth', the constructionist position I adopt here calls into question the possibility of objective, i.e. value- and theory-free research and renders all knowledge partial. Such a position advocates the recognition and examination of previous knowledges and concepts that researchers 'bring' into the research process, which runs counter to a 'naive empiricism' that imagines theory to emerge from empirical data, untainted by the researcher. In line with these principles, I have tried to make explicit - in both my review of the existing literature and in the empirical

chapters - what concepts and theoretical ideas inform this research, and throughout the research process I have attempted to reflect on my presumptions, privileges and background as well as on the limitations and implications of the research findings.

2.2 Methodology and method

The above constructionist epistemology informs the qualitative research approach I have used here. Qualitative methodology is concerned with an interpretive understanding (Weber 1978, p. 4) of social reality as it is interpreted and constructed by people's perspectives and through their everyday and commonsense knowledge (Flick 2004a, p. 6; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, p.3). Openness towards the field and taking into account the multiple and diverse perspectives of research participants are key characteristics of qualitative inquiry (Flick 2009). Rather than arriving at a cause-effect type of explanation and context-free generalisations, the aim of qualitative research is to provide a complex account of a phenomenon (Flick 2004a, p. 8). These aspects of qualitative methodology correspond well with the research interests of this study, i.e. centring the diverse viewpoints, concerns and experiences of Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants participating in this research in order to understand how they negotiate insecurities and risks in Glasgow.

More specifically, this empirical study adopts an ethnographic approach as a specific type of qualitative inquiry. The research questions called for an in-depth understanding of how Slovak- and Czech- speaking migrants living in Glasgow deal with difficulties and manage risks in their everyday life. In 2010 I conducted two qualitative pre-studies to explore some of the difficulties and risks these migrants faced and the ways in which they negotiated these issues. As these small-scale empirical projects were based on qualitative semi-structured interviews, the insights that they yielded were limited to discursive representations. Non-discursive everyday practices and participants' tacit knowledges remained out of sight of these interview-based studies. In order to capture these migrants' everyday realities as and where they unfold, here I employed an ethnographic approach as it is better placed to gain a more detailed and extensive account of insecurities and risks as experienced and negotiated in their everyday life.

Ethnography refers to a "family of methods involving direct and sustained social contact with agents" (Willis and Trondman 2002, p. 394) and "attention to shared meanings and activities" (Charmaz 1996, p. xiv). The key research strategy to realize this is participant observation but it also includes other techniques such as interviews, archival work, and document analysis (Atkinson *et al.* 2001, Gobo 2009). In a broad sense, conducting ethnographic research entails participating in and observing the lifeworlds of people studied and trying to gain as much information about the phenomenon studied as possible. Ethnography is thus "grounded on a commitment to the first-hand experience" (Atkinson *et al.* 2001, p. 4) and on a documentation of events and activities as they actually happen in the natural setting of everyday life (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007), and as they develop across time and space (Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Moore 2005), all essential attributes for this study of everyday practices and experiences of migrants in Glasgow. The long-term and direct engagement with the field both necessitates and enables the researcher to build a high level of trust and ongoing relationships so that research informants may allow insights into their experiences and views and continue to interact with the researcher. This was of crucial importance here, too, as this study was also interested in situations, articulations, and activities that might involve difficult and sensitive issues for those concerned. It is through this intensive engagement with the field, i.e. by conducting ethnographic fieldwork rather than using a 'grab it and run' approach, that ethnography aims to gain an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena. This "engaged, contextually rich and nuanced type of qualitative research" (Falzon 2009, p. 1) was necessary here, too, if the researcher was to make sense of migrants' (inter)actions and meaning-making activities in dealing with risks and insecurities as they emerged in their lives in Glasgow.

2.3 An ethnography of Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants living in Glasgow

How can migrants' everyday negotiations of insecurities and risks in Glasgow be studied ethnographically? As Fitzgerald notes (2006, p. 1), ethnographic approaches have historically played a major role in empirical studies of migration phenomena since the Chicago School's

influential sociological studies of immigrant groups in the USA (for example, Thomas and Znaniecki 1927; Park 1950) and British anthropological studies of mobile workers in Africa (Richards 1939; van Velsen 1960). However, as I discuss in this section, conducting an ethnographic study of migrants in contemporary societies entails various conceptual and practical challenges.

2.3.1 Delineating the field

Firstly, as I set out in the preceding chapter, mainstream migration research tends to adopt - often unwittingly - the perspective and interests of the nation state in which the migrant group studied resides. By conflating nationality, culture and ethnicity and treating these as fixed characteristics of people, empirical studies often homogenize 'migrant communities', defining them as essentially different from the 'host society' and thus in need of adaptation or assimilation to the latter. Wimmer and Glick-Schiller (2002) are two prominent scholars who have forcefully critiqued the complicity of social scientific migration research in problematising and 'othering' migrants. Such criticism can be read as an extension of the 'crisis of representation' (Marcus and Fischer 1986, p. 8) that raised serious questions about ethnographic practices of studying and writing about 'the other' from the late 1960s onwards and led to re-conceptualisations of ethnography as a method, practice, and mode of representation (Marcus and Fischer 1986). Especially in anthropology, with its traditional focus on and enthusiasm for non-western societies, ethnographic research came under severe criticism from various directions: critical theory, feminist and postcolonial critiques drew attention to perspectives and voices that were oppressed and silenced by the authoritative and androcentric gaze of the 'white' ethnographer (Moore 1988; Hunter 2002, pp. 121-123; Denzin and Lincoln 2011, pp. 2-3). The objectivist principle of maintaining distance towards the people studied was also questioned; what was once accepted as detailed, 'thick' ethnographic descriptions of 'cultural facts', was now challenged as resembling more the ethnographer's subjective worldview (Clifford 1990, pp. 59-61; Bourdieu 2000, p. 52). Another criticism concerned the fact that early anthropological accounts often represented non-western cultures and societies as fixed in time and place, creating the impression of "people without history" (Wolf 1982; Macdonald 2001, p. 65).

I have tried to address these limitations and problems of ethnographic research on migrants in various ways. In order to overcome the fallacy of the 'ethnic lens' (Glick Schiller 2007) and the 'Herderian commonsense' (Wimmer 2007), I focused here on a language-based group, that is Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants living in Glasgow. Certainly, one could argue that language is a key aspect of ethnicity or culture, and employing a language-based category might lead to the same issues of homogenisation and essentialisation of migrant groups that I sought to avoid. However, choosing language as the main criterion refers to an individual's practice and not to an ascribed attribute such as ethnicity. Also, in this case, the research population was constructed *across* categories of ethnicity, nationality, and culture: importantly, due to shared linguistic roots and the common history of Czechoslovakia, Czech and Slovak are "mutually intelligible" West Slavic languages, and the communication between Czechs and Slovaks can be characterised as a sort of "passive bilingualism" (Nábělková 2007, pp. 55-56). The two languages are closely related in terms of vocabulary, phonetics and grammar so that speakers of one of the languages can generally understand a speaker of the other language without ever having learnt the latter.²⁶

This sort of 'cultural intimacy' and connectedness between Czech and Slovak speakers also became evident in the two small pre-studies I conducted prior to this project. For example, I was directed to a Facebook group of 'Czechs and Slovaks in Glasgow' and another one covering Scotland as a whole; also, I became aware of shared services and projects between and for Slovak and Czech nationals in Glasgow's voluntary sector which hinted at a whole array of interactions between them on different levels, some of which I explored in the fieldwork. Using this language-based group also had the advantage of including those migrants who self-identify as Roma and speak one of these languages (often alongside others), without *a priori* pigeonholing individuals into separate groups or 'communities' by ascribed ethnicity or nationality. This does not mean that ethnic, national and cultural boundaries did not matter; on the contrary, rather than taking them for granted, I empirically and theoretically inquired into their role and relevance vis-à-vis insecurities and risks, which I discuss at length

²⁶ During my fieldwork I also found that Czech and Slovak speakers communicated with and understood each other in a very natural way. However, studies have indicated that this mutual intelligibility varies in the population of Slovakia and the Czech Republic, especially nowadays in the younger generation who have grown up after the split of Czechoslovakia (Darquennes *et al.* 2004).

in chapter 4. Thus, defining the research group based on language was also a significant means to break with preconceived ideas of and about, for example, 'A8 migrants' or 'East European immigrants' sharing post-socialism as a homogeneous cultural background or who have to 'catch up' with modern life in the west. Here, the construction of my research group rather invited and necessitated questions about specificities and similarities of histories, identities, and experiences amongst Czech and Slovak speakers living in Glasgow. At the same time, to avoid the temptation of crude generalisations I have consciously aimed at recruiting a diverse population in this study and sought to emphasise and explore the heterogeneity within this group of migrants.²⁷ However, the above choices did not remove once and for all the problems of power, 'positionality' and 'gaze'; I tried to address the implications of the latter throughout my fieldwork and in my writing, which I elaborate on later in this chapter.

A second major methodological (and practical) challenge for conducting an ethnography on migrants' negotiations of risks and insecurities in Glasgow relates to the question of 'where the field is'. The pre-studies I had conducted indicated that Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants were scattered around Glasgow, often living, working and socialising in different parts of the city (or beyond). While anecdotal evidence suggested a concentration of Roma, including Slovak- and Czech-speakers, in specific areas and streets of Glasgow, no more robust data was available to corroborate this.²⁸ With regard to Slovak and Czech speakers, overall, there did not seem to be a spatially concentrated 'community', nor did they appear to live in relative isolation from other Glasgow residents. In addition, similar to what studies on other Central and East European migrant groups have found (Morokvasic 2004; Garapich 2008; Rabikowska and Burrell 2009), being relatively close to their home country and free from immigration restrictions, many of my research participants engaged in multiple transnational practices. All these aspects rendered the definition of 'the field' problematic, insofar as it seemed to deviate from the spatial and social boundedness and unity of the traditional ethnographic object especially in anthropology, namely the ethnic tribe, the village, the cultural group, the neighbourhood, where participant observations were to be conducted.

²⁷ A detailed description of the research informants is given later in the chapter and Appendix A.

²⁸ I problematise and discuss issues around various productions of knowledge on ethnicity, for example, by 'mapping' of 'the Roma population' or ethnic monitoring in chapter 4.

From the 1980s onwards, the assumption of a pre-existent natural field (site) for ethnographic research has, amongst other biases (objectivist, androcentric, Eurocentric), been subjected to substantive critiques, especially from postcolonial and postmodern scholars (Marcus and Fischer 1986; see also Gupta and Ferguson 1997, pp. 3-5). In light of what many regarded as intensifying globalisation processes - even though there are highly controversial debates whether and to what extent globalisation is a new or a continuing, or even returning trend (Held and McGrew 2000; Urry 2000) - scholars argued that 'traditional' ethnographic methodology was no longer suitable for studying social phenomena in a rapidly changing and multiply interconnected world. Consequently, some called for more sophisticated methods and methodologies in order to grasp these emerging realities (Marcus 1995; Gupta and Ferguson 1997). In the context of these critiques of 'traditional' fieldwork, multi-sited ethnography was introduced as a methodological innovation in order to bring to the fore connections between sites across localities and national borders. Made prominent by Marcus (1995) it has gained influence over the past decades (Hannerz 2003; Hovland 2009; Falzon 2009; Nadai and Maeder 2009). As the term indicates, multi-sited ethnography rests on the premise that fieldwork should not be bound to one place or location, as social phenomena are "substantially continuous but spatially non-contiguous" (Falzon 2009, p. 2).

In term of methods, multi-sited ethnography involves a spatially dispersed field through which the ethnographer moves – actually, via sojourns in two or more places, or conceptually, by means of techniques of juxtaposition of data (Falzon 2009, p. 2).

At the core of this approach thus lies the idea of following: following people, things, a story, metaphor, biography, conflicts, across space (Marcus 1995, pp. 105-110). In doing so, this approach encourages a permanent openness to the field whereby the researcher should resist the temptations of boundedness and delineation; instead, he/she should be free to experiment like a "circumstantial activist" (Marcus 1995, p. 113) by constantly moving around, "via sojourns" (Falzon 2009, p. 2), "being there....thereand there" (Hannerz 2003).

Somewhat unsurprisingly, multi-sited ethnography attracted considerable attention within migration research, often linking places of migrants' departure and arrival. Ethnographies of transnational migration (Gallo 2009; Weißköppel 2009) and of transnational social spaces (Pries 2002; Glick Schiller 2007) emphasised the high degree of mobility and transnational

connections that had previously been rendered invisible by perspectives that located people and their lives within the nation-state and focused on what was observable in one locality. It was argued that in contemporary societies migrants can be simultaneously connected to and connect multiple places and conduct their lives in a way that transcends borders and national boundaries (Basch *et al.* 1994). At the same time, the revitalisation of ethnographic methodology that we have seen especially from the 1990s onwards was also shaped by scholars expanding their areas of inquiry not only across space but also across time (Glaeser 2006). Advocating for a heightened consciousness of spatialities and temporalities, an increasing number of ethnographic studies involved "observations of processes of change as they go along" (Moore 2005, p. 1). With regard to the study of migration phenomena, attention to time brought into view migration as a process that extended beyond the actual spatial movement from A to B; migrants' experiences and perspectives prior and (long) after their relocation were increasingly explored as changing in the context of their biographies as well as dynamic transformations of and in the places of origin and sojourn (Breckner 2002).

Taken together, these varying critiques pointed to the necessity to take into account not only what is available to the first-hand experience of the ethnographic researcher in a particular location and situation, but also processes and constellations from outwith that materialise and are reinforced in these specific settings. Such perspectives lend themselves to shifting the aim of ethnographic research from 'thick description' (Geertz 1973) to grasping 'the bigger picture':

Pushed by the holism goal of ethnography beyond the conventional community setting of research, these ideal experiments would try to devise texts that combine ethnography and other analytic techniques to grasp whole systems, usually represented in impersonal terms, and the quality of the lives caught up in them (Marcus and Fischer 1986, p. 91).

In this study, however, I did not follow this emphasis on achieving holism as a goal.²⁹ As I have outlined above (in 2.1), rather than aiming for a holistic theory, this ethnography is underpinned by a constructionist epistemology that rejects grand theories and questions our ability to objectively 'know everything'. In this sense, I agree with Candea's (2009) suggestion

²⁹ This epistemological leap to grasp or know 'everything' can be seen, for example, in Pries' (2002) call for systematic inquiries into relatively stable multi-sited social realities that span more than one nation-state, which requires the development of new concepts and methodologies (Pries explicitly singles out Marcus' (1995) multi-sited approach) so as to combine "local, micro-regional, national, macro-regional and global levels of analysis" (p. 28).

to aim for a contingent "window into complexity" (p. 39) and not fall for building a meta-narrative, something which, ironically, proponents of multi-sited ethnography set out to challenge.

On the methodological level, rather than attempting to fully explore multiple sites in a chain-like constellation,³⁰ I take the position that the field results from various delineations that the researcher institutes through and in the research process. The field can thus better be conceptualised as 'un-sited', a concept developed by Cook *et al.* (2009):

The way to avoid the implicit holism Candea identifies in the original multi-sited research agenda, and to avoid the appeal to unseen global forces that such holism enabled, is research in which the field is importantly *un*-sited rather than being merely multi-sited: research that acknowledges that there is no necessary connection between *field*, *place* and *space*, that ethnographic fieldwork is something that could be done no less if one were to travel no further than half an hour's walk from one's study than if one were to travel all over the world. Even if working in a single village (more obviously so in a city) a researcher has to make decisions about what to include in the study and what to omit. One makes those decisions on the basis of the questions that are motivating one's research (pp. 64-65, emphasis in original).

I understand this insight not as a rejection of the merits of multi-sited ethnography but rather as a reminder that doing ethnography always entails making decisions about and thus producing the field, which is informed by and shapes research questions, theoretical considerations, fieldwork practices and so on. As Gupta and Ferguson (1997, p. 4), for example, make clear, the idea of 'the field' in itself is a historical construct in anthropology, and much of the critique that gave rise to multi-sited ethnography used a rather simplistic imaginary of traditional ethnographic research (Candea 2009; Cook *et al.* 2009). Thus, whether one 'stays put' (in a specific locality, village or urban area) or moves around (between several sites around the globe) is not a central indicator of an ethnography's quality.

In this study, although I spent three months in Slovakia prior to the fieldwork in order to undergo intensive training in the Slovak language, conduct a small number of interviews with

³⁰ In practical terms, conducting ethnographies across various sites also has some serious drawbacks as Candea (2009) and Cook *et al.* (2009) remind us: for example, expanding the field transnationally or translocally means spending less time on sites, which in turn makes it difficult to immerse in the field and to establish trust and long term relationships with research informants - which are key commitments to the ethnographic approach as I have outlined above (2.2).

employment agencies and returnee migrants, and visit different places of origin of some of the migrants in Glasgow,³¹ I did not follow my informants or their stories to Slovakia or the Czech Republic, or indeed any other place outside Glasgow and its surrounds that they were connecting to. Given the research aim to understand negotiations of insecurities and risks among Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in the city of Glasgow, I focused my participant observation on practices and settings in and around Glasgow by actively seeking out and following a diverse set of people, situations, and stories. Thus, my field emerged as much from ideas, places and events that the informants themselves led or pointed me to as it did from my theoretical interests and curiosity, involving sites and situations that were not necessarily connected to each other. The next section provides a more detailed description of this process, which includes a reflection on the limitations of the resulting field.

2.3.2 'In the field'

In my endeavor to empirically explore the ways in which Slovak- and Czech- speaking migrants living in Glasgow negotiated insecurities and dealt with risks I conducted ethnographic fieldwork from January 2012 to January 2013 in and around the city. My preparation for the fieldwork phase had begun well in advance: firstly, owing to the involvement of Glasgow City Council in my research project based on an ESRC-funded CASE studentship, in October 2009, I was provided the chance to do a two-week placement with different council departments (Development and Regeneration Services, Corporate Policy, Education Services) and arms-length external organisations (Shawlands Academy, Culture and Sport Glasgow, South East Community Health and Care Partnership) as part of my research training. This involved institutional visits and discussions with key members of staff about their views and experiences of working with and providing services to migrants from Central and Eastern Europe in the city. The placement provided first impressions and practice- and policy-informed inputs regarding the wider field as well as specific concerns and practical issues encountered by these stakeholders. Secondly, with no prior knowledge of Slovak or Czech, I studied the Slovak language both at university level and took private lessons with a

³¹ This included Bratislava in the West, Prešov, Košice and Šaris in the East, Liptovský Mikuláš in the North, Šaľa in Central Slovakia.

native Slovak speaker in Glasgow for one year.³² As briefly mentioned above, I also attended two intensive language summer schools in 2011 in Bratislava and spent three months in the country. These multiple learning experiences enabled me to gain knowledge of the language to intermediate level and significantly broadened my capacity to interact with Slovak and Czech speakers in Glasgow during the fieldwork. Once back in Scotland, I started out by identifying various access points that would enable me to establish contacts with a wide mix of Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants across broad categories that had emerged as potentially relevant in the pre-studies such as age, gender, class, ethnicity, marital and socio-economic status, or other factors such as level of English language skills. At the same time, entry points were also chosen to cover a wide range of situations and different constellations of actors involved.

One of the first sites that I approached³³ was an information and support service run by and located in a local community organization, Groundworks,³⁴ in an inner-city area of Glasgow. The service was providing information and support to 'EU nationals'. However, as it employed only Slovak and Czech speakers as support workers, it came to my attention as a service for Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants which made it an 'ideal' site for the purposes of my research.³⁵ Importantly, service users did not only live in the vicinity but came from all over Glasgow and even further afield. In addition, as it provided support to migrants in the Slovak and Czech language, it presented an opportunity to establish contacts also with migrants who spoke little or no English (a subgroup which I had intended to include in the research sample, hence my efforts to learn the participants' native language).

To facilitate access to Groundworks, I contacted members of the board via email explaining the purpose and nature of the research. A factor which may have helped in establishing a friendly relationship with the board was that an informant from one of my pre-studies had joined the organisation in the meantime and had vouched for my reliability and

³² The reason I prioritised learning Slovak over Czech was that anecdotal evidence suggested that there were more Slovak nationals living in Glasgow than Czech citizens. I hoped that the mutual intelligibility between these two languages would still enable me to access speakers of both languages.

³³ I applied for and was granted approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the College of Social Sciences, University of Glasgow prior to my empirical involvement that is described here. A discussion of ethical considerations concludes this chapter.

³⁴ A pseudonym.

³⁵ During the course of my fieldwork, the service was closed (May 2012) due to financial and internal organisational factors.

trustworthiness to the board. I was invited to a meeting during which the organisation gave me permission to conduct fieldwork at their offices, starting at the beginning of February. Fieldwork at Groundworks involved participant observation in varying roles: as a volunteer at the service providing assistance to the project staff one day a week, and additionally, as an observer in one-to-one advice sessions between native Slovak-speaking project workers and Slovak- and Czech-speaking clients two days a week. In addition, the same local organisation - in collaboration with others - also ran a drop-in service for migrants in the same neighbourhood, and the Groundworks management asked me straight away if I would be interested in getting involved there, too, especially as they valued my Slovak language skills. At that time, the drop-in was still in its early days, having been open since September 2011 for one evening a week. Generally, the drop-in sessions provided a space for adults and children to play, socialise, and get advice on various issues in a more informal setting. Here, the attendees were referred to me as mainly consisting of 'Slovak and Czech Roma' living in the local neighbourhood (see also chapter 5). My involvement there was formalised, as I was given the role of a project worker and thus a set of specified tasks and duties; in the main, this involved acting as a Slovak/English interpreter between attendees and other volunteers or staff members as well as assisting with the general running of the sessions.

Initially, when the management board insisted on a paid role despite my wish to volunteer at the drop-in, I was reluctant to accept their request since this formalisation of my involvement rendered me an employee of Groundworks, thus potentially restricting my ability to maintain a critical stance with regard to the drop-in and the organisation's activities. However, even without a contractual obligation my relationship with the organisation was already constrained; as one of my key informants had recommended me to his employer I felt morally and ethically obliged to ensure that no harm would come to the informant's work relationship. Even though the workings of the organisation itself were not the focus of my research, what would be important throughout my involvement with the organisation was not to do away with a critical stance but to thematise concerns or questions in conversation with members of the organisation and thus make these issues an explicit part of the fieldwork. Also, I considered that by accepting the 'offer' I would 'return' the favour to Groundworks for allowing me to conduct research at their offices, as they needed urgently to recruit a Slovak speaker. Furthermore, I took this as an opportunity to have access to an additional site as well as

possibly to a different group of research informants. In any case, staff and attendees were made aware of my multiple interests in the drop-in.

Having established access to these two sites, I was conscious that they brought me into contact with only a certain subgroup of people and in very specific situations. In order to include also migrants who did not use these services, either because they did not need them or because they did not know about them, I attended a number of informal social gatherings which were organised by members of a Facebook group called the 'Glasgow Slovak and Czech community' every six to seven weeks in different pubs in Glasgow city centre. Although the Facebook group had more than 200 members at the time, around 25 to 30 people would usually attend these gatherings where they would socialise, enjoy 'a night out' and share news, experiences and insights from their lives. Initially, I emailed the organizing committee of the group and asked permission to come along. I was told that the gatherings were open to everyone, and the organizers were happy to have more people. Again, what was particularly useful at these meetings was my knowledge of the Slovak language; many found the fact that I was a 'foreigner' who had visited Slovakia, had learned Slovak and was conducting a study on Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants in the city very interesting and intriguing. Quite often it served as an ice-breaker and helped me to mingle with the group and to establish contacts with people, some of whom became research informants.

My varied involvement with the above access points over a sustained period of time led to an incremental growth of contacts and to the emergence of new sites. By way of introduction I got to know other migrants, family members, friends and friends of friends, and I came to participate in events and activities independent of the initial sites and access points. This meant that while I continued my participant observation at the original three sites, the 'field' expanded to include different sites ranging from places like cafes, a local job centre, work places, the internet, the street, to someone's home, a public park or even the countryside, that is wherever my informants would take me and/or where I could observe practices or take part in conversations potentially relevant to the study. Some of the people I met in this process became key informants whom I would meet repeatedly in various settings throughout the fieldwork period, enabling me to be part of their everyday lives and activities; others I met less regularly. In this sense, the insights into my research participants' 'everyday' which I refer to

are not the result of 24/7 living 'like and amongst them' in a spatially or socially bounded unit that dominate notions of 'the Slovak and Czech community' or a city 'neighbourhood'. The field of the everyday was rather constituted by my repeated, sequential interactions with Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in formal and informal settings, at one-off and regular events, day-time and night-time activities, in public and private spaces, inside and outside of Glasgow. They shared with me their stories, concerns and worries about themselves and others - from coping with health issues, struggling with getting a job, to dealing with someone's loss or coping with loneliness - as well as successes and celebrations - from gaining educational qualifications, finding employment, to birthdays or becoming parents - and for the period of the fieldwork I tried to document their stories and experiences as they changed over time.

The varying degrees of engagement and participation that characterised my ethnographic fieldwork as well as the nature of my research topic were reflected in the varied additional roles - apart from researcher - that were ascribed to me by those in the field, such as volunteer, project worker, interpreter, social worker, human information hub, friend, fellow migrant, the 'odd' Slovak speaking 'foreigner'. Certainly, some of these roles attributed to me had their advantages; for example, some research participants seemed ready to share their issues and concerns with 'a fellow migrant', whilst my speaking Slovak with an accent at times was a cause for laughter. In some ways, they signified a good rapport with research participants. In some instances, however, I realised the necessity to clarify my role, that is whenever the ascriptions led to false expectations, for example, when a research participant called me for health advice on acute stomach pain or when another key informant called me late in the evening about a housing issue. Even though willing to help as much as I could, it became important to remind some participants of the limitations of my role and abilities. Moreover, I was highly aware of the danger of mistaking emerging friendships with research participants for egalitarian - and thus problem-free - relationships. As Gorelick (1991) reminds us, such an ideology of equality between the researcher and research subjects in fact obscures "the differences of their roles and the power complexity of their relationship" (Gorelick 1991, cited in Wolf 1996, p. 19).

In any case, I was attributed and performed multiple roles at any given point in time just as the research participants were. For example, during a one-to-one advice session at Groundworks

where the support worker, the client and I ended up having a conversation about children, I was a colleague to the support worker and a volunteer to the client, as well as being a fellow Slovak-speaker, a male, a migrant and a fellow parent; at the same time, in relation to the client, the support worker was a fellow Slovak national and migrant, a female, a mother as well as a case worker making important decisions on the client's behalf. These complex assemblages of roles disrupted the often critiqued power hierarchy between researcher and research subjects which is based on rather one-dimensional concepts of one's position in a stratified society. To give another example, in terms of socio-economic positioning within UK society, as a funded PhD researcher at a prestigious Scottish university I was placed in a more privileged position than many of my informants, some of whom appeared more marginalised. At the same time, I was sometimes looked down on for reasons of my appearance and background; not being (white) Scottish and having an Albanian background were taken as markers of coming from a more exotic, poor and backwards place, and I was assumed to be a Muslim and a refugee rather than a fellow EU national.³⁶ Also, coming from a non-academic family from a small mountain village myself, there were always things that research participants and I could share and other things that set us apart, with no clear-cut power relations between us or fixed roles of insider/outsider.³⁷ Therefore, with each and every person and in each setting roles and positions had to be negotiated and evolved over time. As hinted at before, the use of languages was an important vehicle in these negotiations. The standard situation was one of multilinguality; with all my research participants there was a possibility of speaking either English or Slovak (or Czech) with varying competencies between us. Differently from research situations in the UK between a native English speaker conducting an ethnography with East European migrants who speak English less confidently or not well, here I was a non-native English speaker cum non-native Slovak speaker which required, from both sides, efforts to render ourselves intelligible and feel comfortable with each other's accents, grammatical mistakes, or silences looking for the 'right' word or expression.

³⁶ Interestingly, my ascribed Muslim religion proved particularly problematic during my stay in Slovakia where also being of an Albanian background at times provoked negative reactions. For example, the relatives of my landlady warned her of the dangers of hosting a Muslim.

³⁷ This certainly applies to the phase of 'fieldwork' but changes fundamentally when it comes to the practice of writing about and representing research participants and their stories for academic purposes, a point to which I return later in the chapter.

2.4 Selection of participants

The fieldwork process described above yielded a research sample that covers a wide range of socio-demographic characteristics. It is important to note that for 2012 when I conducted my fieldwork, there were no reliable statistical data on Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow from which a probability sample could have been drawn. The Scottish Census 2011, for example, does not provide detailed data on Slovak or Czech nationals nor on speakers of the two languages. In the absence of census-based population statistics, quantitative data created from the now defunct Workers' Registration Scheme (WRS) for nationals from the A8 countries are often cited. However, WRS data are generally recognised as problematic because not everyone registered, self-employed 'A8 migrants' were not obliged to do so, and because the WRS did not require deregistration upon a person's move away from a council area. The lack of robust quantitative data on the relevant population can be exemplified by the following, greatly varying figures in different studies: for the period between May 2004 and April 2011, a study by McCollum *et al.* (2012, p. 15) found that 10,905 'A8 migrants' registered with the scheme in Glasgow. An earlier study commissioned by Glasgow City Council reported disaggregated data by nationality from WRS 2006 data (Blake Stevenson 2007, p. 17) showing that among 3,136 registrations 376 were by Slovak nationals and 213 by Czech nationals, but cautioned against these figures as underestimating the actual size of this population. A remarkably different figure is provided in a report by Adamova *et al.*, published in 2007, which estimated for one area of Glasgow alone a population of 2,000-3,000 Slovakian and Czech Roma.

Thus, constructing a sampling frame for probability sampling was not possible nor was it the aim here. For the purposes of this study, the question of numbers was not a central concern as the research aims were not orientated towards producing statistical generalisations. Instead, in line with my research focus on understanding Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants' everyday experiences, I employed a theoretical sampling technique which aimed to develop theoretically generalisable concepts through an intensive, interpretive engagement with the empirical data (Creswell 2003, pp. 125-128). My focus was on including a diverse research group, which corresponds to the significance of range and heterogeneity in ethnographic (and generally in qualitative) research. Therefore, this study does not claim the research sample to

be representative of the Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrant population in Glasgow or the UK.

From the many people I encountered during the fieldwork, 28 became key informants. They were 14 women and 14 men aged between 24 and 54 years, living in different parts of Glasgow, and included single, married, divorced, widowed persons and individuals living with their partners, with their partners and children, or single parents. Of those 28 individuals, 10 were Czech speakers, while 18 were Slovak speakers. Amongst this group, seven informants self-identified as Roma. In terms of occupations, the key informants held varying jobs such as housekeepers in hotels, factory workers, project workers in the third sector, interpreters, agency workers/temps, kitchen porters, car washers, etc., both self-employed and employed, as well as students who worked alongside their studies and people with multiple jobs. The sample also includes people who were not in employment. Educational background also varied greatly amongst the research informants, ranging from those who had finished secondary education, individuals who had acquired vocational trainings to those who had completed university or postgraduate degrees. Regarding further and higher education, there were individuals who had also studied (or were, at the time of my fieldwork, studying) in Scotland. Although I focused my recruitment of participants on those individuals who had come to Scotland/UK in or after 2004, i.e. following Slovakia's and the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union, which enabled citizens of these countries to access the UK labour market, it is worth noting here that not all Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants living in Glasgow shared this specific migration history. During my fieldwork I came across Czech and Slovak speakers who had arrived in Scotland well before 2004, for example, either as asylum seekers³⁸ or through the au pair migration route. A table containing more detailed socio-demographic and additional information about the key informants is provided in Appendix A.

Additionally, there were about 30 people who I met rather fleetingly during the fieldwork whose stories I got to know to some extent but whose everyday lives I did not follow; this refers to persons who I met, for example, through volunteering at Groundworks, working at

³⁸ This included mainly individuals and their families who had experienced persecution in their countries of origin due to being singled out as Roma. They had been relocated to Glasgow as part of the dispersal policy set out in the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act.

the drop-in, or at one-off events. Complementing the key informants and others are nine individuals with whom I conducted expert or ethnographic interviews due to their professional involvement in the field. This included persons working in different positions such as legal assistant, community worker, and employability adviser in four Glasgow-based third sector organisations with a Slovak- and Czech-speaking client base. Interview questions revolved around the nature of their work and services offered, their evaluations of difficulties and problems faced by Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow, and their view on how these migrants dealt with these issues. Some of these individuals were chosen for the importance that key informants afforded them, others I selected in the course of the fieldwork in order to cover emerging aspects such as employment and legal problems.

2.5 Producing and analysing data

Ethnography involves a whole "array of methods and techniques" (Atkinson *et al.* 2001, p. 5) that includes, for example, "observation, participation, archival analysis and interviewing" (Reinharz, 1992, p. 46). In this research I used a combination of techniques to produce empirical data which involved taking field notes, writing memos of observations, conducting ethnographic interviews as well as semi-structured interviews, holding group conversations, and collecting secondary data including reports, policy papers, and leaflets.

The process of taking field notes, i.e. producing "written accounts of an evolving array of experiences and observed event" (Emerson *et al.* 2001, p. 365), varied depending on the circumstances in the field. During fieldwork at Groundworks, for example, I regularly sat in on one-to-one advice sessions between a support worker and client and took notes on the interaction as well as observed conversation (often in Slovak or Czech) as it actually happened. On-site note-taking took place also in other settings such as when I arranged (first-time or follow-up) meetings with key informants in public places such as cafes and bars, but also when attending various other events like meetings of Slovak interpreters, staff meetings or during field discussions with NGO workers or volunteers where note-taking was considered appropriate and normal. In other instances, for example, when working at the drop-in, in the Groundworks waiting room or when walking with an informant to the Job Centre or on a stroll

in the countryside it was impractical to write notes then and there. Furthermore, as I also experienced a few times during my fieldwork, taking notes during certain field situations such as in casual conversations, among strangers or 'on the go' can interrupt their 'natural' flow, or may even offend the research participant by showing that the researcher's attention lies elsewhere (Emerson *et al.* 2001, p. 357). In such circumstances, writing field notes required a great deal of remembering what was said and how (including keywords/phrases used, themes discussed, mode and atmosphere, setting). Lofland and Lofland (1995) refer to this ongoing act of "preparing yourself to be able to put down on paper what you are now seeing" (p. 90) as mental notes. As soon as possible I would put these mental notes into writing or voice-record them and transcribe them later. Overall, field notes took various forms and styles in this ethnographic study: from mental notes to jotted notes to detailed observations and thoughts; long and short accounts; pertaining to an individual or events/episodes; in English and Slovak. Once back at the desk, these field notes were then typed up. This 'tidying up' always involved acts of writing down, editing, extending, and thus transforming the notes from the field (Clifford 1990). Here I provide an example of a resulting, digitised field note:

What: Conversation with SM (2nd follow up) [language: en]

Where: City Centre pub

When: 30 March (11am)

General: SM looked tired today, he had come straight from work and was in a more subdued mood than during our last meeting. He was talking at length about the changes he's going through as a young father. He works five days a week and on the other two days he has to look after his son, as his partner has finished her maternity leave and gone back to work part-time. He says he doesn't mind this 'sacrifice' for his son but he also doesn't want to change his lifestyle. He still wants to continue to see friends whenever he has time... He is very frustrated about this and says that he is 'working hard', providing for the family but also wants to keep his previous lifestyle. [...]

Commentary: As both SM and his partner can't afford to pay for childcare at the moment (and their parents aren't around), they have to stretch themselves and their resources. This means that they have to arrange their working hours to accommodate childcare, leaving no day/time to spend on their own. This situation puts pressure on the family, and questions of (traditional) roles of father (as breadwinner/good father) and mother (caring) re-emerge.

Follow up: Both SM and his partner will be going to Slovakia for holidays in a few weeks time; good to meet up when they're back in Glasgow, especially since this will be the first time that they travel to Slovakia with their newborn son.[...]

As this extract indicates, the resulting field notes usually comprised four sections: alongside brief information on where, when, with whom, in what language and what had taken place, in the section 'general' I gave a narrative account of the specific situation or interaction; 'commentary', which documented any provisional interpretations, reflections or conceptual/theoretical ideas; and finally, 'follow-up', which were notes about what to do next, for example, what to keep in mind and inquire about in a next meeting/encounter. This format for structuring my notes was chosen as a way of addressing positivist notions with regard to field notes. As Clifford (1990) has critiqued, traditionally, field notes aimed at and were treated as objectively capturing social reality, as representing in great detail 'what is'. Instead of being subjected to analysis, elaborated and extended accounts of the field were often presented as *the* analysis of the insightful and expert ethnographer. 'Fieldnotes' came to acquire an aura of objectivity and science due to their secrecy and sacred status which bracketed the process of how they were created, in fact, co-created with the informants: jotting down a word, scribbling a picture, memorising a sequence of actions or an interaction, extending, enriching and editing the notes, negotiating meanings with the informants, probing ideas etc. 'Fieldnotes' as one word reflected and reinforced the notion that notes and field were inextricably joined up. Against this backdrop, I tried to make the production of my field notes as data explicit. Also, instead of keeping descriptive notes, theoretical notes and emotional notes on separate sheets of paper or electronic documents (as, for example, suggested by Gobo 2008, pp. 210-212) I have intentionally kept these aspects together in order to more accurately represent (and thus document) how what I observe cannot be fully disentangled from how I experienced the situation or what conceptual ideas I associated them with. As one can see from the above extract, descriptions in the 'general' section, and thoughts and interpretations in the sections 'commentary' and 'follow-up' overlap to some extent. More importantly, here, in line with the constructionist epistemology I outlined above, the resulting field notes are treated as a constructed version of social reality. Therefore, I treated field notes in the same way as other primary data that were produced during my research (e.g., transcripts of audio-recorded qualitative interviews) and subjected them to analysis and interpretation.

Qualitative, open-ended interviewing was another technique of data creation that I employed in this research. These conversation-like interviews with one, sometimes with several individuals, for example, a couple or family, aimed at getting more in-depth and biographical accounts from the key informants. This could involve exploring a particular theme that I had come across in previous meetings or learning more about informants' backgrounds and histories as well providing an opportunity for them to bring to my attention any issues that they felt to be important. Differently from my ethnographic interviews, some of these were audio-recorded. Some interviews were conducted in Slovak or Czech, others in English, depending on what the informant felt more comfortable with. However, while I was confident in communicating and conducting fieldwork in Slovak and English, I had not acquired the naturalness or ease with which Czech and Slovak speakers seem able to understand or switch to each other's language.³⁹ On five occasions when interviewees indicated they preferred to speak in Czech I brought an interpreter along to the interview to assist me. In these cases, I guided the interview conversation with open and probing questions speaking in Slovak with the interviewee/s (who would answer in Czech) and involved the interpreter whenever I did not understand a particular reply or wanted to confirm I had understood a specific point correctly. The interview process, thus, did not resemble a fully "interpreter-mediated encounter" (Wadensjö 2013, p. 3) in the conventional sense, that is, the interpreter acting as an intermediary translating everything from English to Slovak/Czech and vice versa, 'channeling' the information between me and the interview partner/s. This way, the flow of the conversation remained largely uninterrupted by the interpreter, allowing the interviewees to talk freely in their native language. In addition, the interviews unfolded as casual and friendly conversations, as the interpreter and these research participants already knew each other; the latter were recruited from my fieldwork at Groundworks, while the interpreter was one of the support workers there. As I generally found during my fieldwork at Groundworks, the support workers were treated as confidantes by the clients well beyond the 'office hours', and clients would open up about all kinds of intimate and personal issues as well as asking for support

³⁹ As Nábělková (2007) points out, although Czech and Slovak are phonetically and grammatically closely related languages, "numerous differences exist on all levels and become evident particularly when learning to use the other language actively, or when a foreigner speaking one of the languages comes into contact with the other" (p. 56).

with specific welfare issues. During the interview process the informants thus seemed comfortable to talk about their biographies and concerns.

This is not to say, however, that the interpreter was passive in the interview process. Firstly, as the interpreter and interviewee/s knew each other, the interviews inevitably invited situations when the interpreter would sometimes ask the interviewee a question or add a comment on a particular topic without being prompted by one of us. Secondly, the presence of the support worker led some interviewees to talk extensively about a particular problem or concern, perhaps in the hope of eliciting some extra advice from the worker or making sure that their concerns were heard. On one occasion, for example, a research informant asked me during the interview whether I had recorded his complaint about the lack of interpreting services at a local Job Centre. Although we held these interview conversations away from the Groundworks offices in informal settings such as cafes or pubs, there were moments during the interviews which reminded us of the advice sessions at Groundworks. Nevertheless, whatever the extent of an interpreter's involvement, their presence should not be seen as interfering with and disrupting the interview process and the data collection. The idea of the interview as a 'straightforward' question-answer activity in which, ideally, the data flows unhindered in one direction has been widely challenged in qualitative research. Here, the interview process was understood as dialogic, a social interaction in which data was co-constructed by those present, including the interpreter (Charmaz 2008, p. 402). Hence, the interview transcripts and their analysis included the contributions of all involved parties.⁴⁰ Also, while I transcribed the English language interviews myself, the transcription of those interviews conducted mainly in Czech and Slovak was carried out by a native Slovak speaker. In the latter instance, I subsequently translated the interviews into English myself in order to check the transcripts together with the notes that I had taken during the interviews and to remain close to the data. In a session with the person who had transcribed the interviews, the

⁴⁰ Transcriptions were produced based on a simplified and modified version of the transcription symbols suggested in Silverman (1993, p. 118). They included the initials of the involved participants; words or passages in another language than the main interview language (for example, an English expression in an otherwise Czech or Slovak conversation) were placed in quotation marks; situational or contextual descriptions were given in parentheses (e.g., laughter, a sound in the background); double question marks indicated words or expressions whose meaning remained unclear, or words that were inaudible; a dotted line signified an interruption of speech or a pause.

translated versions were then read together with the original to clarify any unclear phrases, references and correct any inconsistencies or mistakes between us.

Next to these two types of data that made up the main body of empirically derived 'texts' for the analysis I drew on various other data in a not necessarily pre-planned manner. For example, in the course of the fieldwork I collated texts in the form of email and other digital interactions including Facebook posts and messages when they seemed pertinent to the research; collected materials provided by various third-sector organisations such as project reports, leaflets, or material provided at events such as conferences and meetings; drew on statistical data, news coverage and film published online or in offline media here and in the Czech Republic/Slovakia. These various types of data were treated as secondary. Combining varying techniques to produce different types of data in this ethnography could be seen as an example of what Flick has termed "implicit triangulation" (2004b, p. 180), in that it did not aim to compensate for the respective weaknesses of each method in a bid to maximize validity of research results, but rather serves to enhance and multiply possibilities for approaching and thus understanding the subject matter at hand as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon (Atkinson and Coffey 2002, pp. 806-807; Flick 2004b, pp. 180-183).⁴¹

This aim of exploring diverse voices and perspectives of various actors in the field in order to arrive at a complex picture of negotiations of insecurities and risks also informed my analytical strategy. The great majority of the data was digitised and imported into the NVivo software programme which served as a data storage tool and, more importantly, as a means to digitally organise and work with the data. It is important to note that the body of data grew gradually throughout the twelve months of fieldwork and that the process of analysis did not begin once all data was 'collected'. Rather, as was visible in the commentary section in my field note extract provided above, conceptual and theoretical ideas were part and parcel of the fieldwork, guiding subsequent explorations of specific themes or the collation of more data on a particular issue or from a specific individual. That means, throughout the fieldwork process issues or meanings emerged that could be traced and probed across various already existent

⁴¹ Authors such as Denzin as well as Atkinson have revised their initial suggestion that triangulation was useful to increase the validity of empirical results by offsetting the weaknesses of the single methods, because this notion of a single reality 'out there' that can be accessed through different methods runs counter to the interpretative paradigm (Atkinson and Coffey 2002, pp. 806-807).

data units as well as examined and scrutinised again in the field. In this way, while I put the perspectives of the Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants that were central in my field notes as well as interview transcripts at the core of my analysis, I engaged with theory, concepts, and historical accounts in order to contextualise and interpret their experiences and positions with regard to dealing with risks and insecurities in Glasgow and beyond. The specificity of the local, small-scale interactions directly witnessed and co-produced by the researcher was thus enriched, combined, juxtaposed and interrogated with further such interactions over time, across individual cases, and with existing studies, other discursive representations, and theoretical concepts that brought into view processes and forces well beyond the particular case. Multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995), the extended case method (Burawoy 1998) and the notion of global ethnographies (Burawoy *et al.* 2000) present other, more established responses to the question of how contemporary ethnography can yield insights on phenomena that seem to stretch over and/or be shaped by processes on various scales such as the local, regional, national, global and their complex interconnections. As each of the following empirical chapters shows, I have forged my own way of working with and responding to the data, emphasising the epistemological heterogeneity of perspectives and lived experiences through an analysis that unfolded in a spiralling movement between data, theoretical engagement and back to the data.

2.6 Ethical considerations

Before any data were 'collected' I applied for and was granted approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the College of Social Sciences at the University of Glasgow to conduct this ethnographic study. More importantly, however, I was aware that in the course of the research process practices or situations may arise which could potentially harm those involved in the research, whether directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, and that significant efforts would have to be made on my part to prevent this from happening. In this section I discuss some key ethical issues that emerged in the course of this research project.

A central concern in this study was securing the informed consent of individuals participating in the study. Initially, I had planned to obtain and document consent from research participants

in writing by letting them sign a written consent form. As this practice was unproblematic and successful in my two qualitative pre-studies, to this end, I prepared and - for those participants who did not speak English - also translated a form plus an information sheet about the study. In the early phase of the fieldwork I handed out information sheets to potential participants, for example, at Groundworks when introducing myself as a researcher to service users; when sitting in on one-to-one advice sessions at the organisation, the support worker and I also informed the clients orally at the beginning of the session that they could object to my presence. No client, however, expressed their objection. In general, it proved difficult to find the 'right timing' for talking people through the consent form as I only gradually came to know who the key informants would be. This problem was even more pronounced when getting to know people during participant observation in informal settings, for example, at a social gathering in someone's house when new individuals joined the meeting. It became apparent to me that obtaining signatures to 'prove' or 'document' consent amounted to an act of formalising a relationship which was just about to begin (or remain a fleeting contact) and introduced moments of awkwardness into otherwise fluid situations. This led me to the realisation that research ethics are not about rigidly adhering to standard codes of ethical conduct but orienting my research practice towards two key principles: one, that research participants are fully aware of the presence and interests of the researcher and of their rights to withdraw at any time; and two, that anonymity and confidentiality are maintained in order to avoid any harm to the participating individuals resulting from research activities in all stages from data creation to writing and publication (see also ASA 2011).

Regarding the first principle, I introduced myself as a researcher and explained my research topic whenever I met new people, and I informally asked individuals whether they wished to participate or not. Importantly, I assured the continuity of such consent by checking with them repeatedly throughout the research (for example, after a specific conversation) and reminding them that they could withdraw at any moment without giving any explanations. I was grateful that as many as 28 research informants opened up to me and invited me back multiple times for further conversations and meetings. When conducting expert interviews, I used consent forms as the more conventional interview situation provided a suitable setting for obtaining written consent.

As noted previously, ethical issues go beyond the stage of data 'collection' and reach into analysis, the writing of the ethnography and its publication or dissemination. Here again, the seemingly straightforward instruction to anonymise data so as to prevent identification and traceability and, with it, any potential negative consequences for informants proved more complex than initially thought. I have used pseudonyms for people, places and private/third sector organisations and have chosen more general descriptions for geographical locations (e.g. south Glasgow, city centre) and public sector organisations. Also, all empirical data have been kept stored on password-protected computers and safely archived in a lockable cabinet with nobody except me having access to the full material. Yet, some issues still remain(ed): someone who works with this group of migrants in Glasgow might, for example, recognize an organisation or place described. This presented a real dilemma: in very specific cases, absolute anonymity could not have been reached without distorting the data to an extent that it might compromise the accuracy and academic integrity of this study and the researcher. In those instances where a risk of traceability remained, no matter how small, I made participants aware of this risk and discussed possible implications with them; where potential consequences were considered too grave I have refrained from using this piece of information.

More generally, any research involving migrants faces the ethical challenge of not contributing to existing forms and practices of essentialisation, stereotyping and stigmatisation (van Liempt and Bilger 2009). Amidst the current wave of anti-immigrant rhetoric and discourse in the media and politics in the UK, and a recent rise in hate crimes against Central and East European migrants across Britain (Burnett 2011), I have been highly conscious of the risk and real consequences of further stigmatisation that can arise from writing about the 'other'. The danger of fixing 'otherness' and (re)producing racialised difference in the process of my knowledge production was particularly high with regard to Roma participants when considering the history and degree of their persecution and marginalisation in their countries of origin and in the UK. During encounters in the field I placed great importance on being respectful and open in my dealings with individuals, which, for example, also included not 'pushing' further on issues that appeared to be painful or difficult to talk about or share for the informant. Furthermore, I have sought to counter these risks through the way in which I delineated the research group (as elaborated above in chapter 2, section 2.3.1) and by analytically exploring and emphasising heterogeneity within the research group. Moreover, in

several chapters I have analysed and tried to shed light on processes of ethnicisation and marginalisation, and I have actively questioned potential stereotyping practices in my own analysis and interpretations, for example, in the form of crude generalisations from individual to group characteristics.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a condensed account of the research process of this study. In the first part, I presented the constructionist epistemology that informed the qualitative methodology adopted here. I subsequently discussed ethnography as a particular empirical strategy for studying the everyday negotiations of risks and insecurities amongst Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants living in the city of Glasgow. Problematising ethnographic ways of knowing migrants' lives in contemporary societies, I located my study within the wider literature and debates on issues of methodological nationalism, representation, studying 'the other', and power relations. I then specified the boundaries of 'the field' by describing how the actual fieldwork was conducted at specific times and places. This included critical reflections on my various roles in the field. A discussion of how the data were produced and analysed followed, before concluding the chapter with a brief review of key ethical questions. Overall, the contribution of this chapter lies in making explicit a methodological approach that may serve as an example of how methodological nationalism and the ethnic lens can be overcome in migration research. The following empirical chapters present the main results of this intensive and sustained empirical engagement and research process.

Chapter 3: Employment insecurities as invisible traces of globalisation

This first empirical chapter is in some ways concerned with events and experiences in the past, with things that happened before I entered 'the field' in 2012. In order to introduce the empirically grounded findings that are presented in the next chapters, here I look into the specific migration history of my research informants. I do so by critically examining their experiences of employment-related insecurities in Glasgow. Taking a specific spatial and temporal pattern that emerged in my research participants' accounts and career trajectories as a starting point, the analysis draws on Sassen's conceptualisation of the relationship between capital and labour mobility as well as on insights from the literature on the neoliberal restructuring of work. A discussion of the role and impact of private recruitment firms on Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants' short- and longer-term experiences in Glasgow draws out how the latter are shaped by economic globalisation and neoliberal restructuring. Thus, I argue that a human capital perspective, which is often applied in both academic studies and wider perceptions of migration and employment, and which focuses attention primarily on migrants' lack of relevant skills and knowledges can only provide limited insight when attempting to understand these individuals' experiences of employment insecurities in Glasgow.

3.1 'Migrant deficiencies'

"I cannot understand how people come here without basic skills!" exclaimed the job adviser in frustration once the client had left. I overheard this remark by a staff member whose role was to support Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in finding paid work as part of a collaborative project between Groundworks and another city-wide organisation. Amongst those working in similar advice and support positions in direct contact with Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow I often came across similar expressions of exasperation: "They should have at least learnt English before coming over here" or "people lack basic skills and will flounder" or "they've got no idea how to behave in a job interview". Concerns about

their clients being 'unskilled' or 'lacking' essential knowledges seemed to be widely shared. Such remarks were usually not directed at the migrants themselves, but rather expressed between advisers or at staff meetings as explanations as to why their client-base seemed to struggle to find or stay in employment.

At first sight, this type of explanation seemed to apply to the situation of the Šimkos, a Czech couple who arrived in Glasgow in December 2005 and had been using various advice and support services on a relatively regular basis. Iveta Šimková and her husband Karol Šimko were 47 and 40 years old respectively when they left their small town in western Czech Republic and came to Glasgow looking for work. Prior to coming to Glasgow, Mr Šimko had worked as a qualified bricklayer and held various other construction-related qualifications, while Mrs Šimková had been a housewife. Upon their arrival, initially, they had worked for two years as production line operatives at the JVC factory in East Kilbride, a town 12 miles southeast of Glasgow, before they lost their jobs when the factory closed down in 2008. Although they had managed to get some work in a couple of places afterwards, as cleaners at a large utility firm and as workers in a bakery, these had been mainly temporary and unstable jobs with no long-term employment prospects, and they were laid off after just a few weeks. Clearly, for the Šimkos the loss of their jobs at the factory four years ago had impacted significantly on their lives. Their job loss reappeared in our conversations as a key event that subsequently triggered other problems: poor health, poverty, isolation. At the time of my fieldwork, Mrs Šimková and her husband were both receiving state financial support⁴² which was barely enough to meet their basic needs. In recent years, their health had gradually deteriorated. Mr Šimko's heart condition had worsened and was causing varicose veins in his legs that in turn impeded his mobility and ability to find work. Mrs Šimková, on the other hand, was suffering from arthritis which often caused pain in her joints and legs. Their limited knowledge of English seemed not only to contribute to their isolation and ongoing worries about their health but also to have compounded the difficulties they experienced in their search for new, stable employment.

⁴² The couple were receiving Employment Support Allowance, which is financial support given to people who are unable to work because of illness. At the time, their combined benefit income was approximately £400 a month.

The problems the Šimkos were facing seem to provide a typical example of persons lacking human capital. The latter is defined as "productive wealth embodied in labor, skills and knowledge" (UN 1997, unpaginated), meaning an individual's knowledge, skills and experience that may increase his or her economic productivity. General ideas of human capital theory have been applied by migration researchers to explain the differences in the labour market positioning of different ethnic minority groups and, more generally, the difficulties migrants face in the receiving country (Esser 2006). This approach highlights the importance of the host country's language as part of an individual's human capital. The significance of language for migrants' incorporation into the labour market and, more widely, the 'host society' is broadly accepted both in academia (Esser 2006, p. 1) and lay understandings of migration. From this point of view, the Šimkos' employment insecurity could be assumed to relate primarily to their lack of skills relevant to the Scottish labour market, especially their limited knowledge of the English language. As we have seen above, this seemed to be the dominant concept underlying the concerns of various frontline-workers providing services to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants, even though the former did not frame such views in theoretical terms.

3.2 "Back then there was work"

Yet, the Šimkos accounted for their increasingly long stretches of unemployment differently. As I mentioned earlier, losing their jobs at the JVC factory in 2008 was a recurring theme in our conversations, and this event served as a meaningful marker separating the difficult present from a better past. Their narratives constructed a contrast between their current situation and the early years after their arrival in Glasgow at the end of 2005. Referring to the initial period, Mr Šimko stated: "Back then there was work [and] things were better". In fact, it was Mrs Šimková's sister, who had arrived in Glasgow a year earlier and who had told them that there was work in abundance, which triggered their move to the city. Even though they spoke no English, soon after their arrival they got jobs on the production line of the JVC factory through a recruitment agency. After a few months, the couple were offered employment contracts directly by the firm, a major producer of audio and video products. "These were good times", recalled Mr Šimko with a sense of nostalgia: "The job was

excellent...we made TVs and all that". Both working full time, the couple could afford to go on trips in the surrounding areas of Glasgow and visit their families and friends back in the Czech Republic. "We went twice to Loch Lomond", Mrs Šimková told me excitedly. Two years later, however, the company moved its production facilities to Poland; the factory closed down and both were made redundant.⁴³ For the Šimkos, the job loss was sudden and a devastating moment in the couple's life. "And then BAM! Factory was closed, job was gone", recalled Mr Šimko dramatically.

While before, they used to go on trips around Glasgow, now even buying a bus ticket involved careful considerations: "We do not have the money to go to the other end of Glasgow: a bus ticket costs £4.50, for both of us that would be £9. If I add one more pound to this amount, we would have electricity and gas paid for this money", explained Mr Šimko. They had found themselves stuck in a situation in which they had been unable to find any stable work and were struggling to make a living. Since they lost their jobs at the factory four years ago, they had not been able to afford to go home to visit their families and friends. However, returning back to the Czech Republic was not an option for them as they had no place to stay there. Thus, to avoid the risk of homelessness, they felt they had no choice but to stay in Glasgow where they at least had accommodation and, as Mrs Šimková put it, they had "better chances of survival".

The Šimkos, however, were not the only people I encountered during my fieldwork who saw their current difficulties in finding work as related to a shortage in jobs. In fact, the vast majority of my informants had started out working in factories, with some still doing so at the time of my fieldwork.⁴⁴ Many fondly referred to their early years in Glasgow as "good times" of abundant employment opportunities when, as one informant described it, one "could work anywhere if [one] wanted to". These times seemed to have lasted up until 2008-2009, when they ended abruptly. As another informant recalled: "My brother had called me and said that there is plenty of work [...] I worked there [at the factory] for 2.5 years, then bad conditions

⁴³ Having run the factory in the area since 1987, JVC moved its production abroad announcing that "it would be difficult to continue production within the UK due to the resulting impact on profits" (Sky News 2008, unpaginated).

⁴⁴ Only a few of my informants had never worked in factories, e.g., those who came to Scotland/UK through the au pair or student route or those who had worked mainly in another key employment sector, namely the hospitality industry.

came". Thus, many had experienced an initial, but short-lived phase of economic stability after their arrival in Scotland, contributing to a positive outlook, be it short-term or long-term. In the experience of many of my research participants, these hopes were dampened when one factory after the other shut its doors. Large companies like JVC moving their production abroad, as in the case of the Šimkos, was not a one-off event, as other migrants were similarly affected. Many clients at Groundworks and the drop-in had lost their jobs in this specific period of 2008-2009 and had since been struggling to find a stable source of income.

Experiences of factory closures were also shared by informants whom I came to know independently of the above fieldwork sites. Marta Černáková, for example, a university graduate, had arrived in Scotland in 2005 with the help of a Slovakian recruitment agency and initially worked as a production line operative at IBM and then later at HP, both large US-American ICT companies with production factories in Greenock and Erskine respectively.⁴⁵ A couple of years later, both firms moved their production to the Czech Republic, and in the case of HP it was Ms Černáková who facilitated this relocation process thanks to her proficiency in English. Acting as an interpreter for the factory management team, she travelled for 14 months between Scotland and the Czech Republic to help set up the production facility there, including recruiting and training new staff. Eventually and somewhat ironically, she had in the process helped to make herself redundant.

Her case highlights another important aspect: while the Šimko family and some other informants had followed a relative or friend to Scotland, many came with the help of recruitment agencies. In fact, the abundance of factory jobs during this early period of post-accession migration corresponded with an active recruitment process in the Czech Republic and Slovakia by companies based in Scotland. The case of Matej Zolian, a 29-year old from eastern Slovakia, illustrates this. Before he came to Scotland in 2004, Mr Zolian had moved to the Czech Republic and worked in a factory, repairing mobile phones. It was there that representatives of a recruitment agency (operating UK-wide and with offices in Scotland), offered him (and some of his colleagues) work in a factory in the west of Scotland. Although this was essentially the same job as in the Czech Republic, they felt it was an attractive offer to work abroad and accepted it. Alongside cases when individuals were headhunted by UK

⁴⁵ Greenock and Erskine are towns located approximately 40km and 20km respectively to the west of Glasgow.

firms in their home countries, others like Ms Černáková had approached local agencies in Slovakia or the Czech Republic looking for work abroad. And again, others like the Šimkos had come to Glasgow/Scotland on their own, mainly through their existing social contacts (friends, family), and used agencies here as a means to find jobs. However, in the case of almost all my informants and irrespective of their prior qualifications, the jobs that the agencies arranged for them did not involve highly skilled positions. These were entry-level positions, mainly working on the production line, with basic or no training at all provided and for low-wages.⁴⁶ At the same time, because these jobs did not require specialist skills they presented an opportunity for everyone, young and old, women and men, university graduates and those with elementary schooling, those with good English language skills and those without and so on.

The picture that emerges when looking across these various cases is a reversal of direction of jobs and capital movement from Scotland eastwards, which happened suddenly and only a few years after my informants had arrived in the country. In the above cases of Mr Zolian and Ms Černáková an even greater irony becomes evident: at first, with the help of recruitment agencies, companies and firms from the UK and other US/Western countries went to the Czech Republic and Slovakia to recruit cheap and temporary labour for their factories in Scotland, thus triggering peoples' migration, only later to move their production to these very countries. No matter whether the production moved to Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland or elsewhere, many of my informants were caught out in these movements and reverse flows.

3.3 Migrant labour and economic globalisation

The experiences of my research participants draw our attention to the intricate linkages between the mobility of capital and labour. This relationship has been extensively analysed by Saskia Sassen who in her influential book *The Mobility of Labor and Capital* (1988) argued that economic globalisation and international migration are mutually constitutive. She demonstrated how the direction, timing and intensity of various immigration trends in the US

⁴⁶ A recent survey of employers in the UK found that Central and East European migrants continue to "account for a disproportionately large share of low-skilled employment" (CIPD 2013, p. 5).

since the 1960s were closely connected to the internationalisation of production and the free circulation of capital beyond national borders seeking to maximise profitability, such as in the form of foreign direct investment in developing countries. In this early work, she suggested that foreign direct investment not only disrupts and transforms the previously existing local political economy but also creates new linkages with the country from which the investment originates. And these linkages are not merely economic in nature but have a cultural-ideological effect: "the presence of foreign plants not only brings the US or any other 'western' country closer, but it also 'westernizes' the less developed country and its people" (p. 20). For her, it is this ideological effect that specifically triggers outmigration from specific places in the global South to specific localities in the global North. Unlike approaches that view the movement of labour and capital mobility as two separate phenomena, her account places international migration as one of several inter-related flows of capital, goods, services and information (Robinson 2009, p. 7).

Importantly, however, economic globalisation also restructures the economies of developed countries. This includes two key developments: "a) the growth of the advanced service sector, including the financial system, and b) the shrinking of traditional manufacturing industries and their replacement with a downgraded manufacturing sector and high technology industries, in both of which sweatshops are mushrooming" (Sassen 1988, p. 22). What is particularly notable in an increasingly neoliberal, globalised world, Sassen argues, is that "even the most dynamic and technologically developed sectors of the economy, such as the advanced services and high-technology industry generate a considerable supply of low-wage jobs with few skills and language proficiency" (p. 23). Thus, while the political discourse on immigration in the UK is focused on attracting only "the brightest and the best"⁴⁷ and so-called low-skilled migration is increasingly rejected as socially and economically harmful, not least by the public (The Migration Observatory 2011), Sassen makes clear that the 'new economy' is heavily reliant on migrant labour filling '3-D jobs'.⁴⁸ This army of workers in low-paid, low-skilled jobs are essential for the reproduction of capital as well as for facilitating the livelihoods and

⁴⁷ In February 2012, in a speech at the Policy Exchange think tank, the then Immigration Minister, Damian Green, was quoted as saying that Britain will only accept "the brightest and the best" migrants. "Britain does not need more migrant middle managers, any more than it needs unskilled labour. We do need top of the range professionals, senior executives, technical specialists, entrepreneurs and exceptional artistic and scientific talent" (The Huffington Post 2012, unpaginated).

⁴⁸ 3-D jobs refer to dirty, dangerous and difficult jobs.

lifestyles of the winners of economic globalisation, for example management and financial consultants, marketing and publishing executives as well as IT and other engineers, whom Reich terms "symbolic analysts" (1991, p. 177) occupying the highly valued positions in a global knowledge economy. In Sassen's later work, the expansion of low-wage, temporary and casualised jobs that demand immigrant labour in developed countries emerges as symptomatic of advanced capitalism, which is characterised by a deepening of capitalist relations, leading to the immiseration and expulsion of an increased number of people reduced to mere "laboring bodies" (2012, p. 75).

In the case of my research participants, it remains unclear whether any British/Scottish investment in Slovakia and the Czech Republic provided a context for the emergence of a specific allure of the UK or Scotland as a destination country for peoples' migration. While the UK remained amongst the 10 most important countries of origin for foreign direct investment in post-socialist Slovakia and the Czech Republic between 1999 and 2005 (Bandelj 2008, pp. 106-109; OECD 2014), it made up only about 3% of FDI in these countries. However, one of my pre-studies in which I analysed qualitative interviews with Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants who had arrived in Glasgow after 2004 hinted at a broader dynamic of cultural internationalisation in these post-socialist East European societies. For example, the English language seemed to have played an increasingly important role within the local education system and labour markets, being demanded as a skill or qualification, regardless of its actual relevance for a job. Thus, learning English was one of the main attractions for my research participants to come to live and work in the UK, an aspect that also emerged during my fieldwork for this research project. More broadly, experiencing life abroad in a Western country appeared to be positively valued, and the cultural imagery of the UK as a 'developed country' or of Scotland as a place of natural beauty and a rich history further contributed to their appeal (Guma 2010).

At the same time, the second linkage between the migration of people and movement of capital pointed out by Sassen appears as more directly relevant here. While I will provide a more detailed discussion of the role of recruitment firms in the next section, here it suffices to emphasise that private recruitment firms played a specific and important role in 'channelling' Slovak and Czech nationals to production and processing facilities in Scotland after their

countries' EU accession. These new arrivals provided cheap labour for various multinational companies with factories based around Glasgow. This also becomes apparent in the spatial dispersal of my informants in their first years in Scotland: especially up until the period 2008-2009, the majority worked in factories located in the vicinity of but outside Glasgow, that is in areas within the Central Belt historically known (Henderson 1989) and still branded as an attractive location for foreign direct investment in Scotland (BBC 2012).⁴⁹ For example, technology companies and online retailers such as IBM, HP and Amazon ran factories and warehouses in areas around Erskine, Greenock and Gourock to the west of Glasgow. My informants also mentioned large food processing plants located to the east of Glasgow such as around Airdrie and Livingston as well as in East Kilbride south of Glasgow. Some of my informants initially lived in these towns before moving to Glasgow later on, either when they lost their jobs there or for other reasons (such as higher education, better infrastructure, cultural life in a bigger city); others who had moved directly to Glasgow commuted to these factories outside the city.

Given this connection it seems remarkable that the literature on the so-called A8 migration has hardly considered capitalist economic globalisation as an analytically relevant process. As I pointed out in chapter 1, section 1.1.2, studies on employment-related insecurities amongst 'A8 migrants' tended to restrict their analysis to processes and forces within the UK. On the other hand, researchers who have adopted push-and pull-factor models based on aspects of unequal development between East European countries and the UK, have often construed these migrants as highly mobile individuals moving from less developed, low-wage countries with high unemployment to an advanced economy in the pursuit of higher financial returns and better lifestyles (Drinkwater *et al.* 2006; Blanchflower *et al.* 2007; Pollard *et al.* 2008; Elsner 2011). In such accounts that focus on the notion of free mobility of workers within the EU, a global economic system is mainly taken as given and globalisation processes are omitted from their analyses. Sassen's work is insightful here, as it highlights that my research participants' migration experiences are not just taking place under abstract conditions of globalisation but can be understood as a realisation of the specific relationship between capital and labour movement.

⁴⁹ The then finance secretary John Swinney was quoted as saying: "Scotland works hard to attract international investment, demonstrated by the large number of major multi-national firms - such as GlaxoSmithKline, Aker Solutions, Amazon, Samsung, Mitsubishi and others - who have all recently invested in Scotland" (BBC 2012).

As I discussed earlier, many of the Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants I encountered during my fieldwork had come to Scotland to fill manual work positions in vast factories and warehouses of multinational companies. Whether recruited into these jobs directly in their home countries or upon their arrival here, they experienced a high demand for their labour up until 2008-2009 when the period many retrospectively interpreted as stable and hopeful came to an end. In 2008 and 2009 many of the factories that had employed them moved elsewhere, to other parts of the UK, to Eastern Europe or further afield, which in turn led to many people losing their jobs. Certainly, in an increasingly globalized economy, job losses and insecurity of work caused by flows of capital and multinational companies moving production facilities elsewhere seeking ever higher profits affects not just migrants but also other local workers. However, in the case of migrants like Karol Šimko and Iveta Šimková this created a situation in which they found themselves stuck away from home, abandoned by the company and somewhat displaced. What becomes apparent is that even though their basic knowledge of English or, more generally, their only recent arrival in Scotland had not impeded their employment at the factory in the past, after 2008 it became increasingly difficult for many to find a similarly stable position. It seems to be no coincidence that this timeframe concurs with the global financial crisis and the UK labour market becoming more volatile. With regard to Scotland, a quantitative study by Findlay *et al.* (2010) found that, considering WRS⁵⁰ data for 'A8 migrants', there was a significant decline in their employment figures across all sectors (apart from agriculture) during the recession years 2008-09, with Glasgow and the Clyde Valleys being one of the areas characterised by a particularly sharp decline. Even though they do not provide findings specifically for Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants, their analysis is supportive of the assumption that so-called A8 migrants were used as a cheap and flexible supply of labour during boom years when labour was in high demand, but were disposed of with the onset of recession.⁵¹

⁵⁰ The Worker Registration Scheme was introduced in 2004 by the UK government as a means to monitor the migration from the eight accession countries (see also chapter 1 for more details on the scheme and limitations of WRS data).

⁵¹ At the same time, other structural factors seem to play a role. As acknowledged in a Scottish Government review paper, "Scotland has historically been a branch plant economy for countries like the US and Japan who want to set up operations, often low skilled work, in a cheap European country where they can also gain access to the European Union (and hence the free market). The problem with this type of industrial strategy is that, in times of economic difficulty, Scotland's industries may be vulnerable to closure from their foreign owner in an attempt to reduce costs. Indeed, this was the case in 2002 when the Taiwanese company Chunghwa Picture Tubes

Sassen's political economy approach to international migration provides a perspective that helps us to consider the ways in which employment insecurities experienced by my informants were being produced not (merely) by migrants' deficit in human capital but as part of global processes of neoliberal restructuring and ongoing transformations of the value of work. Her analyses, however, remain on a macro level with little explication of and empirical reference to individual agency and lived experiences (Robinson 2009). Furthermore, her work mainly traces dynamics of restructuring in what she terms 'global cities' (1991), that is, cities such as New York, London, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Bombay, Buenos Aires that have become part of an increasingly integrated network, controlling and enabling the reproduction and accumulation of capital on a global scale; she says little about other localities and cities like Glasgow. However, other authors have suggested that such transformations are not limited to those powerful nodes that are categorised as global cities but also take place elsewhere as all localities nowadays compete nationally and internationally for investments in new economies (Glick Schiller and Çağlar 2009, p. 187). As I mentioned earlier, the city of Glasgow, as well as areas in the Central Belt, were indeed all trying to attract investments by large firms, especially in new sectors of the economy such as finance and consumer electronics. In the following sections I will extend Sassen's analysis and examine how the relationship between capital and labour mobility manifested itself in the specific cases of my informants' experiences in Glasgow in which recruitment agencies seemed to play a significant role.

3.3.1 Private recruitment agencies and migrant labour

As noted earlier, private agencies played a crucial role in the migration processes of my research participants.⁵² There seems to be a growing acknowledgement of the involvement of fee-charging, private recruitment firms in international migration. On the one hand, while not focusing on migrant labour, the role of private employment intermediaries in restructuring labour markets has been discussed in the context of processes of neoliberal globalisation.

massively scaled back its operations in Scotland – cutting Scottish jobs from 639 to between 40-50." (Office of the Chief Economic Advisor 2013, p. 17).

⁵² Even people like the Šimkos who arrived in Scotland through existing social contacts (family, friends, relatives) still relied on recruitment agencies for finding work in Glasgow.

Employment agencies have a long history especially in the US and the UK but were rather marginal players until the 1970s when the temporary work industry began to gain ground; it then grew from the 1980s onwards and spread rapidly throughout the global North in the 1990s as part of neoliberal projects of capitalist restructuring on various scales and in different areas of life (Peck *et al.* 2005, p. 3). 'Flexibilisation' of labour was promoted at the same time as organised labour and collective bargaining agreements were aggressively dismantled, relieving employers from their responsibilities with regard to issues of occupational safety, equal employment and workers' rights (Brenner and Theodore 2002, p. 364), especially through the triangular relationship between agency, worker and the user-enterprise (Dewhurst 2006-2007, p. 380). Countries of the global North have become crucial, highly profitable markets for an emerging global staffing industry which enables employers to shift risks and insecurities onto workers who lose key social entitlements such as sick pay, pension contributions, and opportunities to organise themselves. These transformations may be felt most severely where agencies are involved in "restructuring down" by lowering standards of pay and working conditions and producing day-to-day employment insecurities, often involving migrant and undocumented labour (Peck and Theodore 1998).

On the other hand, the International Labour Organization (ILO), more specifically, expressed growing concerns about various problems emanating from the rise of recruitment agencies in migrant labour on a global scale, ranging from "wholesale fraud, exorbitant fees, non-existent jobs, and often poor or even dangerous working conditions" (ILO 1997, unpaginated) for migrant workers. However, the workings of recruitment firms and other intermediaries with regard to international migrants remain under-researched (Hussein *et al.* 2010, p. 1000) and under-theorised (Lindquist *et al.* 2012). Generally, they are thought to be important players as part of a 'migration industry' involving various actors such as travel agents, lawyers, employment agencies, individual brokers who facilitate and financially profit from the mobility of labour (Garapich 2008; Lindquist *et al.* 2012). With regard to the UK, international recruitment through private firms has, for example, been studied in the area of health care and social work (Hardill and Macdonald 2000; Hussein *et al.* 2010), with less

literature available on the role of staffing firms in relation to post-accession migration from Central and East European countries to the UK.⁵³

My research informants referred to various types of agencies; small, local firms based either in the Czech Republic/ Slovakia or Scotland, firms operating on a national level as well as large international agencies which had branches both in the Czech Republic/Slovakia and Scotland/UK. In terms of employment sectors, the recruitment agencies were specialised mainly in jobs in the manufacturing industry, involving electronics and communication technologies, as well as packaging, and food processing. The services provided by these agencies also varied. Three types of recruitment agencies are commonly distinguished with regard to the employment arrangements (Dewhurst 2006-2007). 'Matching agencies' usually provide individuals with "offers of and applications for employment, without the private employment agency becoming a party to the employment relationships which may arise therefrom" (ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention 1997, Art. 1). 'Leasing agencies' constitute a second type that act as "surrogate employers" (Lobel cited in Dewhurst 2006-2007, p. 380) by making their casually contracted workers available to third parties. Finally, there are those agencies which provide services that do not involve matching or leasing labour but are limited to the provision of information or other assistance. In my fieldwork, it became clear that agencies also varied in the nature and extent to which other, non-employment related services were provided.

Amongst those being 'headhunted' in the Czech Republic by a large UK recruitment firm was Matej Zolian, whose case I introduced above. Aside from recruiting him and his friends for work in a large factory where they would repair mobile phones, the firm, which acted as a leasing agency, arranged and paid for their flight to Scotland, provided accommodation in Greenock and paid them £70 pounds each as pocket money (although this was later taken from their wages). In addition, agency staff picked them up from the airport and later helped with administrative tasks such as registering with the WRS and opening a bank account. Now

⁵³ There are a few exceptions such as Sporton's (2013) study of the role of local recruitment agencies in the experiences of 'A8 migrants' living in Doncaster. Also, Findlay *et al.* (2013) consider how specific images of the 'good migrant worker' are constructed by recruitment agencies and influence the recruitment of people from Latvia to the UK. Scott *et al.* (2012) study for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation provide evidence of exploitation in the UK food processing industry with some references to the relationship between 'A8 migrants' and employment agencies.

fluent in English, Mr Zolian knew very little English when he first arrived. "I came with absolutely nothing!" (*Mohol som príst s holou ri'ou*), he remembered with excitement and some pride. The fact that this recruitment agency went to some lengths to facilitate his move, i.e., arranging not only his employment but also helping with accommodation and other issues, is an indication of the heightened demand for labour at the time. Matej Zolian's experiences are typical of cases in which, as one informant put it, people were "basically brought over" to Scotland. Some informants found factory jobs in Scotland through local agencies in their countries of origin which in cooperation with a UK agency organised the essential paperwork and initial accommodation for people who were interested in working abroad. Often, these local agencies would group people together to process their applications and then 'send' them over to Scotland as a group to work in factories as a leased labour force.

Not all agencies, however, offered the kind of comprehensive initial arrangement described above. There were, for example, local agencies in and around Glasgow which provided factory work to people who had already arrived in Glasgow on their own. Then there were those with a rather blurred role, for example, offering accommodation and help with settling in but not necessarily guaranteeing employment. Petra Kolarová, a 32-year old from eastern Czech Republic, for example, sought support from a private agency which offered her accommodation but no help with finding work, even though it had promised to do so. Nevertheless, despite experiencing some difficulties when dealing with her agency, for example, when trying to retrieve money that the firm owed her, she evaluated their services as having been important, especially in the initial months after her arrival in the UK in 2004. The agency, she pointed out, had provided her with the "basic things like National Insurance [number], the Home Office [paperwork], which [were] very important for life here."

Like Ms Kolarová, there were others who also reported negative experiences when coming to Scotland/UK with the help of agencies - for example, ending up sharing a flat with too many people or the poor state of some flats - but, overall, they were surprisingly uncritical of the services offered or the fees charged by the private recruitment firms. Travel costs to Scotland, monies for rent, costs for transport to and from the factories, administration fees were amongst expenses that were often automatically deducted from their wages. Also, although people referred to factory work as having been "repetitive", "robot-like", "boring", they did not

problematise the working conditions or their wages in these jobs. It seemed that with regard to the initial months and years a kind of excitement about gaining new experiences in a different country and imagining and exploring new opportunities outweighed many of the problems they encountered. This was evident in the way they talked about this early stage of their lives in Scotland, often displaying a sense of tolerance and humour about things that 'went wrong'. "The flat the agency provided was bad, really bad. We stayed in the worst possible flat for one or two months and after that we moved to a new flat. But it is a nice story, life story", recalled a 30-year old informant with a smile. Furthermore, it seems that for some individuals, life in group accommodation was also a source of long-term friendships and mutual social support. It is worth noting, however, that such evaluations were expressed in retrospect and especially by those who were no longer dependent on this type of recruitment process.⁵⁴

From the perspective of my informants, recruitment firms enabled not only people's entry into employment but also provided a sort of initial safety net, significantly limiting the unknown and thus reducing risks usually associated with moving abroad. Especially for those without social networks extending to Scotland and travelling or moving 'west' for the first time in their lives, turning to private agencies was often felt to be a safe option. This was the case for people like Michal Kuchta, a 31-year old single man from Slovakia, who was highly educated and possessed good English language skills. When asked whether he could not have tried to arrange things by himself, he replied: "Oh, no - I wouldn't have had the confidence to come on my own." Like Mr Kuchta, some research informants had previously visited, extensively travelled, or even worked and lived in countries in Central and Eastern Europe, e.g. Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, but had not been to Scotland/UK. Travelling to 'the West' may have appeared as a journey to the unfamiliar, even more so when neither they nor their parents had previous experiences of visiting or living in western countries. At the same time, using employment agencies was presented to me as a rather normal way of getting into the labour market, even within Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Many university graduates, for example, had considered agency work at home, and relying on services by recruitment agencies generally was seen as a standard route to go and work abroad.

⁵⁴ A positive attitude and outlook is also commonly found amongst migrants in the early years of their migration due to an expected or imagined 'temporariness' of initially adverse conditions and negative experiences (Piore 1979).

While, generally, the practices of private recruitment firms are contentious in their blurring of rights and responsibilities of the parties involved (Dewhurst 2006-2007, p. 380), there were 'rogue' agencies which operated well beyond the limits of what could be considered as legal or ethical conduct. Some project workers, for example, reported to me the case of an employment agency specifically targeting Czech- and Slovak-speaking (would-be) migrants which had operated for around five years in the south of Glasgow. This private firm had promised accommodation and employment for potential migrants from the Czech Republic and Slovakia but did not provide any of these upon people's arrival in Glasgow. As a result, with no social contacts in the city and having lost substantial amounts of money in the form of fees paid to the agency, many ended up being destitute and homeless. Amid growing concerns, action by local NGOs resulted in an intervention by the authorities, and the agency was forced to close down in 2010 and was under investigation at the time of my fieldwork. Fortunately, this example emerged as a rather exceptional case but serves as a poignant reminder of the risks and insecurities often associated with private agencies and profit-orientated networks of intermediaries, an issue that I will explore in more detail in the following section.

3.3.2 Experiences of being trapped

As indicated earlier, by 2012, as I found during my fieldwork especially at Groundworks, the employment situation had changed considerably. When the labour market became more volatile with the onset of recession around 2008, this had a significant impact on the Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants living in and around the city. This is not least evidenced by the fact that a service was set up in 2008 as a joint project by local third sector organisations and supported by various statutory organisations, recognising a pronounced need for support and assistance amongst these migrant groups.⁵⁵ Later, Groundworks, where I conducted a significant part of my fieldwork, also relaunched its information and advice service for EU migrants as a service for Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants. Furthermore, as reported by some of my research informants and the large number of people seeking (more) work who attended the Groundworks service, after 2008 finding stable work became very difficult

⁵⁵ This 'Information Centre for EU Nationals' opened in 2008 and employed one Czech- and one Slovak-speaking worker. The Centre's remit was to provide information and advice regarding employment, health, and welfare rights.

especially for those relying on recruitment agencies. As mentioned before, various companies and firms moved and/or closed down their production and factories, and, subsequently, several recruitment agencies went out of business.⁵⁶ Those that continued operation had only a few jobs on their books, often involving further casualised work, and no longer offered the same range of services as they had done previously.

My conversations with Milan Krasko, a 43-year old father of two from eastern Slovakia who I met regularly during my fieldwork at the drop-in, are illustrative of the altered labour market situation. Mr Krasko had not been in stable employment since 2008 and we often ended up talking about (the lack of) job opportunities that had existed in Glasgow ever since. Once, for example, he told me that nowadays his prospects of finding work had worsened as he had to have a car. At first I wondered what kind of job he was looking for that required car ownership. In the course of our conversation I realised that this requirement was not related to a specific type of job; rather, in his experience, he needed a car to get to the mostly remote factories and warehouses which were still offering work. Since his arrival in the UK in 2004, he (and his wife) had always worked (although in different cities including Cardiff and Sheffield) in factories which were located outside of these cities. However, he told me that during the "good times" up until 2008, when work was in abundance, recruitment agencies had also provided transport for the workers. As the number of factory jobs reduced drastically, the firms or agencies terminated the provision of transport for their workers. For those like Mr Krasko who spoke little or no English and had little knowledge of other jobs this resulted in feelings of being trapped; not wanting to uproot (and move) his family once again, having a car had become a *sine qua non* for finding work and securing a living, a requirement he could not afford.⁵⁷ Ironically, living in the city where one would usually expect to find more employment opportunities was experienced as a disadvantage.

⁵⁶ This became apparent when support workers at Groundworks tried to look up details or contact certain agencies for tax or social security enquiries that individuals brought in, only to find that the firms' websites were no longer in use or their phone lines no longer working.

⁵⁷ The relevance of having access to a car also came up during my fieldwork at Groundworks, when people often came to get help with their car insurance. But this issue was considered minor and unimportant by the organisation. One of the project workers, however, had realised the importance of this and told me that he felt frustrated by the organisation's rules which discouraged workers from providing advice and support on issues outside the service's remit. As I showed in the case of Mr Krasko, the car had become essential for some people if they (and their friends and family) were to have a chance of getting work.

A similar account was given by Pavel Hubar, a 48-year old, divorced man from eastern Czech Republic, who had also been struggling to find stable work since 2008. Although he considered himself very 'lucky' when he managed to find a job in 2010 in a food-processing factory, this long-awaited opportunity was cut short after three months. As the recruitment agency no longer offered a shuttle bus for their workers from Glasgow, initially, a friend (who also worked there) had given him a lift to and from the factory located more than two hours drive from Glasgow. At the time of my fieldwork he still talked very enthusiastically and vividly about this job:

The *mrkváreň* [carrot factory] suited me. Every day you would do something else. There is a table, you have carrots, onions, parsley. It's a round table. You have the trays which you fill up with carrots, then you wait. [The same thing with] onions, parsley, so it [the belt] goes around. Then it goes down, there the price tag is attached to it [the package]....This kind of work all day. I have learned all this. Or I can go to another [section], working with other machineries. As it [the package] comes, you check for the weight, it has to be [accurately] weighed. It has to be 500 g ...it's over, 520g, then no, it's under, 480 g, until it reaches half a kilo. I take it and send it further. Then it goes into the machine where it's is cling-filmed. And the same again. Easy work, and I could even sit down. The director, I think she was called, Reese, allowed me to sit down. I was ok there, even with the supervisors, completely ok. She checked it and said "clear" [to go]. There is a lot of money there. There you can earn 600 pounds [a month]. There you can also do overtime... they even run prize competitions and if you were a good worker you could win plasma TV, Hi-Fi, etc.

Mr Hubar's narrative shows how much he enjoyed and appreciated this job, not least because it was his first position after he had suffered a work accident that had left him limping in 2008 (hence his reference to being able to "sit down"). Even though the monthly wage of 600 pounds for a full-time position indicates a very low-paid job, for him this income brought stability and pride. In a different section of the interview he also talked about the staff and what he experienced as a positive workplace community ("*super kolektív*"), especially with his Polish co-workers with whom he could communicate. Unfortunately, a change in shifts meant that he had to organise his own travel to and from work; he even attempted to relocate to the town in which the factory was based. But when he could find neither affordable accommodation there nor any means to get to work from Glasgow on his own, he was no longer able to keep the job. Mr Hubar was also trapped in the city. Again, as in the case of Milan Krasko, we can see how in the longer migration process the initial movement to

Scotland under conditions of a specific international labour mobility, somewhat surprisingly, led to experiences of immobility for some of my informants. This emphasises how, contrary to the notion of 'free movement' of EU citizens, my informants' mobility as a capacity to move spatially is not uniform but, rather, was manifested unevenly, depending on a more complex interplay of local and translocal factors.

The 'alternative' that people like Mr Krasko and Mr Hubar were left to consider was to work for one of the local grocery shops where one would get as little as £100 a week cash-in-hand for up to 10 hours of work a day. With hourly pay amounting to almost half the national minimum wage and two children to look after, Mr Krasko told me he was not (yet) prepared to put up with such exploitative working conditions. There were, however, some people who had no choice but to work for very low pay. For example, several migrants told me about their work at a local car wash. This included Tomas Morávek, a 29-year old father of two small children from eastern Slovakia, who described to me exploitative practices in his workplace:

For the first two days, you work for 10-12 hours a day. Then you start to work for money... He did the same with me, [I had to do] 23 hours of unpaid 'training', then he paid me 3 pounds an hour... We also had to give him the tips that customers left for us – we could not keep it, there were cameras everywhere to check that you didn't keep any tips. They didn't even allow us to Hoover inside the car, in case we find something [money]!

Cynically, these workers were often given contracts which stipulated an hourly wage of £6.08 (the then national minimum wage) but in reality were only paid half the amount cash-in-hand. In a climate when individuals felt highly dependent on and even 'grateful' for any kind of paid work they were afraid and unwilling to publicly or legally challenge their employers. Thus, after 2008 many of my research informants experienced a push towards even lower-paid, exploitative work in the city, as people became more exposed to an informal labour market that operated outside of any regulation or safeguards and could involve both day labour and long-term employment under such terms.

Similar developments were also felt by those who still relied on agencies for finding work and securing their livelihoods. The work offered by these firms was even further casualised and unstable. Groups of people queuing up in front of a local supermarket in the early hours of the

day became a regular sight; employment agency staff would arrive, select a 'few lucky ones' for a day of work and drive them to the worksite. Those who were not chosen would scatter shortly afterwards. Such a scenario was described to me in more detail by a 35-year old female service-user at Groundworks who angrily complained about one particular UK-based leasing agency. She spoke poignantly of her experiences and especially the way she was treated by the agency staff. On one occasion, the agency had informed her (and others) a day in advance that there would be work so she should come to the collection point in front of a supermarket. Once the agency van arrived, it became clear that far more people had been called for work than would actually be needed, so the agency staff carried out their 'selection process'. The service-user experienced the latter as an intimidating and humiliating exercise as she and other women present were subjected to sexual comments and advances by the male agency staff, creating a situation in which they were made to 'beg' to be picked. This kind of treatment appeared to have become a routine practice as people struggled to find work, as reported to me by various service-users.

For many individuals without higher educational qualifications and limited English language skills this kind of day-to-day, insecure work had become the norm when I met them during my fieldwork in 2012.⁵⁸ In these cases, solely orientated towards increasing their profits, factory owners and recruitment agencies were transforming people into on-demand, 'hyperflexible' labour without any rights and reducing them to mere "laboring bodies" (Sassen 2012, p. 75). Sassen discusses this condition as resulting from the "logics of expulsion" which characterise the systemic transformations that have further entrenched capitalist relations in the last two decades. Through processes on various scales and multiple sites in which the interests and rights of people as workers, consumers, homeowners etc. are disregarded and discarded for the benefit of investors, an ever growing number of people is expelled from society and 'the good life'. Here, prior to 2008 neoliberal restructuring was manifested in the rise of private recruitment firms who were keen to "bring people over" from the Czech Republic and Slovakia and 'supply them' to multinational companies and other large factory owners in and around Glasgow. High demand in labour for so-called unskilled jobs provided ideal conditions for recruitment agencies, as they would typically charge both their corporate clients for

⁵⁸ The resulting fragmented and irregular work histories also had implications for individuals' social welfare entitlements, a point which I discuss in more detail in chapter 6.

meeting their labour demands as well as labour migrants themselves for different types of attached services (registrations, transportation, accommodation). With the onset of the financial crisis, these firms were key players in a process of further 'restructuring down': not only did the closure of many factories and staffing agencies play its part in many people losing their jobs and struggling to make a living, the (remaining) agencies were now able to exploit the vulnerabilities which they had helped to create in the first place. While migrant labour had previously been sought after en masse and a majority of people had experienced their work lives in the initial years in Scotland as relatively stable, now people were treated rather openly with disdain as their labour was further devalued.

Furthermore, agency and factory work affected not only those with less educational qualifications and/or limited knowledge of the English language but also individuals who had obtained higher formal educational qualifications. As mentioned earlier (see 3.2), Marta Černáková, for example, held a university degree from Slovakia and spoke fluent English (and even acted as an interpreter for HP during its relocation process to the Czech Republic). Differently from the above cases, she had not found it difficult to find and stay in employment since she arrived in Scotland in 2005; having worked in a factory for the first few years employed by a 'leasing agency' who arranged her relocation to Scotland, after 2008 she found temporary work through matching agencies several times. In all these jobs she was employed as a production line operative. As someone who held relatively highly qualified positions prior to her migration (for example, working as project manager in an anti-poverty project run by a large international charity, or as an external election observer in the parliamentary elections in another country), she had not managed to get what she referred to as a "proper or office job" and move on with her career in Scotland. It is quite telling that even when she commuted between Scotland and the Czech Republic to support her then employers in moving the production facility abroad, she was still paid as a production line operative. She had found factory work tolerable at the beginning, when she did not have specific plans as to how long she would be staying in Scotland, but now that she had been living in the country for several years she felt she needed to move on: "It's time for a career change... maybe it's time for different roles, different environments", she explained. But with only factory work to show on her CV for the past seven years, moving from 'blue-collar' to 'white-collar' work was proving difficult. I met with her several times over the course of my fieldwork and she had started to

express her frustration at not being able to get any reply after sending her CV to many agencies and employers. Feeling increasingly stuck, in our last meetings she was considering the option of returning to Slovakia, even though this was not something that she preferred at the time. While in the years after 2008 the cases of Milan Krasko and Pavel Hubar highlighted forms of spatial 'entrapment' in Glasgow due to their immobility and geographical spatial distance from (potential) worksites, the experiences of individuals such as Marta Černáková point at additional ways in which they were 'trapped' by factory and agency work: having mainly relied on staffing agencies, many migrants had very little direct experience and knowledge of the application process for 'office jobs' involving, for example, how to write personal statements and how to present themselves to potential 'white collar' employers in the UK.⁵⁹

This was often further compounded by people's lack of networks that cut across various employment sectors and social groups, as has been theorised by Granovetter (1995) in his study of the careers of white-collar workers in the US. He shows how the difficulties in finding a job and progressing in one's career are more pronounced for those who use agencies, as finding a job depends not only on the motivation of the individual or the labour market situation but also on the individual's 'weak ties'. The latter are fundamental for gaining tacit knowledge of job opportunities, including relevant information about potential employers and job roles as well as the 'know how' to apply. At the same time, qualitative and quantitative evidence is emerging that suggests that discrimination against 'A8 migrants' and a lack of recognition of their qualifications obtained outside the UK also plays an important role in their well-documented underemployment (Cook *et al.* 2011; Campbell 2013). The analysis of qualitative interviews in one of my pilot studies on Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in the UK which mainly involved university graduates also found such experiences to be common (Guma 2010).

There were other university graduates, however, who had managed to make the transition from the factory jobs of their early years in Scotland to non-manual labour jobs. This typically

⁵⁹ Interestingly, there appeared to be no service providing advice on or training in these vital job application skills, as most existing services were targeted to those who were officially unemployed. The latter thus did not cater to those wishing to obtain 'better employment'. I experienced this also directly during my fieldwork, when I helped several individuals into office-based jobs by sharing information on vacancies and advising them with their written applications and interviews.

involved roles such as support workers in the charity/third sector and interpreters working for private firms or statutory organisations. At the time of my fieldwork, there was a considerable number of Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants who worked in such positions in Glasgow. They were even holding regular social events in different parts of the city (also called "interpreters' meetings") where they socialised and also discussed work-related issues. While not all of these 'interpreters' had initially worked in factories, the great majority had found their first jobs through agencies (working, for example, in hotels or restaurants), and interpreting or support work was considered a positive "alternative" and upward career move.

Yet, the roles of support worker/interpreters were not necessarily highly-paid or secure positions. Often, these were temporary or fixed-term contracts that lasted from several months to a year depending on project funding. Neither did these positions tend to be connected to individuals' formal qualifications; even though their roles required various skills and knowledges and often involved great responsibilities, English- and Slovak/Czech-language proficiency appeared to be the most relevant aspect of their recruitment and role. It is noteworthy that these jobs that meant upward mobility for some migrants had been created to provide services to their fellow migrants who had lost their factory jobs and were struggling to make a living in the city. While these career trajectories have to be understood as hard-won achievements by individuals who often studied to gain further qualifications in the UK alongside working in their existing low-paid jobs,⁶⁰ they also point at another form of being trapped, that is within jobs specifically catering to an ethnically defined group. Thus, during my fieldwork, I hardly met any Czech- or Slovak-speaking migrants who were in the process of 'breaking through' what in effect constitutes a glass ceiling to their social upward mobility.⁶¹ However, even here, one could see the manifestations of processes of 'restructuring down'; with two large private interpreting agencies having recently entered the sector in Glasgow, these employees were coming under increasing pressure. Many described increasing insecurities in their employment conditions with their jobs being less well paid, no longer covering their travel costs or time, and work offered on a more casualised basis. As Gabriela Koreňová, a 40-year old woman from the Czech Republic, put it: "Before, being an interpreter

⁶⁰ This was, for example, the case for interpreters who needed a Diploma in Public Services Interpreting for most of their jobs; the assessment for this qualification cost several hundred pounds and required intensive study.

⁶¹ I met a handful of individuals who had - at great personal effort- obtained Master and PhD qualifications in the UK while continuing to work as interpreters, warehouse workers etc.

used to be a profession and much better paid, it was a respected job. Now it's none of that anymore."

3.4 Conclusion: Insecurities as invisible traces of globalisation

In this chapter I focused on employment insecurities as they were experienced by my research informants. The above analysis situates my research in time and place as it refers to a specific spatial and temporal dynamic: the plentiful employment opportunities which were spread in areas outside Glasgow provided a relatively stable situation for most migrants in their early years here, but this only lasted for a short period of time. The years 2008 and 2009 appear as a turning point that divides peoples' experiences into a 'before' when 'there was work' and an after when individual trajectories became more heterogeneous. This directed the analysis to Sassen's work on the intricate relationships between economic globalisation and international migration. I argued that Glasgow as well as other areas in the Central Belt were participating in a global competition for investments, and it is these areas that saw a large number of Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants providing cheap and flexible labour for large corporations in high-tech and other new economy sectors that are usually not associated with low-skilled jobs. The role of recruitment agencies emerged as a vital and widely shared element in my informants' histories of moving to Scotland/UK. I considered this aspect in relation to the proliferation of temporary and precarious work as a realisation of neoliberal globalisation, a perspective that has received little attention in the academic literature with regard to migrants from EU member states in Central and Eastern Europe. I then discussed empirical material illustrating concretely how these wider global dynamics manifested themselves in the experiences of my informants in Glasgow. This included a problematisation of various ways in which people found themselves trapped which were interpreted as extensions of such global transformations. The findings raise questions about a human capital perspective on migrants' labour market experiences in the 'host country'. I have argued that, while individuals' skills, knowledges, and experiences remain important for their employment opportunities, a focus solely on migrants' human capital deficiencies is inadequate, as it largely ignores wider societal changes that impact on conditions of and evaluations around work and play out on people's lives. Thus, the contribution of this chapter lies in elaborating

these often ignored and invisible traces of globalisation in experiences of insecurity amongst Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants living in Glasgow. The next chapter takes us more firmly into the present of my fieldwork and discusses processes that contribute to the concealment of these traces of globalisation and, instead, place ethnicity at the centre of attention.

Chapter 4: The making of a 'risk population'

In this chapter I focus on the role that the ethnic category of Roma played in the support provided by voluntary sector organisations to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants living in Glasgow. I begin by describing a local interaction between a support worker and client which I witnessed at the Groundworks service and embed it in wider practices and discourses in the field. The analysis adopts a boundary-making perspective in order to unpack the various processes involved in constructing 'the Roma'. By contrasting different ways of construing ethnicity in the national contexts of Slovakia, the Czech Republic and the UK, I denaturalise the category 'Roma'. I then discuss the classificatory practices regarding Roma in Glasgow within the wider political and sociohistorical contexts, thus providing a more in-depth and enriched understanding of the interaction between client and support worker at the Groundworks service. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the contradictory consequences of such classificatory processes, which, I argue, give rise to 'the Roma' as 'a risk population'.

4.1 "You are Rom, right?"

Jan Búrik had made a 30-minute, routine appointment with the support worker to get help with completing his tax credits application form. As soon as he sat down at the table next to the support worker, he took the application form out of a blue plastic bag and handed it over to the support worker who began to fill it in. Every now and then the support worker consulted one of the various documents scattered on the table or looked up and asked him a question in Slovak or confirmed a detail with him before writing it down in English. "When did you arrive in the UK, again?" - "In 2010." - "How much did you earn in the last tax year? Oh, you know, tax year, that means here from the 6th of April 2010 until the 5th of April 2011." Mr Búrik looked through his letters scattered on the table, until he found some papers with the employment agency logo and showed them to her. They continued for about fifteen minutes and once they reached the end of the form, the support worker showed him where to sign and handed it back to Mr Búrik who thanked her repeatedly. While chatting, they both gathered Mr Búrik's documents together and returned them to the bag that he had brought them in. Mr Búrik stood up and just as he was about to leave the room, the support worker suddenly asked him:

"Sorry, Mr Búrik, before you leave, one last question? You are Rom, right?" (*Vy ste Róm, však?*) He hesitated for a few seconds and blushed before responding slowly: "Half-, why?" (*Na pol-, prečo?*) "Well, hm," said the support worker, "we tick the Roma box as we don't have 'half' here", also blushing, quickly glancing from me back to Mr Búrik and pointing at a form in front of her. With what seemed like an apologetic smile she then explained that it was now a 'service requirement' to keep a record on Roma and that, in any case, it was good to put down 'Roma' on his new client sheet, so that he would be able to continue using the service in the future.

This is an edited extract from field notes I took during one-to-one advice sessions at Groundworks, the organisation where I conducted fieldwork for nearly five months in 2012. The exchange at the end of the session when Mr Búrik was asked about his ethnicity created an awkward moment that seemed to interrupt the otherwise smooth running of the session. It could be that Jan Búrik was simply surprised by the support worker's sudden request to declare his ethnicity; he might have been reluctant to reveal his ethnic belonging; he might have anticipated the difficulty of 'being half-Roma' for the support worker's purposes; or he might have been surprised to find that she was assuming him to be Roma. In any case, Mr Búrik seemed uncertain about the support worker's intention, hence his hesitation and blushing. The support worker, on the other hand, seemed surprised by his reaction to her question. She might have just simply felt sorry for causing him embarrassment, or felt embarrassed about her initial assumption that he was Roma, or that she had been anticipating a straightforward yes-or-no-answer and was unsure how to handle his response. In any case, this exchange and the awkwardness it created drew my attention to the ways in which ethnicity, and particularly the categorisation of Roma, was becoming increasingly relevant in the provision of support by various organisations to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in the city.

Just as the support worker had indicated, I subsequently noticed during my fieldwork that internal collection of data increasingly focused on this specific category of 'Roma'. While no data were collected, for example, on the nationality of service users, all new service users, like Mr Búrik, were supposed to fill out a form, declaring themselves as Roma (where applicable). What is important to note is that this was not an ethnic monitoring procedure, but 'being Roma' was a precondition for having access to certain services; the form included a box "Roma client" with no other ethnic categories offered.

4.1.1 Shifting attention and intensification of support

The 'service requirement' of "tick[ing] the Roma box" that the support worker mentioned had only been introduced recently (in March 2012) when Groundworks began a collaboration with another organisation that had moved into the same building. The form was introduced by the latter organisation which was running a service to promote employment amongst the Roma population in Glasgow and, as part of the collaborative arrangement, it required Groundworks to collect data specifically on "Roma clients". As became apparent to me, this growing attention towards "the Roma" was not only restricted to Groundworks and its partner organisation. Rather, it was part of a recent shift in services and resources targeting Roma throughout Glasgow and more widely in Scotland. From the end of 2011 and especially in the following year, various new services and initiatives were launched such as the aforementioned Roma Employability Project, the Roma Children and Family Service, or the Roma Anticipatory Care Pilot.⁶² As identified in a report by Glasgow ROMA-Net,⁶³ in 2012 there were as many as twelve major (non-governmental as well as statutory) organisations running new or reconfigured services specifically aimed at Roma in Glasgow. It is important to note, however, that services targeting Roma existed before 2011-2012. A Roma youth project, for example, had been running since 2010. The Groundworks service, which was officially called an 'Information and Support service for EU migrants' but was commonly referred to as an 'Advocacy service for Roma', had been present in the south of Glasgow since 2007. Similarly, the 'Information Centre for EU Nationals', a drop-in service jointly provided by several organisations, operated for three years between 2008 and 2011 in the same area of Glasgow. Although, as its name suggests, this was a service for EU nationals in general (the service employed two support workers, a Czech and a Slovak), in an interview in 2010 (as part of my pre-study research project) with a senior member of one of the main organisations responsible

⁶² The Roma Children and Families Team was formed as part of the Glasgow City Council's Social Work Services in March 2012. The Roma Anticipatory Care Pilot was delivered by a Health Improvement Support worker and a local NGO to raise awareness of free health checks for individuals in the age group 40-64 amongst the Roma population.

⁶³ "ROMA-Net is a transnational partnership of ten European cities in 7 countries, committed to improving the social inclusion and community integration of the Roma population living in their cities. These countries include Hungary (Budapest & Nagykallo), Spain (Almeria & Torrent), France (Bobigny), Italy (Bologna & Udine) the Czech Republic (Karvina), Slovakia (Kosice) and the UK (Glasgow)" (Glasgow ROMA-Net 2013, Foreword).

for the drop-in, the service was repeatedly referred to as the "Roma project". As these examples show, services aimed at Roma had been in place well before my fieldwork started at the beginning of 2012; these were mainly based in one particular area in the south of Glasgow. They also indicate that the ethnic categorisation of Roma was already at play (see also chapter 1, section 1.1.4).

However, what can be seen starting from the end of 2011 and especially the following year is an intensification and stronger integration of support and resources aimed at 'the Roma population' not only living in the south of Glasgow but throughout the city and even more widely in Scotland. Alongside the launch of new services and initiatives, there was a wide range of activities taking place including surveys, trainings (for example, on "multi-agency Roma awareness"), meetings, conferences.⁶⁴ New groups and structures were put in place to coordinate and integrate the existing services, identify new resources (e.g., EU funding) as well as 'guesstimate'⁶⁵ existing numbers and collect new data on Roma. Most notably, under the leadership of Glasgow City Council, a Roma Local Action Plan was developed which brought key stakeholders together with the aim of "develop[ing] and implement[ing] ways to support the inclusion of the Roma population in a socially coherent and economically successful city" (Glasgow ROMA-Net 2013, p. 4). One of the key aims of the Plan was stepping up the efforts to "locate" the Roma population: i.e., "mapping of where the Roma population are located in Scotland, their situation and what local organisations and practitioners are working with Roma populations in Scotland, including local authorities and community organisations" (p. 31). I return to this 'mapping study', which was completed in September 2013, in the next section.

⁶⁴ A large conference entitled *Scotland's New Migrant Communities – Meeting the Needs of Roma* was held at Glasgow City Council in 2012. The event was attended by as many as 50 participants representing various sectors (local authorities, charities and non-governmental organisations as well as the Scottish Government). Also participating in the conference and giving a keynote opening speech was the deputy First Minister for Scotland, who "expressed her strong support for the Roma Net programme and the local community in Glasgow" (McLelland 2012, unpaginated).

⁶⁵ Here is, for example, how the number of Roma in a primary school in the city was calculated using what the report refers to as an "educated estimate": "The approximate numbers for [...] primary 1s to 7s are 294 A2 and A8 nationals. We estimate that the majority of these nationals are Roma. That is an average of about 26 children for each age group across the primary sector. If the number for each age group is roughly similar in the 0 to 5 age group and the S1-S6, then the figures should be around the following: 0-5 age group = 180; and S1– S6 age group = 216. Based on these projections we can estimate the numbers at around 649 for the age range 0-18 A2 and A8 nationals. The proportion of Roma children is unknown but practitioners have made an educated estimate that the majority of these nationals will be Roma" (ROMA-Net 2013, p. 6).

Furthermore, the shifting of support and growing attention towards "the Roma" was not just happening in Glasgow but was part of a wider change on the European level. In 2011, the EU published the *Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020*, outlining its "targeted approach" for Roma integration throughout Europe:

To achieve significant progress towards Roma integration, it is now crucial to step up a gear and ensure that national, regional and local integration policies focus on **Roma** in a **clear and specific way**, and address the needs of Roma with **explicit measures** to prevent and compensate for disadvantages they face. A targeted approach, within the broader strategy to fight against poverty and exclusion – which does not exclude other vulnerable and deprived groups from support – is compatible with the principle of non-discrimination both at EU and national level. The principle of equal treatment does not prevent Member States from maintaining or adopting specific measures to prevent or compensate for disadvantages linked to racial or ethnic origin (European Commission 2011, p. 4, emphasis in original)

The Glasgow Local Support Group⁶⁶, which was responsible for developing the Roma Local Action Plan was "mindful" of the new EU approach towards Roma and in 2012 aligned its objectives with the EU Framework for Roma Integration. This included, for example, the adoption of four Roma integration goals (Access to Education; Access to Employment; Access to Healthcare; Access to Housing and Essential Services) as well as the EU principles of integration. The considerations and action taken by ROMA-Net in Glasgow show how the shifting of support and targeting of Roma as a specifically ethnic group involved different actors on different levels (local, national, supranational), a point which I return to later in the chapter.

4.1.2 Who are 'the Roma'?

As various services and projects were newly launched or reconfigured with the focus on Roma, and as organisations set out to collect data on 'the Roma population' living in the city and beyond, it seemed Roma were understood as an ethnic group 'existing out there', and the

⁶⁶ The Local Support Group consists of a range of stakeholders who aim to collaborate on Roma integration issues and were initially led by Glasgow City Council's Development and Regeneration Services (from 2012 onwards by the Social Work Services).

process of their identification was a purely 'technical' matter, for example by ticking a "Roma box" on a self-declaration form. Furthermore, the fieldwork example that I have given involved the support worker asking Mr Búrik about his ethnicity, but this was not always the case. Quite regularly, support workers filling the forms would "tick the Roma box" without asking the respective service user. This was especially the case when a support worker had known the service user well and had obtained that information previously. Generally, I observed that the support workers seemed to be careful about directly labelling individuals as Roma in their presence. At the same time, when prompted directly to account for who 'the Roma' are, support workers would assert in various conversations, amongst themselves or with other staff members and volunteers, that to them it was "obvious who the Roma are": that they tended to be "dark-skinned", "poor", "uneducated" or "speaking with a thick accent". Amongst volunteers, staff members and support workers I also came across romanticised ideas such as references to "the Roma culture", their "strong focus on family values", "artistic and specifically musical talents" or "being happy folk". At the same time, a volunteer at the drop-in once asked whether there are "any normal Slovak/Czechs" amongst the service users, involuntarily implying that Roma were not "normal". In addition, support workers seemed to automatically assume a person to be a "normal Slovak/Czech", meaning non-Roma, when this person was light skinned. In this particular case, the support worker was unsure about Mr Búrik being Roma or not, as he was light-skinned and did not 'look' or 'sound Roma'. In any case, the question of being or not being Roma was generally treated as clear-cut, as if being Roma was a natural category (thus a Roma box to be ticked if applicable), an objective fact that could be observed or predicted with sufficient accuracy (by those who 'knew how to identify them'). For those organisations which participated in the aforementioned 'mapping study' of the Roma population in Scotland, relevant identification criteria were the large number of family members and individual's residence in specific areas understood to be largely populated by Roma families.

4.2 Ethnic categorisations and processes of boundary-making

Such an approach and practice reminds us of what Wimmer (2007) has called the orthodox or Herderian view of ethnicity, which takes ethnic groups as given, 'natural' categories of

culturally coherent and bounded units. This view which has almost become commonsensical⁶⁷ as it continues to dominate the way we view human society today, has, as Barth (1969) put it, "historically produced a world of separate peoples, each with their culture and each organized in a society which can legitimately be isolated for description as an island to itself" (p. 11). From this perspective, ethnic groups/categories, cultures and communities are one and the same, as reflected, for example, in the interchangeable use of categories such as "the Roma people", "the Roma community", or "Roma folk" which, as I noticed throughout my fieldwork, was a widely spread practice amongst project workers, volunteers, activists and policy-makers alike.

This long-held view of ethnicity as an objectively-defined culture has, however, been empirically challenged by various scholars. Barth (1969) was the first to seriously question the view of ethnicity as a fixed category and primordial aspect of human social organisation. Instead of studying ethnic groups as separate, 'natural' cultural units, Barth turned his attention to the boundaries that marked them. In a series of empirical case studies, he found that in many cases 1) ethnic distinctions persisted despite individuals crossing boundaries and that 2) social relations and interactions (rather than isolation) played an important role in maintaining these distinctions. Belonging to an ethnic group thus entailed an active process of boundary maintenance by which cultural difference was produced, or as Glick Schiller (1977) titled one of her papers, "ethnic groups are made, not born".

As a way of overcoming the Herderian commonsense that often blinds thinking about ethnicity and is prevalent in much of migration research, Wimmer (2007) builds on Barth's boundary-making perspective. Instead of looking at ethnic groups as bounded cultural and social units, he also suggests to focus on the "processes of closure and opening that determine where the boundaries of belonging are drawn in the social landscape" (p. 20). When adopting such a perspective, the task of the researcher becomes then less about describing certain characteristics or the collective identity of an ethnic group or critiquing the latter as a construct, and more about examining the processes that generate and transform its boundaries (Wimmer

⁶⁷ I use commonsense here in line with Berger and Luckmann's emphasis on raising questions about and studying "common-sense knowledge", that is what "people 'know' as 'reality' in their everyday, non- or pre-theoretical lives" (Berger and Luckmann 1966, p. 27).

2008, p. 1010).⁶⁸ But while Barth focused his analysis mainly on the social interaction between or within different ethnic groups, Wimmer places ethnicity and ethnic boundary making within a broader historical-political framework, one that brings into play various actors (e.g., nation-states and not just ethnic groups themselves) which operate on different levels. In the context of nation building, for Wimmer, ethnicity is "the outcome of classificatory struggles and negotiations between actors situated in the field" (2008, p. 970), which entails the making of both "minorities" and "majorities" and as such are "part and parcel of different definitions of where the boundaries of the nation are drawn" (2007, p. 19). His approach is thus important in that it de-naturalises the distinction between the nation and its "others" and lays bare the political and power driven nature of ethnicity and ethnic boundary making. Because these struggles and negotiations are ongoing, their results remain open; the questions of whether specific ethnic boundaries are fluid and permeable (Barthian position) or historically stable (Herderian world) is not given but a matter for empirical investigation. This is another significant contribution made by Wimmer to Barth's initial analysis: by treating ethnicity as a "continuous variable", Wimmer goes beyond the "constructivism" inherent in Barth's view.

Wimmer (2008) expands his analysis of the processes of boundary making into an elaborate multilevel process theory, outlining a model that researchers can deploy to trace the genealogies of ethnic groups, i.e. their emergence and transformation over a longer period of time. Utilising this model to historically locate the formation of Roma as an ethnic group is, however, beyond the topic of this thesis. Nevertheless, in order to better understand the meaning of and context in which the classificatory practices and collection of data regarding Czech- and Slovak-speaking Roma living in Glasgow took place during my fieldwork, I consider Wimmer's boundary making perspective useful. It guides the following discussion of various categorisations of Roma across countries and time, more specifically in official census data at the national level in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the UK, and different ways of thinking about ethnicity, as relevant reference points for the analysis. By providing brief historical accounts and contrasting different ways of categorising Roma employed in these

⁶⁸ Following such an approach also enables the researcher to avoid the use of "groupist" default language (Brubaker 2004, p. 9) that pigeonholes or essentialises ethnic groups into fixed categories such as "the Roma", "the Turks", "the Pakistani".

national contexts, I aim at denaturalising 'the Roma' as an administrative category and, instead, problematising the processes through which they are constructed as an ethnic category.

4.2.1 Counting Roma differently

In their recent 'mapping study' of the Roma population in Slovakia, Matlovičová *et al.* (2012) open their introduction with the following concern: "Obtaining reliable data about the number of Roma was and is almost always associated with many problems" (p. 77). This long-standing challenge regarding the enumeration of Roma, the authors argue, has been particularly compounded by the introduction of recent administrative and legislative changes in the aftermath of communism. As part of the accession criteria for joining the EU, Slovakia (which was part of Czechoslovakia until 1993) had to sign and ratify various agreements and conventions containing legally-binding stipulations on minority rights, including the OSCE Copenhagen Declaration (1990), the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights (1992) and later, more pertinently, the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1993).⁶⁹ Under these new agreements, Czechoslovakia and other post-communist countries were required and obliged to recognize, protect and respect the rights of all their national minorities. As a consequence, starting from 1991 not only were Roma in the Czech Republic/Slovakia (and other post-communist countries) officially recognized as a national minority but new legislation also required that all information on Roma and other ethnic groups and minorities be collected and processed only with the consent of the data subjects. This meant that declaring one's group belonging became the exclusive right of the individual. Collecting data on Roma could no longer be carried out without the permission of Roma themselves as had happened previously, a point I will elaborate on further below.

Thus, in the most recent Czech and Slovak 2011 censuses participants are asked to declare their *národnost'* which, according to the Slovak Academic Press dictionary (Barac *et al.* 2002),

⁶⁹ As Kymlicka (2007) explains, one of the reasons behind the heightened interest shown by the EU with regard to minority rights was the fear that the so-called ethnic conflicts that broke out in the Caucasus and Balkans after the collapse of communist regimes in 1989 might spread throughout Europe. At the same time, there was a growing awareness on the international level about the rights of minorities which culminated in the 1992 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

translates into English as 'nationality', 'nationality of minorities', or 'ethnicity'. While the Czech census form does not provide standardised answers but allows respondents to write in more than two, and answering this question is not compulsory (*Sčítání* 2011), the Slovak census form lists Roma as a category amongst 14 predefined answers (the others are Slovak, Hungarian, Ruthanian, Ukrainian, Czech, German, Polish, Croatian, Serbian, Russian, Jewish, Moravian, Bulgarian) plus one write-in field (*Sčítanie* 2011). The British population censuses⁷⁰, on the other hand, do not include a specific Roma category in their question on ethnic group. This might not be all too surprising considering that Roma have been part of Slovak and Czech society for many centuries, in contrast to their comparatively recent migration from these countries to the UK, especially since 2004. In the UK Roma are, however, widely considered to fall under the category of 'white Gypsy/Traveller'.⁷¹ 'Gypsy/Traveller' was only officially included as a subgroup of 'White' in the 2011 census, even though the official collection of data on Roma in the UK under the Gypsy/Traveller category had begun several years earlier.⁷²

Let us look more closely at the terminology used. In Britain, the concept of 'race'⁷³ plays a key role in boundary formation, as is also reflected here in the reference to colour in the 'white Gypsy/Traveller' category under which Roma are grouped. Also, taking the definition provided by the Oxford English dictionary as an indication of a term's common usage, in the UK ethnicity is mainly understood as "the fact of belonging to a particular race". Contrary to that, I understand ethnicity in line with Max Weber's definition: as a subjective sense of belonging expressed in (an imagined) shared culture, common history or phenotypical similarity (Weber 1978). Yet another way of conceptualising ethnicity can be found in the reference to *národnosť* in the Slovak/Czech censuses which suggests that in both these countries ethnic boundaries are drawn primarily along national lines. In Slovak and Czech the

⁷⁰ Scotland started its own population census in 2001; until then, it was part of the British census which covered England, Wales and Scotland. Northern Ireland runs a separate census (Ratcliffe 2008).

⁷¹ According to the Equality and Human Rights Commission research report, *Inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities: A review* (2009), this category includes Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers, Welsh Travellers, Scottish Gypsy / Travellers, New Travellers and Occupational Travellers (p. iii).

⁷² According to Barton (2004), for example, since 2003, schools in England and Wales had been "obliged to include Roma/Gypsy and Irish Traveller categories in the Pupil Level Annual School census" (p. 3).

⁷³ The term 'race' is placed in inverted commas here to reflect its historical and ideological implication in the creation and perpetuation of myths and ideas based on "pseudo-scientific theories of difference" (Ratcliffe 2008, p. 13) which deny various groups of people any 'worthiness', dignity or 'humanness' outright (see also Gilroy 2000, Miles and Brown 2002).

term *národnosť* is often used indiscriminately to refer to ethnic group belonging or national minorities. As *národnosť* also translates into English as nationality, this can add further confusion. In other words, while *národnosť* connotes ethnicity, national belonging and nationality and is distinct from citizenship, in British English nationality is defined as "the legal or political right of belonging to a particular nation" (Oxford English Dictionary) and as such is synonymous with citizenship. For example, using the Slovak/Czech terms, one can hold Slovak citizenship (*príslušnosť lobčianstvo*) but may belong to the German *národnosť* (nationality, i.e. ethnic group.) The elucidation of these linguistic terms clearly shows differences in conceptualising ethnicity in the three countries: a close connection between ethnicity and nation or nationhood in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, and of ethnicity and 'race' in Britain. Within the respective national discourses, the respective terms are often used interchangeably; such conflation also extends to the administrative language and sometimes even to the academic discourse which can cause misunderstandings and make direct comparisons difficult (Kivisto 2002; Wimmer 2008).⁷⁴

More generally, it is important to note that also in Britain ethnicity only became part of the census in 1991, albeit for reasons different from those in then Czechoslovakia. Mainly triggered by the larger number of people from former British colonies arriving in the UK in the 1950s and 1960s, the introduction of a so-called ethnic question in 1991 had been mired in controversy for decades and was preceded by several field trials. Primarily from the West Indies, East Africa, and Asia, these latest newcomers were seen by the 'host' society to be different in a way that was deemed socially relevant: as Kivisto (2002, pp. 138-154) states, despite the number of people entering the country by 1960 not even reaching the hundred thousands, anti-immigrant sentiments and rhetoric were widespread, discrimination especially against non-whites rife, and violent incidents frequent. This kind of heightened awareness of 'race' also found its way into the thinking about official data collection. Statisticians Sillitoe and White (1992), for example, argue in their overview of the long-winded and contested introduction of "the ethnic question" in the British census that such a question became initially necessary as the new arrivals were "clearly distinguishable from the indigenous population by

⁷⁴ The academic debates on the relationship between 'race', ethnicity and nation are ongoing and often intense (Gilroy 2000). The space for a review of these debates is, however, limited here. (For a short summary and discussion of these debates see Kivisto (2002) and Wimmer (2008)). In line with the Weberian definition of ethnicity that I have given above, I understand ethnicity as an encompassing term that subsumes 'race' as well as nation and nationhood.

the colour of their skins" (Sillitoe and White 1992, p. 141) and experienced discrimination in various areas of life. Thus, some form of data collection was deemed essential to trace unequal outcomes between groups and inform policy-making, and to facilitate the better allocation of resources and provision of services.

After several field trials and amid heated debates and controversies, an ethnic question was eventually included in the census for England, Wales and Scotland for the first time in 1991. It asked people to tick the appropriate ethnic group box from a list of seven predefined answers (White, Black-Caribbean, Black-African, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese) and two open answers (Black-Other and Any other ethnic group). It is worth noting that these answer categories present a mix of colour, nationality, and geographical region as signifiers of ethnic group membership and specify the numerically largest groups in Britain. This lumping together of different types of categories has continued in the most recent censuses in 2001 and 2011, when further categories and sub-categories were added. Some of these reflect the new constitutional and political setup of Britain, with devolved powers in Scotland and Wales and increasing national awareness. As a result, for example, Scotland ran its own census in 2001, adding 'Scottish' as a separate subcategory of 'White'; the 2011 Scottish census also included a separate question on national identity in order to allow people to express a national identification independently from their ethnic origin or heritage (Wishart and McNiven 2008). At the same time, the adoption of an extra-category of 'Irish' as another 'White' subcategory in the British censuses was effected by lobbying activities of Irish community organisations in the UK, the Irish diaspora as well as politicians in Ireland (Howard 2004). Given that previously the mainstream view was that racial discrimination was suffered only by non-whites, this is an interesting case as people who identified as white Irish themselves demanded their recognition as a disadvantaged group in the censuses with the aim of making their distinctness and suffering visible through ethnic monitoring. This was closely connected to the 'race equality duty' put on public bodies such as local authorities, the police, educational institutions and health bodies by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which obliged them to "have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups" (quoted in Barton 2004, unpaginated) in all their activities.

Similarly, the category of Gypsy/Traveller as a white subgroup in which Romany Gypsies were included was only introduced in the last censuses in England and Wales as well as in Scotland as a result of growing awareness of their discrimination and disadvantaged position in British society through a series of research and reports carried out in the 2000s. There are several interesting points here about this categorisation of Roma as 'white Gypsy/Traveller'. The first is the reference to or association with nomadism; regardless of whether Roma migrants who came to the UK, especially after Slovakia and the Czech Republic joined the EU in 2004, had pursued or were pursuing a nomadic lifestyle, such assumed tradition continued to play a part in classifying/categorising Roma together with various groups of travelling communities. The second is that it is unclear whether those self-identifying as Roma would consider themselves as belonging to this category at all. Furthermore, the classification of Roma as 'white' runs counter to the widespread view in Slovakian or Czech society of Roma as dark-skinned as opposed to white Slovaks/Czechs (Cviklová 2011), this ethnosomatic characteristic being specifically highlighted and targeted by right-wing groups (Gheorghe 1991, pp. 831-833) and racist organisations.⁷⁵

4.2.2 Perpetuating stereotypes

What becomes visible by contrasting the Slovak, Czech, and British censuses above is the varying treatment of ethnicity, and more specifically Roma ethnicity, in these official data collection practices as well as the differing questions with which statisticians were/are trying to collect data on this group. Some researchers approach this mainly as a technical matter. In their foreword to the paper *Scotland's New Official Ethnicity Classification*, for example, chief statistician Robert Wishart and Scotland's registrar general Duncan McNiven (2008) emphasised the difficulties of "find[ing] a question which people can understand and answer easily - but which also allows people to record their ethnicity in the way which best suits them. There is, sadly, no perfect question!" While they acknowledge the complexity of recording ethnicity, they define their task as one of designing the most appropriate classificatory system and categories that would best reflect the changing population in Scotland. A similar position

⁷⁵ The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) has reported extensively on attacks on Roma by racist organisations in both Slovakia and the Czech Republic. One of the most common racist slurs employed by these groups in attacks is "black swine" (Budějovice 2013, unpaginated).

is adopted by scholars such as Matlovičová *et al.* (2012) whose concern about producing reliable data about the number of Roma in Slovakia I introduced at the beginning of this subchapter. In fact, they argue that the regulations and rules regarding minority rights introduced post 1989 in the process of EU accession have led to a "distortion" in the Slovakian statistics on Roma. Although the number of Roma living in Slovakia recorded in the census data increased steadily from 75, 802 in 1991 to 89, 900 in 2001 to 105, 738 in 2011, it was still significantly lower than in previous years. The last record of the Roma population in 1989, for example, showed 250, 943 Roma to be living in Slovakia, a number which is notably higher than the 75,802 recorded in the 1991 census. This led the authors to conclude, without further elaborating on the point, that the census data did not reflect the actual total number of Roma because, as they argue, a large number of Roma did not declare their nationality (p. 86). Discussing a similar divergence in the statistics on Roma in Hungary, Babusik (2004) argues that, in his research experience, the reason why many Roma refuse to declare their ethnic identity vis-à-vis authorities is because of a "fear of discrimination" (unpaginated) which has historical roots in the tragic fate a large number of Roma suffered during the Nazi period.

Viewing the Slovakian census data as unreliable, Matlovičová *et al.* (2012) set out to address this statistical gap, aiming to create a more "standardized and sustainable form of data collection on Roma in Slovakia" (p. 79). Thus, they decided "to not examine the number of people declaring themselves as Roma, but [instead to focus on] occurrence, location and nature of communities that are perceived as Roma by the neighbourhood (the majority)" (p.79). The collection of data was "carried out through information obtained primarily from the representatives of the territorial units (municipality or town)" (p. 79). This was based on the idea that local authorities 'knew' who the Roma are, so the researchers' task was to visit those areas which were thought to be populated by Roma and survey their number on the basis of information given by these authorities. This approach used, as the authors put it, "attributed ethnicity" (p. 79), a concept which was not new; it had in fact been used in the past, i.e. prior to 1991, in all surveys on Roma. Somewhat predictably, the final results of the survey yielded an estimate of 350,000 Roma living in Slovakia in 2011 which was significantly different from the 2011 census results (more than three times higher) but a figure which the authors regarded as 'in tune' with the pre-1991 statistics on Roma. By demonstrating 'statistical continuity' between the pre-1991 figures on Roma and current estimates, the study claimed the

validity of its view that its estimates provided a more realistic picture of the actual size of the Roma population in Slovakia, a precondition for a better "understanding of not only their needs but also their possible involvement in shaping [Slovak] society" (Matlovičová *et al.* 2012, p. 102).

At first sight, the choice of research design in Matlovičová *et al.*'s (2012) study may seem a rather technical matter in order to get more adequate figures. However, as I have hinted above, a historical look at the way data on Roma were collected under communism reminds us of previously used processes of categorisation and boundary-making vis-à-vis Roma, even though these were for very different ends. In communist Czechoslovakia, as Ulc (1988) notes, the collection of data on Roma was problematic due to their (lack of) administrative status. Since they were thought to comprise a diverse group of people who neither possessed a common language nor a territorial base, Roma were denied the status of national minority by the Czechoslovak government.⁷⁶ This status refusal is in contrast, for example, to the German, Hungarian and Polish minorities which were granted the status in the 1960 Constitution. Because Roma were not recognised as a national minority, they did not legally exist as an ethnic group. This had various repercussions. Firstly, Roma were not allowed to run their own cultural institutions, such as schools teaching in Romany language, which promoted or celebrated their heritage or identity. Secondly, while they were not afforded these special protections and rights, their Gypsy origin and "Gypsiness" was highlighted and tainted negatively. In the entry for Gypsy (*cikán*) in an authoritative dictionary of the Czech language in 1954, for example, the term was defined as "a member of a nomadic nation, symbol for mendacity, thievery, vagabondage" (cited in Ulc, 1988, p. 311). Furthermore, such negative images did not 'bode well' with the socialist vision of modernising the country and provided further justification for assimilating the Roma population:

Under socialism it is totally unthinkable to build some "socialist and national" Gypsy culture from the fundamentals of something which is very primitive, backward, essentially often very negative and lacking advanced tradition....The question is not

⁷⁶ Barany (2000) considers these criteria and the close link between ethnicity and nation intrinsic to the communist ideology ("Stalinist criteria") on national minorities. In fact such a view of ethnicity, as Wimmer (2008) elaborates, is far older and predates Stalinism and the communist period. In particular, it was consolidated in the 18th century by the writings of German philosopher Herder.

whether the Gypsies are a nation but how to assimilate them (*Demografie* 1962, a Czechoslovak government publication quoted in Ulc 1988, p. 108).

With no administrative status, Roma were constructed as a social group of Gypsy origin who shared some somatic features (dark-skinned), cultural characteristics (songs, dance) and belonged to a "backward" and "primitive" tradition. Since Roma were not considered a legitimate nation and were "backward", they, so it was argued, did not possess a culture or ethnic identity worthy of survival. Assimilation to the majority culture was thus justified as the only solution. Starting from the 1950s and continuing until the fall of communism, the Czechoslovak government pursued one of the most coercive assimilation policies amongst the communist countries (Barany 2000).

Importantly, the lack of administrative status did not mean that statistics on Roma were non-existent. Since Roma were 'targeted' by assimilation policies, data were collected in various other ways, as the following extract from *Demografie* explains:

In view of the fact that the Gypsies (*Cikáni*) are not considered a nationality (*národnost*), no ascertainment of their mother tongue has been made; the census takers had to base their finding on special *označení* ("characterisation", "determination") of persons included in the groups of Gypsy population. The census takers, it was acknowledged, had to rely on the frequently unreliable and incomplete "Gypsy Register" maintained by the offices of local administration and on "common knowledge: characteristic lifestyle in multigenerational families with a great number of children and inadequate knowledge of the language of society" (quoted in Ulc 1988, p. 316)

As this quote suggests, however, such statistics on Roma were not only unreliable but also essentialising and stigmatizing since they were based on what officials and researchers construed as special characteristics, behaviours and lifestyle of the Roma population. In addition to further stigmatisation, the data were used to justify the Czechoslovak government's policies towards Roma. Most notably, the census data were used to pursue one of the most inhumane policies against the Roma population in 1970s and 1980s: coerced sterilisation.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ As the census data were based on the "common knowledge" that Roma have "families with great number of children", the large birth rate amongst Roma women revealed by the census became a "fact" which had tragic consequences for many Roma women and families (see also chapter 5).

Despite the stigmatising nature and reported unreliability, however, the pre-1989 statistics on Roma are not questioned but rather taken at face value by Matlovičová *et al.* (2012) (as well as other researchers and policy-makers in Slovakia (Vano 2001) and elsewhere). Furthermore, while the study of Matlovičová *et al.* (2012) restores some of the pre-1989 practices of collecting data on Roma by mapping information and estimates requested from local authorities and organisations, it does not reveal the criteria on which their estimates are based, i.e. how this attributed Roma ethnicity is defined. The above historical example is illustrative of a case where prejudices against and essentialised imaginations of Roma culture, look, and lifestyle were simply reinforced and even gained an 'objectified' validity as resulting from scientific research.

Interestingly, as mentioned earlier, a 'mapping study' of Roma living in Scotland was conducted recently by The Social Marketing Gateway (2013). The study was commissioned by Glasgow ROMA-Net (see 4.1.1) in collaboration with the Scottish Government and other Scottish local authorities. It aimed to "build an understanding of the numbers, localities and the needs of the Roma population [by] collecting information from people working in the public and third sectors who have information to input on the situation of local Roma, in order to inform the creation and implementation of a National Roma Integration Strategy in line with the European Commission's Structural Funds for 2014-2020."⁷⁸ The study found that "it can be assumed that there are approximately between 4,000 and 5,000 Roma living in Scotland [and that] Glasgow, Edinburgh, Fife, North Lanarkshire, Aberdeen City and Falkirk are the most heavily Roma-populated Council areas" (p. 14). A table summarising the number of Roma living in Scotland is provided (p. 14) and the top row of this table has the following three count headings: "Minimum number of Roma", "Maximum number of Roma" and "Mid-point number of Roma". Below the table, a note explains some of the criteria used in the study: "When respondents were asked to estimate the number of Roma families, we have assumed 7 members per family as a rough estimate (e.g. 1 pre-school age, 1 primary school age, 1 senior school age, and 4 others)" (p.14). As indicated by the methods and criteria employed here, unfortunately, there is little to suggest that more recent 'mapping studies' like this and those conducted by Matlovičová and other researchers have been able to avoid the tendency of reiteration and justification of stereotypes and essentialisations critiqued above.

⁷⁸ Glasgow City Council email circulation, July 2013.

4.3 Differentiating Roma in Glasgow

The above section discussed at length and in detail the varying ways in which Roma have been and are categorised in the Slovak, Czech and British censuses, and the specific historical and political contexts with regard to imagining the nation and its others in which the respective categorisations evolved, were adopted, and came to replace others. How, then, are these different approaches to thinking about ethnicity and, more specifically, to counting or collecting data on Roma, relevant to understanding what I observed during my fieldwork?

4.3.1 An unwelcome setback

Let us return once again to the extract from the fieldwork notes which described an exchange between a support worker at the Groundworks service and Jan Búrik. Briefly, this involved a moment at the end of an advice session when the support worker asked Mr Búrik - as he was about to leave the room - whether he was Rom. When Mr Búrik hesitantly replied that he was "half" Rom, a visibly embarrassed support worker said: "we tick the 'Roma' box since we do not have 'half' here". As I have set out earlier, the question of Mr Búrik's ethnic belonging suddenly created a moment of awkwardness in the room, for which I offered some initial explanations (see 4.1).

A further interpretation of the awkwardness that encroached on a previously smooth and lively session could focus on the variations that exist between the Slovak/Czech and British ways of conceptualising ethnicity and categorising Roma. The differences could be read as providing a historical or cultural-relativist explanation for what would then appear as a 'misguided' approach taken by the Slovak support worker when it came to registering Roma clients in the described advice session - but also in those instances when staff ticked the 'Roma box' (literally on a form or mentally in encounters or conversations) without explicitly asking the service user. From this perspective, one could consider that the staff members who were themselves migrants from Slovakia had applied an approach towards Roma that was more traditionally used in their country of origin; rather than letting service-users self-identify as Roma by, for example, handing them the form, they had attributed being Roma to certain

people based on their 'knowledge' of Roma, 'being able to tell them apart', informed by their long experience of living and working with Roma in Slovakia and in Glasgow.⁷⁹ Alternatively or additionally, one could consider that Mr Búrik, whose ethnic belonging was questioned here, was wary about having to declare his Roma ethnicity, reminded of the long and often painful history that closely linked data collection on Roma with the administration of violence and inhuman treatment against them in Czechoslovakian and now Czech and Slovak society. Further, we could assume that the awkwardness was caused by the support worker suddenly treading carefully, feeling embarrassed about having to ask the question in the anticipation of potentially causing offense or harm due to such negative personal experiences or collective memories on Mr Búrik's part.

In the following, I will suggest another interpretation of what happened here. Being attentive to boundary making processes I argue that - even though some of the above interpretations might be also relevant - the situation should not be reduced to one evolving between the Slovak support worker and the 'half-Roma' service user whose shared history of difficult relations between majority and minority Slovaks plays out here, somewhat 'imported' from 'back home' to this setting in Glasgow. As I found during my fieldwork, many Groundworks clients I spoke to valued the service highly, in particular for the fact that the service was provided in their native language and by fellow Slovak migrants who could understand many issues they faced as newcomers in Scotland. What seems crucial here, however, is the fact that many of those who self-identified as Roma in our conversations, for example, when mentioning or explaining anti-Roma discrimination and injustices experienced in the Czech Republic or Slovakia, had experienced life in Glasgow as a place where the Roma/non-Roma divide was not (or at least far less) socially relevant. This was, for example, apparent in my conversations with Mr Búrik who sometimes spoke about how things were "different" in Glasgow: "It is another approach (*prístup*)⁸⁰ to people here, and to us as Roma - the approach is quite different. They take us normally." He contrasted this "different approach" with an

⁷⁹ Such an explanation is provided, for example, by Grill (2012) in his study on (Slovak) Roma migrants living in Glasgow. Grill refers to the "socio-cultural baggage" (p. 49) that 'white' Slovak and Czech migrants, who work as interpreters/support workers, bring with them. In his argument, this 'baggage' plays a key role in categorisation and identification processes of Roma in a particular inner city area of Glasgow.

⁸⁰ What is also interesting here is that *prístup* also translates in English as 'access' or 'admission'. The use of such a term by Mr Búrik thus relates to social (im)mobility; when he talks of different *prístup* towards Roma in Glasgow and that Roma are taken "normally", this, to my understanding, also means being allowed access, participation in society.

example of an incident in his town back in Slovakia when his wife was refused a phone contract by the telecommunications company T-Mobile for being Roma: "They told her face to face that they do not give phones to Roma!" Other research informants mentioned that they felt positive about being "less visible" in Glasgow due to the presence of a diverse population in the city, and how they would often be seen as Asians due to their looks, or that people would not be able to easily 'place' them or their origin (see also Grill 2012, p. 48). Others talked about having no questions asked or getting no 'suspicious looks' from strangers in Glasgow when introducing oneself as Slovak or Czech or as coming from Eastern Europe.

What this hints at is the fact that the EU accession of Slovakia and the Czech Republic not only opened up the possibility for these informants to leave their home cities and villages and come to the UK, but to come to and live in Glasgow as EU citizens, as Slovaks or Czechs on a par with other (non-Roma) Slovaks and Czechs. This is not to say that they now identified primarily as Slovak, Czech, or EU citizens (which would be a rather individual question) but to emphasise that these different identifications were now available to them alongside that as Roma, man or woman, villager, city person, Slovak-speaking, Romany-speaking, etc. Importantly, certain entitlements and rights that they were granted as EU citizens just like any other Slovak or Czech migrant, too, represent one aspect of what Mr Búrik called the "different approach", of being treated "normally" in Glasgow.

With this in mind, it is important to note that in the advice session that I have described above both the support worker and Mr Búrik had been communicating in their native language Slovak. In my reading of that situation, they had been communicating in Slovak as fellow Slovaks, or more specifically, as fellow Slovak migrants in Glasgow. I argue, that the moment the support worker asked Mr Búrik to 'confirm' his Roma ethnicity, a boundary was drawn between them, that of Roma and non-Roma. From this perspective, the emerging awkwardness then seems an effect of, firstly, the fact that the question presupposed Roma to be a strict either/or category which Mr Búrik's reply of "half" called into question. Secondly, the classificatory practice of ticking the 'Roma box' immediately created a social distance between Mr Búrik and the support worker which did not exist in previous meetings and, from the perspective of Mr Búrik, might have felt like a setback.

4.3.2 The ethnicisation of need

The above analysis focused on a specific interaction between support worker and client. I have argued that this specific conversation between Mr Búrik and the support worker was not happening in a void but is embedded in the routine practices and ideas of a variety of actors involved in the field such as the third sector organisations, their staff members, volunteers, other service users, local authorities (see section 4.1.1). As mentioned earlier, the form in question was not an ethnic monitoring form but an internal form to be filled out by the support worker to ascertain and record a client's eligibility to continue to access several services. Boundary making was thus not restricted here to a distancing between the non-Roma support worker and the half-but-still-Roma client. Following Wimmer's argument, the shift in services and resources from the more general category of EU nationals or Slovak and Czech migrants to the more restrictively defined 'Roma population' or 'Roma clients' posits the divide Roma/non-Roma as the socially relevant boundary, i.e. that 'the Roma' are a specifically vulnerable group with greater needs that have to be met through various services and support. This, in turn, firstly, requires and at the same time reinforces the thought that 'the Roma' exist as a homogeneous group, making invisible the heterogeneity I came across during my fieldwork, e.g., Slovak-speaking, Romany-speaking, darker and lighter skinned people, singles, families, city-dwellers,⁸¹ villagers, persons with varying educational backgrounds and skill sets, which might be as equally or more significant in people's lives and their trajectories. Secondly, the drawing of such a boundary and the wider shift of attention described above (section 4.1.1) meant the sudden loss of support provided for Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants who did not qualify as Roma. For those, on the other hand, who were able to "tick the Roma box", some new and often more specialised services opened up.

Thirdly, not only were Roma considered and constructed as a homogeneous group, but ascribing neediness and vulnerability to a certain ethnicity holds the risk of continuing their

⁸¹ *Mestizo* was, for example, a term used by some research informants to refer to those Roma with an urban background.

stigmatisation⁸² as poor and needy, thus constructing a vulnerable population 'laden with problems', or in other words, a 'risk population'. This is not to deny that many who would either identify themselves with or be categorised by others as Roma face significant, often structural barriers; but turning an issue into a 'Roma issue' might neglect other potentially relevant factors that give rise to an increased vulnerability, such as the specific migration process (see chapter 3) interacting with educational background, language skills, age, gender, etc. Moreover, the powerful notion of 'the vulnerable Roma' also runs the risk of reducing or denying Roma their agency, and thus contributes to a patronising image of powerless and hopeless victims, unable to deal with and overcome difficulties on their own. This could be seen, for example, in pessimistic remarks that I came across during the fieldwork such as the following made by a senior member of a third-sector organisation working with Roma: "These people, the Roma, will never get out of poverty". Such comments were usually made in the context of accounting, from the organisation's point of view, for the difficulties in bringing about a measurable change to people's life.

In some ways, such stigma of 'the needy' appears as a tragic irony. The term 'Roma' as an encompassing category representing different groups is a relatively recent one. It was adopted by the delegates of the first World Romani Congress held in London in 1972 to reject the existing pejorative terms at the time such as *Tsiganes*, *Zigeuner*, *Gitanos*, *Gypsies* and so on (Blasco 2002, p. 175). Nearly four decades later, however, the very term which was agreed upon in order to tackle stigma seems to be unable to disrupt the stigmatisation. The depiction of Roma as needy is particularly problematic in the current political and economic context in the UK and throughout Europe. The currently ongoing retrenchment of the welfare state and the relentless march of the neoliberal economic and political project (Wacquant 2009) have created conditions in which hardly a day goes by in the media and public discourse without 'the unemployed', 'the immigrant', 'the other' being seen as 'burdensome' for the welfare state (see also chapter 6). What is specific with regard to Roma is that in addition to labels such as 'welfare claimant', 'burdensome', 'benefit scrounger', or 'welfare tourist', the creation of Roma as needy has also led to the resurfacing of older prejudices against 'Gypsies', for example, as being 'workshy', 'parasites', 'lazy' and unwilling to work or to integrate. Thus, being depicted

⁸² Following Goffman's (1963) definition of stigma as an "attribute that is deeply discrediting" and reduces the bearer "from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one" (p. 3), I understand stigmatisation as processes that create such a "discrediting attribute".

as specifically vulnerable and needy will add further fuel to the current situation with a significant rise of anti-Gypsy sentiments and racist attacks on Roma who are increasingly being targeted and seen as a 'menace' to European societies (Stewart 2012).

4.4 Conclusion: The making of a 'risk population'

What I have described throughout this chapter are different processes and mechanisms that have given rise to 'the Roma' as 'a risk population'. Taking a specific face-to-face interaction between a service user and support worker as a starting point, I showed how the ethnic category of Roma became relevant at the local level. I then contextualised the classificatory practice of ticking a box in wider discursive changes on 'the Roma' as a particular group both in Glasgow and beyond. Questioning the commonsensical ways in which people in the field were accounting for 'the Roma', I suggested the adoption of a boundary-making perspective on ethnicity; instead of asking further who the Roma are I examined how the Roma are differently produced across varying political and sociohistorical contexts in the Czech Republic and Slovakia as well as in the UK. By moving back and forth between discourses on the local, national and supranational level and the interaction introduced at the beginning of the chapter, I aimed at providing a nuanced understanding of what was going on in this specific interaction. In the final part I argued that these various processes which operated on different levels and mutually informed each other led to a contradiction: while support services in Glasgow were targeted at 'the Roma' in order to tackle what was understood as their long-standing discrimination and marginalisation, this very mobilisation of resources again essentialised Roma as a homogenous group with greater needs, thus reinforcing their stigmatisation. This is not to deny the relevance of ethnicity or, more specifically, of 'being Roma'; on the contrary, what I have tried to highlight is how the ethnic category of Roma had a rather strong presence in the field due to both well meaning and hostile intentions and agendas. This reminds us of the fallacy of uncritically adopting dominant concepts and categories encountered in the field. While the use of categories and essentialising notions may be inevitable in empirical studies or policy making, this chapter invites us as researchers and practitioners to reflect on the consequences of their usage and to seek ways to minimise potential harm.

Chapter 5: Risk and positionality

The previous chapter provided an account of how 'the Roma' were produced as an ethnic category and a population 'at risk' in Glasgow. While the preceding analysis focused on processes and actors who attributed risk to Roma, in this chapter I discuss a concern that emerged amongst Roma families in Glasgow during my fieldwork, namely the risk of Roma children being separated from their families by the UK social services. I begin by providing an empirical account of how this theme came to my attention and how it unfolded over several weeks. I then draw on conceptual ideas by different authors on risk in order to shed light on the observed dispute between those claiming and those denying the existence of such a risk. Subsequently, I recontextualise the empirical case to better understand what is being negotiated in this process of contestation. In the conclusion, I employ the notion of positionality to account for the varying perceptions regarding the risk of children's forced removal and to argue for a more critical and complex approach to risks faced by migrants.

5.1 "*Sociálka* take children away"

I first came across the theme of children being taken away by *sociálka*⁸³ in September 2012 during my fieldwork at the drop-in. The latter took place once a week for two hours in the evening at a local church in the Rivertoun⁸⁴ area in the south of Glasgow. Organised through collaboration between the local church, Groundworks and another third-sector organisation, the drop-in had started out in early autumn in 2011 as a humanitarian project aimed at local people who were destitute and/or in need of basic support such as food and clothes. However, those who came to attend it were mainly Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants who lived in the local neighbourhood. More specifically, the drop-in became associated with Roma migrants. For those who attended or visited the place, the drop-in provided a rare, informal

⁸³ *Sociálka* stems from the word *sociálny* ('social') and can be translated into English as 'social services', 'social workers', 'social welfare', 'social benefit' or more broadly 'social authorities'. In this context, the term was used to refer mainly to the UK social services and social workers. In this chapter I will use both the Czech/Slovak word *sociálka* and the English term 'social services'.

⁸⁴ A pseudonym.

setting in the local area to share and talk about their problems. Many attendees brought their children or grandchildren along, which, eventually, led to the place being mainly seen as a safe play area for children⁸⁵ who enjoyed the sheer size of the indoor space and the activities provided by the staff and volunteers. In fact, children (their ages ranging from 2-15 years old) often constituted the majority of attendees.

It was a session at the end of September 2012 that was fully preoccupied with talk and concerns about *sociálka* taking children away from their families. Drop-in attendance varied from one week to another with an average attendance of 50 people per session, but this particular session was not only busy in terms of a higher turnout (around 75 people attended), but many had also come in for the first time, looking visibly concerned. A typical drop-in session would follow roughly this routine: as people came in, younger children would go to the play area in one corner of the emptied church hall, away from the main adult area, while adults and some of the older children would take a seat at one of the five or six large tables located in the middle of the hall; depending on the programme that the staff and volunteers⁸⁶ had prepared, people would spend the evening by engaging in the activities provided (the most common activities included drawing and painting); the staff and volunteers would also engage with the children and mingle with the adults and, at some point during the session, serve food and drink to them. This particular session, however, was more 'chaotic' as people, including the children, did not follow the usual routine. This had started right from the beginning of the session. As we opened the door and welcomed people in many approached me and the two other Slovak-speaking workers.⁸⁷ Amongst those who came to talk to me with some urgency was Denisa Beňaková, a 40-year-old research informant:

⁸⁵ This evaluation of the drop-in as a playground also emerged in the results of a small survey/group exercise (see Appendix B) which I, together with two other Slovak-speaking workers, conducted with the attendees in October 2012. The aim of the survey was to get a general idea about people's opinion of the drop-in as well as to find out ways in which the service could be improved.

⁸⁶ The number of staff and volunteers present at the drop-in varied from one session to another, but on average there were eight to nine people per session.

⁸⁷ Most of the drop-in attendees spoke little or no English, so throughout my fieldwork there I communicated with them in Slovak. By 'Slovak workers' I refer to those drop-in staff members who spoke Slovak and also came from Slovakia. As I mentioned in chapter 2, section 2.3.2, my role at the drop-in included acting as a Slovak interpreter between the attendees and staff/volunteers/visitors, but, unlike me, the other two Slovak-speaking workers were also native Slovaks.

DB: "Did you watch the documentary?! Did you hear about the children that they took away?!"

TG: "No, which documentary?"

DB: "On *TV JOJ*."

TG: "Oh, I don't have Slovak TV."

DB: "It was [also] in the news, on the internet, everywhere. It's terrible, they take children away, for money."

TG: "Who took the children away? Where?"

DB: "*Sociálka* took them. In London, in Sheffield, everywhere."

I knew Mrs Beňáková from my fieldwork at Groundworks, but it was unusual to see her at the drop-in. However, as her daughter attended the place regularly with her own 2-year old daughter, Mrs Beňáková came by because she was worried about her grandchild. In our conversation, she referred to different places in the UK in which these incidents had taken place, the wide media coverage of them, and also talked about what motivated the children's removal from their families, including financial gain. Her account and interpretations of these incidents were also shared by others who attended the drop-in, and to a large extent resembled the claims made in the documentary. Given its impact on the attendees, I briefly describe the story covered by the documentary and highlight some of the key claims that it made.

The documentary which Denisa Beňáková referred to had been broadcasted on the Slovak television channel *Televízia JOJ* in two parts, on 16 and 19 September 2012, a week before this last September drop-in session (*Televízia JOJ* 2012a). The documentary was entitled *Bez detí neodídeme*⁸⁸ ('I won't leave without [my] children') and told the story of a Slovak mother living in London who had been trying unsuccessfully for two years to regain custody of her two small children (2 and 4 years old at the time of their separation from the parents) from the UK social services. Both children had been taken away after social services were informed by the family doctor who, during a routine check-up of the children, had found bruises on the children's bodies and suspected that these resulted from abuse within the family. Initially, the

⁸⁸ The documentary (48 min.) was originally broadcasted at 10.30pm local time (*Televízia JOJ* 2012).

social services placed both children in the care of the family pastor. Then, following a reassessment of the situation a month later, they decided that the children were still at risk (their father remained a threat to them) and placed them in foster care.

Bez detí neodídem was a piece of investigative journalism which made several alarming allegations about the UK social services. Firstly, by using extracts from interviews with several experts (including the family pastor in the UK, psychologists, lawyers, representatives of the Slovak government and a British MP) it discredited the claim that there was any medical reason involved in this particular case and instead claimed that this was a case of "forced adoption" (*nútené adopcie*), and that the two children were effectively "kidnapped" (*unesené*). To add further to its sensationalism, the report ascribed the acronym "SS" to (the UK) 'social services', thus evoking the image of a Nazi organisation.⁸⁹ Secondly, the reason behind this "forced adoption", the documentary claimed, was that the UK social services were involved in a profitable industry of child adoption, an industry that specifically targeted foreign children. Foreign children, it reported, were treated as a "commodity". This particular claim of children being sold for money was mentioned to me by Mrs Beňaková and other Roma migrants at the drop-in, with figures given ranging from £400 (a figure which was also stated in the documentary) to as high as £5,000 per adopted child.

With many migrants having access to Slovak TV channels via satellite and other media through the internet, the documentary and the media frenzy that followed had clearly had a powerful effect on many Roma migrants in Glasgow, including their children. The broadcasting of the documentary was followed by wide TV and other media coverage of this case in Slovakia, including hours of TV commentaries and discussions, numerous newspaper articles and internet forums (*Noviný špeciál* 2012). At least two Facebook group campaigns were also established, and one of them organised a protest at the British embassy in the Slovakian capital Bratislava. Although this incident took place in the UK, the heightened media attention generated in Slovakia is perhaps not surprising; it is estimated that there are around 50,000 Slovakian nationals living in the UK (Lášticová 2014, p. 409). Also, in a globalised world, information (including images) flows rapidly across borders and as a result the world has become ever more interconnected: Roma migrants living in Glasgow came to

⁸⁹ This sensationalist language was accompanied by dramatic background music.

know about this incident not through the UK media; instead, this knowledge was disseminated transnationally via Slovakian and Czech media and other social media channels.

Alongside this transnational aspect there was also a national element which paradoxically facilitated this media frenzy. In the UK, under the Children Act 1989, the media and authorities have a legal responsibility to protect the privacy of children involved in court cases.⁹⁰ Reporting or comments on individual cases such as the one dealt with in the above documentary are thus restricted. Under these circumstances, the specific claims made by the Slovak side in the documentary could not be countered or contested by the UK side. The only response made by the UK authorities was in relation to a declaration made by the Slovak Ministry of Justice. Expressing its concerns about this case, the latter had issued a declaration condemning the practice of child adoption for "no sound reason" (*bez relevantných dôvodov*) and even threatened to take matters to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.⁹¹ In response, the UK authorities issued a counter declaration defending its services as "best-regulated" and stating that while they cannot "comment on individual cases", they "want to reassure all Slovak citizens, that British Social Services only take children into care when they have serious concerns about the wellbeing of the child" (The Daily.Sk 2012). Due to national legislation, the declaration made by the UK authorities could only take the form of a general statement, thus leaving an information 'vacuum'. What is more, the UK authorities' 'silence' on details of the case was interpreted by the Slovak media as a sign of guilt, i.e. the UK social services' involvement in "child kidnapping" (*unesené deti*).⁹² With the allegations and claims in the Slovak media going unchallenged, the negative image and the threat posed by the UK social services increased further.

⁹⁰ See, for example, the editorial guidelines of the BBC [No date].

⁹¹ Ministerstvo spravodlivosti Slovenskej republiky (Slovak Ministry of Justice) (2012).

⁹² It might thus be not surprising that this heightened attention in Slovakia continued for several months later. When I began to write this chapter in May 2013, the Slovak channel *Televízia JOJ* was broadcasting an 8-episode drama series based on the above documentary called *Zlodeji Detí* (Children's Thieves), with the first episode titled *Únos* (The Kidnapping).

5.1.1 Acting on knowledge

The perceived danger of "child kidnapping" was having some real effects. At the drop-in, this could be seen, for example, in the attendees' heightened awareness of visitors. Alongside the playground role, the drop-in also served as a sort of help point for Roma migrants. Collaborating with other organisations, the organisers of the drop-in ran an informal advice service for them. This included one-to-one advice sessions with visiting agencies providing support on issues related to welfare, finance, housing, and health. In addition, the drop-in also became an 'attraction spot' for Roma projects and was visited by various interested individuals (e.g., journalists, artists, photographers) and organisations. As a result, rarely a drop-in session went by without 'visitors' coming in. Attendees were aware of these frequent visits and often talked to me and the other two Slovak workers about their annoyance at constantly being interviewed and targeted.⁹³ But what I noticed since that September drop-in session was that, in addition to annoyance, they had become wary of these visitors as they often asked: "Are they from *sociálka*?" The fact that such a question was posed by both adults and children at the drop-in suggested that concerns about *sociálka* were discussed more widely, i.e., including in the family.

Importantly, worries and concerns about *sociálka* taking children away did not only involve narratives, they also prompted actions. Later on during my fieldwork, I came across cases which showed that some Roma migrants living in Glasgow were also taking action in response to the risk of children being taken away. One such case was reported to me by a support worker at Groundworks. It involved a Roma migrant woman and her three young children. The family, who lived in the south of Glasgow, had an ongoing issue with their private landlord. The latter had received complaints from the neighbours that her children were being noisy and had thus threatened her and her children with eviction. Although she was faced with

⁹³ Throughout my involvement at the drop-in there were many Roma migrants who attended the place infrequently or occasionally. Only a small 'core' group of people were 'regulars' at the drop-in. They were mainly from Slovakia and came from a small town in the eastern part of the country, so there was a sense of village/town solidarity amongst them. In this group some were also related or knew each other from back home. Despite its small size, kinship relations and geographical proximity, the group was often seen (and presented) as representative of the "Roma community" or "Roma folk" in Glasgow and thus attracted the attention of various interested parties who wanted "to do Roma projects" with them or wanted to hear their views and experiences. This is an example of the ethnicisation processes regarding the help and support provided to Roma migrants in Glasgow and elsewhere, which I have discussed in detail in chapter 4.

constant pressure to move out, she did not seek advice or help from local organisations to fight the eviction because she feared that this would involve police or local authorities who would take her children away from her. To avoid any contact with the authorities, the woman moved out of the flat and only with considerable difficulties found new accommodation. When discussing this case with me, the support worker said that "it was worrying" that the women had got into such a desperate situation: "Why would the police take her children away without any reason?" he asked shrugging his shoulders. As a single mother with three children and speaking little English, it would have made things much easier for her, he continued, if she had sought support at Groundworks or with local housing organisations.

Another case involved a local school in the Rivertoun area, i.e. the same area in the south of Glasgow where the drop-in was based. This story was told to me by a social welfare officer whom I met at the drop-in. Like many schools in Glasgow this local school was running a free meal scheme which offered pupils from low income families access to a free lunch at school. In the case of this particular school, the welfare officer said, many Roma migrant families were not participating in the scheme because they seemed afraid that "we would take their children away from them". "But why would we take the children away?!", he asked, looking perplexed. He expressed his disappointment about the families' decision not to take part in the scheme; the free meal scheme was aimed at helping families on low incomes and improving the health of their children, and with many local Roma migrant families falling into this socio-economic category, their children would have been entitled to the scheme but were now missing out. During our conversation, a Slovak (non-Roma) project worker, a member of the drop-in staff, was also present. For her, this was a "cultural thing"; Roma would usually take their children home during school breaks because this way they could cook a nice meal for them and eat together as a family. The welfare officer listened intently to this explanation but still looked unconvinced: in his experience, Roma migrant families had clearly developed a fear of the social services, and he found this fear to be unfounded.

5.1.2 "What's the fuss?"

As reflected in these exchanges, those who worked with Roma were finding it difficult to understand the actions taken by many Roma migrant families to protect their children from the

threat⁹⁴ posed by *sociálka*. Similarly, the staff and volunteers at the drop-in were puzzled by the reactions shown by the Roma attendees following the broadcasting of the Slovak documentary. During one of the drop-in debriefings⁹⁵, for example, some wondered why the attendees had "made such a fuss" about this issue, especially since no-one amongst them had experienced it. One of the staff members pointed out that she had been talking to some of the Roma women who attended the session and felt surprised by how "seriously they had taken these rumours". Another volunteer added that "the likelihood of this happening was very small" since it was not easy for the (UK or Scottish) social services to remove children from their families "without the permission of the courts".

At the same time, the staff and volunteers at the drop-in also realised that many Roma families were clearly worried and concerned about this issue, so one of the suggestions made during one of the debriefings was to organise an open meeting inviting relevant authorities (e.g., the local authorities' children's services) and Roma migrants. It was hoped that such a meeting would enable Roma migrant families to directly ask questions to the authorities (including social workers) about this matter, thus reassuring them that there was no risk of having their children taken away arbitrarily. The local children and families services were thus contacted and asked about the possibility of organising a meeting. In their response, however, they expressed wariness about holding such a meeting at the time. They explained that such gatherings had taken place in other parts of the UK, namely Rotherham and Peterborough, and, generally, they had been "quite heated". Both events were attended by a significant number of Roma migrants (up to 200 people were reported to have attended the meeting held in Rotherham (BBC Radio 4 The Report 2012). Both meetings took place at the end of August 2012. Prior to the broadcasting of the Slovak documentary *Bez detí neodídem* two cases of Roma migrant families in the UK whose children had been taken away by the British social services had been reported on Slovak TV news. Although there was only little TV coverage⁹⁶ of these cases (2-3 minutes slot on the news), it was enough to cause substantial concern

⁹⁴ I discuss the question of whether this was a perceived or real threat in the next section.

⁹⁵ After each drop-in session, the staff and volunteers would hold a debriefing meeting (usually lasting one hour) to reflect on the evening and discuss any issues raised. I participated in the discussion and took notes during these debriefings.

⁹⁶ The fact that these two cases involved Roma families may partly explain why they received little media coverage in the Czech and Slovak media and TV (and continue to do so). This was in stark contrast to the media frenzy following the case of the Slovak (non-Roma) woman whose case the documentary was based on.

amongst Czech and Slovak Roma migrants in these two cities. As the drop-in was closed during August, I could not record the reaction to this earlier news coverage amongst Roma migrants in Glasgow.

Unlike in Rotherham and Peterborough, however, no open meeting or discussion was held in Glasgow. Whatever the reasons behind the decisions taken by the relevant authorities, i.e., whether they thought that the discussion might be too intense and generate conflict or they wanted to avoid difficult questions that (Roma) participants might have asked, or that the meeting would not make any difference, organising such meeting in the city was seen as a 'hassle'. The lack of action and indifference seems striking given the large number of (informal and formal) services and 'projects', people (employed or volunteering) and agencies (local, national and transnational)⁹⁷ involved in providing help and support specifically aimed at Roma migrants in Glasgow. Perhaps this hints at the relatively weak position of Roma in the local political landscape; it is noteworthy that both in Rotherham and Peterborough Roma migrants who were relatively well placed in the local infrastructure - a police officer in Peterborough, a local council employee and candidate for the local council election in Rotherham - had been directly involved in the organisation of the public meetings.

When looking at the overall responses amongst the (non-Roma) staff, workers and volunteers in Glasgow, there seemed to be a general sense that the reactions of the Roma migrant families were rather exaggerated with regard to the risk of children being taken away. Although the concerns of the families were recognised, they were considered to be an emotional overreaction to the sensationalist (Czech/Slovak) media coverage of just a single case. The fears were thought to be unjustified, and the resulting panic fed by "rumours" and "misinformation" rather than being informed by "concrete cases", actual examples and figures. Moreover, the subsequent actions taken by Roma families were deemed to be "strange" and difficult to understand, and thus somehow irrational. Clearly, for non-Roma workers, the threat posed by *sociálka* was based on subjective feelings of the Roma migrant families; in their view, the risk of having one's children taken away did not exist or it was very small.

⁹⁷ As I have highlighted in chapter 4, there were as many as twelve major (non-governmental as well as statutory) organisations running services or projects aimed at Roma in Glasgow.

5.2 Real or perceived risk?

Can we interpret the above data as a case of misinformed Roma migrants in Glasgow, acting irrationally based on a lack of understanding of the UK child protection system and social services? This interpretation would hinge on the assessment that a risk of Roma children being taken away from their families in Glasgow by the local social services did not 'objectively' exist but constituted merely a 'perceived' risk without any basis in facts. Such reading of the data presupposes a dichotomy between objective/actual/real and subjective/inaccurately perceived risk, a binary which prevails in both the literature on risk management and in the common use of the term (Adams 1995, p. 10). Risk, according to this prevailing orthodoxy, is thought of as a quantifiable and measurable phenomenon. It is commonly defined as "a compound measure combining the probability and magnitude of an adverse effect" (Adams 1995, p. 8) occurring in the future. It is thus understood as a neutral, 'scientific' category, best left to experts such as statisticians, physicists, mathematicians (see also chapter 1, section 1.2.1). Numerical expressions of risk, such as an 80% probability of a particular negative event happening, are commonplace and thought to be helpful tools for making informed decisions and mitigating potential negative effects. In contrast, an issue that is associated merely with fears, perceptions and emotions that individuals hold about the possibility of adverse events is categorised as 'perceived', which connotes a 'not real' risk.

However, the idea that there is a clear cut distinction between "objective - the sort of thing 'the experts' know about - and perceived risk - the lay person's often very different anticipation of future events" (Adams 1995, p. 8) has been critiqued by various authors as a common fallacy (Beck 1992; Douglas 1992; Adams 1995; Boholm 1996). These authors have argued that there is no such thing as an objective risk, as risk is always socially constructed. What risk is, how risky a specific action or situation is, and how to deal with a risk are not merely questions of technical calculation and objective assessment but subject to social and cultural negotiations. I have outlined this socio-cultural perspective on risk in more detail in chapter 1, section 1.2.1 where I reviewed and discussed the works of three prominent social theorists of risk, Ulrich Beck, John Adams, and Mary Douglas. Here, I will, therefore, only briefly summarise key points which are relevant for my analysis of the case at hand.

As noted in chapter 1, section 1.2.1, although Beck, Douglas and Adams adopt distinctive perspectives on risk, they all disrupt the notion of objective risk and arrive at the fundamental idea that risk is socio-culturally constructed. For Ulrich Beck (1992), the concept of risk epitomises a fundamental transformation from industrial to modern society in which dangers are no longer externally induced but increasingly produced by humans themselves. In the wake of rapid technological developments, a different way of thinking about the future and the unknown has become pervasive: in risk society, according to Beck, the issue of risk is no longer the exclusive domain of experts who measure and control it; instead, risk is subject to social forces and is now and again dramatised or played down, rendered relevant or invisible, accepted or rejected. As risks are intrinsically and inseparably linked to knowledge, "perceptions of risks and risks are not different things, but one and the same" (p. 55). At the same time, the notion of risk refers not only to an abstracted danger or insecurity in the future but also to (the consideration of) systematic ways of dealing with and mitigating these in the present.

John Adams (1995), on the other hand, uses the individual decision-making process as a baseline for developing his approach to risk. Differently from Beck, Adams considers risk-taking as a natural human capacity through which we deal with uncertainties and dangers in everyday life. Conceptualising risk-taking decisions as highly dynamic, he suggests that they are the result of one's risk perception and inclination to take risk, which in turn are informed by anticipated returns on a particular decision as well as past experiences. Both collective histories and an individual's past experiences can play an important part here and shape both risk propensity and risk perception. The dynamism of risk does not stop there; risk perceptions change as people act upon them. Thus, the interplay of the various feedback loops in Adams' theoretical model render an 'objective' evaluation of risk virtually impossible. This also means that risk cannot be 'objectively' dismissed as 'unreal' for those who experience it as real.

The socially and culturally embedded and thus controversial nature of risk is highlighted in Mary Douglas' (1992) theorisation which develops from a critique of probability-based notions of risk as ethnocentric. In contrast to Beck, she understands risk primarily as a concept characteristic of Western culture, not of late modernity. For Douglas, the emergence of risk does not mark the advent of new, potentially uncontrollable dangers, but new ways of thinking

about and managing an anticipated but uncertain threat; defining risk is about apportioning and attributing blame, about bolstering and defending one's social position. Risks are thus morally and politically contested with struggles over who defines what as a risk and who is to blame. In this sense, risks are "a joint product of *knowledge* about the future and *consent* about the most desired prospect" (Douglas and Wildavsky 1983, p.5, original emphasis). Finally, the Western notion of risk with its claim to objectivity and scientific knowledge conceals the socio-cultural, political, and ethical dimensions of risk by decontextualising it from the processes of its production.

5.3 Recontextualising the risk of 'Roma children being taken away'

How do these conceptual ideas help us understand what was going on as concerns about Roma children being taken into care emerged and unfolded in Glasgow during my fieldwork? Certainly, the scope and focus, for example, of Beck's sociological grand theory seem a far cry from the empirical case at hand here. My argument here is not concerned with the question of whether Beck's diagnosis of contemporary society as risk society, marked by processes of a reflexive modernisation is (universally/partially) correct or not.⁹⁸ However, his conceptualisation of risk is useful to question the seemingly rational and apparently superior account of events given by staff and volunteers who were convinced that the risk of Roma children being taken away did not 'objectively' exist. Because risks are, according to Beck, created by and in knowledge and exist as action is taken upon this knowledge, there is no neutral or external ground from which the 'reality' of the risk of Roma children being forcibly separated from their parents by UK social services can be proven right or wrong once and for all. This specific ontological status of risk is further supported by Adams' conceptual model in

⁹⁸ The concept of the risk society and the thesis of reflexive modernisation put forward by Beck have attracted a great deal of criticism from various scholars. His diagnosis of the risk society has particularly been criticised for its gloomy outlook and universalising tendency which overlooks the variations and relevancies occurring on other, lower levels (Caplan 2000, p. 25). Empirical studies have shown that the way people perceive and deal with risks vary across locations, regions (Nugent 2000), countries (Tulloch and Lupton 2003) or even cultures (Eckermann 2006). It is thus not surprising that a lack of empirical validity is one of the major criticisms directed at Beck (Jarvis 2007; Eckermann 2006). Nevertheless, offering fresh theoretical formulations on the subject area of risk, Beck's conceptualisations have also paved the way for and given impetus to new sociological research in this area (Lupton 1999; Zinn 2010), which had hitherto been understudied in the social sciences. For a detailed review of the debate on the risk society paradigm see Caplan (2000).

which he argued that whether we perceive something as a danger and how we deal with it is dynamically linked to previous experience and knowledge as well as anticipated rewards, so that any attempt to objectively measure, quantify or determine risk is rendered futile. Thus, analytically, my approach here takes a cue from Douglas' critique of risk as a decontextualised and desocialised notion. In what amounts to a reversal of the individualisation of risk, in this last section I will attempt a recontextualisation of the above case. In other words, the perspective taken here looks at the case as an (ongoing, incomplete) process of contestation in which differing views on the existence, the severity, the implications of the risk of having one's children taken away by UK social services are brought into play; this involves not only disputes about what are more commonly understood as 'facts' but also various other knowledges which transpired as relevant and will be introduced below. This includes knowledge based on past experiences in the Roma migrants' home countries as well as on everyday experiences in their lives in Glasgow.

5.3.1 Past experiences and risk

I have described earlier in the chapter the situation at the drop-in session when many Roma migrants came in visibly concerned after having seen the TV documentary and Slovakian news reports about children being taken away from their Slovakian families by the UK social services. Some of the attendees, when asked by the volunteers why they felt affected so much by the news story, replied: "Because we're Roma, they target us again," or, "It's like before." What this 'before' entailed is the subject of the following paragraphs. Before I provide a brief account of specific forms of violence and discrimination suffered by Roma populations in what is now Slovakia and the Czech Republic, it has to be noted that amongst my research informants were non-Roma Czech and Slovak migrant families with small children who did not seem to share these concerns about the UK child protection services, although some had heard about this well publicised case of Slovak children being taken into care, through friends, the media, or from Roma migrants. Nor did I notice any particular actions taken by non-Roma parents to avoid contact with UK authorities. My suggestion here is that this difference is grounded in a specific past that was invoked by those who were worried about being forcibly separated from their children in Glasgow.

Historically, various Roma populations have been shown to have suffered continuous and systematic discrimination and stigmatisation throughout Europe (Bogdal 2010) which has forced many of them into the lowest positions in society. The mechanisms and practices perpetuating this marginalisation, which continues to this day (Stewart 2012), have involved all aspects of people's lives including the family. A detailed historical account of this persecution is, however, beyond the scope of this chapter; here, I can only briefly highlight what seems relevant for the case at hand. This includes forced sterilisation, institutionalisation, and segregation in the more recent history of the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Sterilisation was a measure introduced by the Czechoslovak communist government between the 1970s and 1990 under the pretext of controlling the country's population and reducing what was regarded as a "high, unhealthy" birth rate amongst the Roma population (ERRC 2005, unpaginated). Social workers (*sociálka*) were deployed who, alongside doctors, encouraged Roma women to undergo sterilisation by offering them financial incentives. However, in practice sterilisation procedures were often carried out without the informed consent of the women involved. Also, the term 'encouragement' to undergo sterilisation often masked far more coercive measures, and in the case of women who refused to do so, social workers threatened to take their children away and place them into state care. The systematic and illegal nature of these practices were only recently recognized by the Czech government, which in 2009 expressed its "regret" over forced sterilisations of Roma women during this period, an admission which, one must add, came only after a long campaign by human rights groups such as the European Roma Rights Centre (Stracansky 2009). Yet, albeit less frequently, such practices have continued even after the fall of communism. A report by the Centre for Reproductive Rights (2003) found that more than 100 Roma women had been coerced or forced to undergo sterilisation in eastern Slovakia since 1989 (p. 14). In the Czech Republic, the country's Ombudsman concluded in a report in 2005 that forced sterilisation of Roma women still exists in the country (ERRC 2007).

Alongside forced sterilisations, the institutionalisation of children has been another discriminatory practice which has targeted Roma families in particular. In their study of children in state care in the Czech Republic, Hrubá and Ripka (2011) found that the

overrepresentation of Roma children (the country has also the highest rate of institutionalised children in the EU (ERRC *et al.* 2007, p. 39) did not exist by chance. From the prejudiced 'assessments' made by social workers, a lack of information given to families about their rights, arbitrary court proceedings, and the unwillingness of social workers to re-unite children with their families, to the reluctance of (non-Roma) Czech foster carers to take Roma children, the study highlights a range of administrative and legislative barriers, cultural prejudices and stigmatisation that make Roma children an 'easy' target for institutionalisation.

A far more visible phenomenon, and thus one often criticised by various human rights groups and the international community, is the ongoing segregation of the Roma population in the Czech Republic and perhaps even more so in Slovakia.⁹⁹ In the case of Roma children, this involves their disadvantageous and discriminatory treatment in the education system, for example, by enrolling them in so-called special schools or placing them at the back of the classroom.¹⁰⁰ More recently, however, there have again been calls by politicians to take Roma children away from their families and school them in a different "environment". In February 2013, the Slovakian Prime Minister, Robert Fico, said that "someone should show [Roma] children they can live in a different way, but you can do this only when using extreme measures - you would have to take these children from their environment and place them elsewhere" (The Slovak Spectator 2013, unpaginated).¹⁰¹ Such "extreme measures" of forcibly separating children from their families have a long historical tradition. In the 18th century Maria Theresa, the monarch of the Austro-Hungarian empire, decreed the removal of children from Roma families as a way to eradicate their culture and identity. Although two very different historical periods are involved, there are striking and poignant similarities between this latest effort by Slovak authorities to 'solve the Roma problem' (*riešenie rómskej otázky*)

⁹⁹ This can be seen, for example, in the infamously high number (600) of Roma "settlements" (*osady*) in Slovakia. Often located outside the main residential areas in the eastern part of the country, these "settlements" are known for poor-quality housing, high levels of unemployment and extreme poverty (Vermeersch 2006, pp. 23-34).

¹⁰⁰ Amnesty International has long been campaigning against the segregation of Roma children, and more generally, the Roma population in Slovakia (Amnesty International 2010).

¹⁰¹ One should add that such views (or rather threats) are more widespread and not only bound to Slovakia; in 2004, Eric Van der Linden, the EU Commission's Ambassador to Slovakia, proposed similar measures: "It may sound simplistic but it is, I think, in the root of the cause that we need to strengthen education and organise the educational system in a way that we may have to start to, I'll say it in quotation marks, force Romani children to stay in a kind of boarding school from Monday morning until Friday afternoon, where they will continuously be subjected to a system of values which is dominant (*vigerend*) in our society" (*Slovensko.com* 2004, unpaginated).

and the empress' attempt to address the 'Gypsy question' and forcibly assimilate Roma centuries ago (Human Rights Watch 1996).

During my fieldwork I did not hear any stories or come across anyone who had directly suffered the above discriminatory practices of forced sterilisation, institutionalisation and separation from their families in Slovakia or the Czech Republic. Nevertheless, I refer to this past as 'past experiences' insofar as it is remembered and known through a narrative of a shared history of persecution and suffering by those self-identifying as Roma. The relevance of past experiences in risk perception was highlighted by Adams as I discussed earlier. His conceptualisation of risk-taking reminds us that our past is not somehow cut off from or irrelevant to the decisions we make in the present, in anticipation of negative events happening in the future. The divisions between the past, present and future are not clear-cut when it comes to perceiving or dealing with risk. Adam's conceptualisation thus contributes to my analysis by providing a link between the risk perception in the here and now of Glasgow during my fieldwork and these past experiences of discrimination and inhuman treatment in the then and there of these migrants' home countries. This would also explain why, as I mentioned previously, non-Roma families in Glasgow seemed unfazed by the Slovak TV documentary - even though the family which the programme was based on was actually non-Roma. Without a shared history of oppression in which the forced removal of children constituted a particularly painful collective memory, the non-Roma migrants might not have felt specifically targeted and instead thought of the reported case as an exception for which the featured parents were to blame.

5.3.2 Everyday knowledge and risk

The history of marginalisation and persecution of various Roma people was not unknown to the volunteers and other staff at the drop-in. Even though they did not specifically talk about the discriminatory practices mentioned above, in team meetings and debriefings it was often stated that the painful history of Roma had led them to generally fear and mistrust state officials and authorities. In this case of highly pitched emotions about children being taken into care, the Roma's assumed fear/mistrust of authorities seemed to further support the view

that they were panicking without any concrete or 'real' reasons, as, staff members would argue, "these things happened over there, not here!"

Let us, firstly, turn to the question of 'facts' on Roma children taken into care by the British (or Scottish) services. There is currently no academic research available on the topic, and the relevant children's social work statistics published by the Scottish Government do not include information on the nationality or detailed ethnic group or origin (such as Roma) of affected children (National Statistics 2014). With a view to the UK, more generally, a BBC 4 Report *Roma children: Britain's hidden care problem* which was broadcasted in December 2012 may serve as some anecdotal 'evidence'. According to this report, there was a disproportionately high number of Roma children taken into care in specific areas (such as Rotherham, Sheffield, London) in the UK when compared to the national average. Overall, citing statistics issued by the Department of Education, the BBC report claimed that the number of Roma children taken into care or under child protection plans had quadrupled since 2009, and that several local authorities' social services around the UK were increasingly coming into contact with Roma families. The report also stated that out of the 150 Slovak children who had been removed from their families in the UK, 90% were Roma. This 'problem' had escalated to such an extent that Slovak authorities had become involved in family court cases heard in the UK. While the accuracy and validity of these figures could not be independently ascertained, they could be taken as hinting at a risk for Roma migrant children¹⁰² to be separated from their families due to child protection concerns. While this BBC 4 programme was broadcast at the end of my fieldwork (December 2012) and my research informants had therefore not been exposed to it when this topic came to my attention at the drop-in session in September 2012, they seemed to have been aware of cases in other parts of the UK. Consider, for example, the short conversation between Mrs Beňáková and myself that I presented at the beginning of the chapter, in which she claimed that, to her knowledge, children were taken into care in "London, in Sheffield, everywhere." However, what staff members often pointed out was that these fears about children being taken away were not based on facts, especially with regard to Glasgow, since nobody they had spoken to seemed to be personally affected or knew someone in Glasgow who was. Indeed, the number of Roma children taken into care in Glasgow was

¹⁰² It should be noted that the BBC programme construed this mainly as a major problem for the British social services rather than as an issue for Roma families.

once reported to me as low; a social worker from the local social services gave the number as "only five or six children" in 2013/14.¹⁰³ This was a key reason why for non-Roma workers and volunteers the risk of children being taken away from Roma families in Glasgow did not exist or was too small. Moreover, trust was placed in the legitimate and rational workings of the child protection services; workers and volunteers alike pointed out that all "measures and safeguards" such as strict court procedures and the role of the Commissioner for Children were in place to make sure children were separated from their families only if that was in the children's best interest. And children were only removed if their wellbeing was at risk, not just arbitrarily.

Yet what became apparent from my fieldwork notes were the various times when child protection issues were discussed as a concern by the staff and volunteers involved at the drop-in. In staff meetings and debriefings as well as in casual conversations with them, concerns about, for example, children coming or leaving the drop-in unaccompanied by parents or relatives were common. In some cases, relationships between children and their parents/relatives/carer were thought to be "loose" and difficult to establish. There were particular worries about care responsibilities with regard to younger children under the age of three. Some of the questions asked revolved around the responsibility amongst the adult attendees: "Who is responsible for these children coming in?" "Which child belongs to which parent?" "How many aunties have they got?" A registration process for attendees and children was frequently discussed and eventually introduced, allocating attendees to family groups and recording children's ages, as a means to enable workers to determine familial or other relationships between adult attendees and children. Moreover, staff and volunteers sometimes expressed their concerns about the lack of education and overall development of attending children. Some of the children who used the drop-in were thought to be "wild" and have "challenging" behaviour. Issues of "lack of concentration" and "low level of attainment" were also frequently mentioned. In one of the debriefings, for example, a volunteer expressed her disappointment that although it had been a year since the drop-in had started, there had been "no sign of progress" in the behaviour of some children. To address some of these 'developmental' issues a separate area for younger children was created to create a "calmer

¹⁰³ Interestingly, in 2012 a team within the local authority's social work services in Glasgow was created specifically to assist and deal with Roma children and families in the city.

environment" for them to "play and concentrate". Parents were also encouraged to "engage" with their children in the separate areas.

The above concerns expressed by staff members should not be interpreted as 'concrete evidence' of the risk discussed here. My argument here is that, although unacknowledged by the staff members (and thus not part of their risk evaluation), there is a connection between the worries about Roma children being taken away and the staff members' concerns about the ways in which the Roma attendees were handling their children or their care responsibilities. While the drop-in staff's views seem irrelevant and unconnected to the workings of Glasgow child protection agencies, from the perspective of the Roma attendees they constituted an everyday experience in which their parenting and child care abilities were questioned and problematised. This does not mean that the attendees felt unsafe at the drop-in; as I have described, once the story of children taken into care broke, attendees became wary of visitors whom they did not know, not however of the regular staff members. Moreover, as mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, Roma migrant families who attended the drop-in talked positively about it and valued the space, services and activities provided, especially for their children. This also became apparent in a little survey I conducted at the drop-in, in which the care and fun that their children enjoyed at the drop-in was a recurring theme.¹⁰⁴ My argument suggests that the 'panic' that ensued on the topic of children's removal from their families actually highlighted the significance that was ascribed to the family and children by these Roma, quite contrary to concerns voiced about Roma parenting issues at the drop-in. It is also noteworthy how the concerns of drop-in volunteers and staff seemed to be framed by specific ideas about children and care amongst Roma that problematised, for example, Roma children's "wildness" or their "roaming the streets" or attending the drop-in without adult supervision. To illustrate my argument, such a framing could, for example, be contrasted to recent efforts in the UK to herald the 'return of the wild child'. *Natural Childhood*, for example, a recent study by the National Trust (2012), bemoans the impact of an increasingly urban and technological life on childhood, recalling with nostalgia the times when children roamed the streets freely:

In a single generation since the 1970s, children's 'radius of activity' - the area around their home where they are allowed to roam unsupervised - has declined by almost 90%.

¹⁰⁴ See also 5.1 as well as the small survey in Appendix B regarding the attendees' evaluation of the drop-in.

In 1971, 80% of seven- and eight-year-olds walked to school, often alone or with their friends, whereas two decades later fewer than 10% did so - almost all accompanied by their parents.

Running errands used to be a way of life; yet today, two out of three ten-year-olds have never been to a shop or park by themselves. A poll commissioned by the Children's Society revealed that almost half of all adults questioned thought the earliest age that a child should be allowed out unsupervised was 14 - a far cry from just a generation ago, when ten-year-olds would have had more freedom than a teenager does nowadays (National Trust 2012, p. 5).

While in this account, roaming free for children is promoted as 'natural' and important for children's development and well-being, a lost 'way of life' that must be restored, the same children's activity in the context of a densely populated inner-city area was discussed rather differently in the case of the Roma families at the drop-in: as a sign of parents' neglect or disinterest, or the children's wildness. From the vantage point of the Roma families, their experiences at the drop-in seemed like a poignant reminder that even an informal drop-in that was generally supportive, friendly and welcoming towards them would display unease with how their children behaved or were looked after. Only worse could be expected from social care services.

5.4 Conclusion: Risk and positionality

By recontextualising the concern about children being taken into care I have, inevitably, 'rewritten' the case: at this point, my presentation of the case at the beginning of the chapter (section 5.1) can be read as the framework in which the drop-in staff understood the case; from it being triggered by the Slovak and Czech media coverage of a single case in London, the misinformation created by an unfortunate mix of rumours and privacy rules under the UK child protection system, Roma migrants' misunderstanding of social services in the UK and what looked like exaggerated and irrational reactions to an unjustified panic. Crucially, this framework is based on an erroneous concept of risk as I have discussed in 5.2. In section 5.3 my analysis has referred to knowledges beyond what is commonly seen as 'facts' and introduced past and present experiences of Roma families as relevant for their risk perception; in other words, this section has tried to set out the different framework through which they interpreted the situation. By doing so, I have shown that the definition and acknowledgement

of risk is a contested process. As Beck reminds us, practices of maximising, dramatising, minimising or denying risk, here, for example, in the form of the seemingly sensationalist account by the Slovak and Czech media, the rumours amongst Roma families about children being sold to paying adopting families or the straightforward dismissal of these by the drop-in staff, are a common part of such a process of contestation. Such points are further elaborated in Mary Douglas' cultural perspective on risk which helps to destabilise our taken-for-granted understanding of risk as a rational calculation regarding anticipated dangers but emphasises its ethnocentric nature. I am not claiming here that those Roma families who expressed fear of their children being removed from their families by the UK social services should be considered as non-Western others who have no sense of risk. Instead, I have attempted to show that there is no 'objective' reason to disqualify knowledges other than quantifiable evidence. Furthermore, Douglas' observation of risk as being closely connected with blame draws our attention to issues of positionality.

I argue that disputing or denying the risk in question here entails a two-fold blame put on Roma families: on the one hand, blame is located with them for not understanding the system and thus acting irrationally. On the other hand, the staff members' assurances that the social services do not arbitrarily remove children from their families squarely places blame on the parents affected in such cases. In contrast, the claim by Roma families that such risk existed defined the UK social services that "targeted" them as the source of this danger and thus dismissed any potential responsibility on their part. On both sides, the notion of risk was used to channel views and build consensus around the respective versions of the case. What my analysis points at is that from the Roma families' point of view and according to their knowledge, the risk of being separated from their children existed or was real not because they misunderstood the British system, or did not speak English and were acting irrationally (as the staff members were interpreting it), but, inversely, because they did not speak English and felt they lacked the means and the power to protect themselves against any actions or measures that disadvantaged or discriminated against them. More specifically, it reflects the positionality of those who have learnt to anticipate the worst because of an extended history of violence against them, but also in the face of ongoing and (perhaps more subtle) forms of prejudice and bias in Glasgow. I understand positionality as an interplay of social status categories which one identifies with or is ascribed to (e.g. gender, ethnicity, class) and one's

individual experience. Or as Bettez puts it: "Our positionalities - how we see ourselves, how we are perceived by others, and our experiences - influence how we approach knowledge, what we know, and what we believe we know" (2014, pp. 3-4).

As much as positionality shapes both the production and our interpretation of knowledge, it is also crucial for our understanding and management of risk: the non-Roma staff who were puzzled by what they perceived as rumours and panic were not ill-meaning and did not seem to intentionally portray those who acted to mitigate the risk as ignorant or irrational. However, their outright refusal of such risk can be read as being borne out of an individual or collective lack of similar experiences of oppression as well as their assumed higher position in the social hierarchy with the authority to define for themselves and others what is accepted as a risk and what is not. Likewise, I am not arguing that all these Roma families were fixed in their identities as victims; rather, I suggest that the risk perception and actions taken upon this perception varied in relation to one's positionality. I have presented different ways in which people reacted to this fear, from avoiding any contact with authorities, withdrawing children from certain services, being alert to/wary of strangers, or simply sharing and discussing their concerns. To use Adams' (1995) term, one could presume that these differences had to do with varying 'risk thermostats'. In any case, I argue, their behaviour was far from 'irrational'; rather, it emphasises peoples' agency in the face of uncertainty as they try to mitigate possible adversities within the means and situations which they can control. Finally, even though the risk discussed here appears very specific and affected only a certain group of people amongst my research informants, it may be useful in broader terms as it reminds us of the ways in which what we accept as risk may be preconfigured by our own (cultural, individual) assumptions and imageries of the unknown. My contribution is that in order to understand risks that migrants face in the cities and localities in which they live it is necessary to critically revisit our own claims to knowledge and to recontextualise migrants' fears and concerns in specific histories, experiences, and knowledges.

Chapter 6: Making immigrants out of citizens

The preceding chapters dealt with various aspects of support and services provided by local third-sector organisations and groups to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow. In this chapter, I turn to their experiences in relation to the British welfare state. Rather than attempting to provide a comprehensive picture of how these migrants draw on the various welfare services and benefits provided by different state agencies, I focus my analysis on specific problems that my research participants experienced when seeking or claiming welfare support. Firstly, I begin by introducing the notion of "*zkancelovali*", a Czech/Slovak-English word invention, and draw out its meaning in relation to notions of insecurity in my informants' everyday life. Then, I contextualise these experiences and locate them within the wider transformations of the British welfare state under a neoliberal government. Secondly, drawing on Wacquant's conceptualisation of the advent of the punitive state as well as, more broadly, on anthropological perspectives on statecraft, I suggest an analytical perspective to explore the nexus of welfare, state and migration in everyday encounters and experiences specific to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in my field. Thirdly, extending Wacquant's insights I argue that my informants' encounters with social welfare providers can be considered not only as part of state-making but also, more specifically, as constitutive of nation-building processes. I conclude by interpreting these processes as turning citizens into immigrants and briefly consider the scope of my findings.

6.1 "They cancelled the papers"

Zkancelovali was a word that I came across frequently in my conversations with research informants and which I also heard repeatedly in the context of my fieldwork at Groundworks and the drop-in. This term is intriguing as it exists neither in Slovak nor in Czech. It derives from the English word 'to cancel' and is formed in accordance with the Slovak and Czech conjugation of a verb in the 3rd person plural in the past tense. A common expression that I encountered was, for example, *zkancelovali papiere* ("they cancelled the papers"). Although sometimes the word was used in wider contexts, such as when a bank rejected someone's

application for a new account, *zkancelovali* was mainly used with reference to state support. It seemed a blanket term to refer to various kinds of negative responses from authorities, such as when applications were rejected, benefits payments suspended or stopped. That Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants have developed a technical term to talk about rejections or suspensions of their applications or claims and used it widely hinted at the regularity of such experiences. The recurring theme of *zkancelovali* during my fieldwork in 2012 brought to my attention linkages between welfare provision and interactions with state agencies and peoples' worries and fears about their social benefits claims being rejected or stopped.

Amongst the informants who expressed such worries was Milan Lačný, a 33-year old man from eastern Czech Republic. Mr Lačný was receiving state financial support in the form of tax credits¹⁰⁵ that complemented his factory job income, and losing this support was his greatest worry: "The worst thing that could happen is that, God forbid (*nedajbože*), something happens and they stop the money. What if they stop the money? You don't have anything to live on", he fretted. Being the sole person working in his family of four, the income generated from his employment was barely enough to meet the everyday expenses and essential needs of the household, so the subsidies that the Lačnýs received were vital to their household budget. Mr Lačný worked as a butcher in a meat factory located in the town of East Kilbride, just outside Glasgow, and was paid the minimum wage (£6.08 per hour). He usually worked three to four days, amounting to a minimum of 24 hours a week, which qualified him for both Working and Child Tax Credits. Although his job entailed a degree of uncertainty, as he was employed through a job agency rather than directly by the factory, he was still content about the fact that he had held down a job for a relatively long time (five years), and this had provided some sort of stability to his household budget and family life:¹⁰⁶ "When you have a job and wages come in to your account on the exact date, plus the benefits payment, and everyone in your family is healthy, and everything works as it should, it works [i.e. things are

¹⁰⁵ Tax credits are government financial subsidies that are awarded to people on low income. These include two types: *Child Tax Credit* (CTC) and *Working Tax Credit* (WTC). A person may qualify for CTC if he or she is responsible for at least one child or young person, and may qualify for WTC if he or she is on a low income and works above a minimum threshold of 24 hours per week. (Further information about tax credits and a detailed list of other relevant social security benefits can be found in Appendix C.)

¹⁰⁶ In the context when many of his fellow Czech- and Slovak- speaking migrants had lost their factory jobs in the aftermath of the financial crisis (2007-2008) and finding new employment had become difficult especially for those with few English language skills like him, one can understand that even under difficult circumstances Mr Lačný still felt himself to be in a 'privileged' position. Chapter 3 provides a more in-depth discussion of issues around employment-related insecurities.

going well]", he explained. However, sometimes not everything was "working as it should", and the delicate stability or balance that Mr Lačný was relying on had been threatened previously. Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the UK tax authority, had stopped his Tax Credits payments twice in the past. On both occasions he had been asked to provide an extended list of around thirty items of additional information and documentation about himself and his family members as part of a process of checks on his claim. With the help of the local law centre and Groundworks he had in both cases managed to gather the required information and documentation and "fortunately", he said, HMRC had re-activated his payments, ending several weeks of insecurity.

6.1.1 Social welfare as a 'game of chance'

Yet despite considering himself "fortunate" to have had his payments reinstated on both occasions, it became clear in our conversations that these experiences had left Mr Lačný feeling anxious that "something would happen" and the HMRC would stop the payments again in the future. As I observed during my fieldwork, there were many others who had experienced situations of *zkancelovali* and shared Mr Lačný's anxiety and insecurity. Both at the drop-in and at Groundworks, several people asked for appointments to enquire about their benefit payments which had been delayed, suspended or stopped. The prevalence of welfare payment suspensions was also confirmed to me by the support workers at Groundworks; referring to their individual monitoring records of regular service users, they pointed out that it was difficult to think of any individuals who had not had their claims rejected or payments stopped at least once. The regularity with which complex cases involving "cancellations" were referred by Groundworks to the local legal centre further corroborates this.¹⁰⁷

In one of the advice sessions, for example, I witnessed a woman in her mid thirties who, upon completing her benefit application form, asked the support worker: "What do you think, will they cancel my application?" The form that she had come to complete was in relation to her

¹⁰⁷ Complex cases included all those that required legal advice which Groundworks staff were unqualified to provide, e.g., for lodging formal appeals, legal representation in courts.

Housing Benefit which had been suspended.¹⁰⁸ The form required the woman to provide more information on and evidence for specific gaps in her employment history and "what she had lived on" during such periods. But like many others who attended the Groundworks service, she was contracted only for casual and temporary work through a recruitment agency and was not continuously employed. This made the provision of information required by the local authority difficult as the agency operated a '(re-)hire and fire' policy towards its workers. People would be called in for work but their contracts immediately terminated once that particular job was completed, which meant that P45 letters¹⁰⁹ were issued every couple of weeks, even though these workers, in practice, stayed on their books as they were 'rehired' once work became available. This resulted in these migrants having very fragmented work histories, which was also apparent in their payslips. The recruitment agency in this case refused to provide any confirmation for times when people were laid off; they would only issue a confirmation for those weeks in which the individual had been called in for work. Unable to obtain any proof, the support worker wrote a letter explaining these gaps and that the woman and her family had lived on Child Tax Credit payments and the support of other family members during these periods. But this response was deemed insufficient by the authorities who once again requested additional information, thus causing further delay to the benefit payment and distress about mounting rent arrears.

What the above case highlights are the difficulties experienced especially by those migrants who were involved in insecure and casual employment. Here one can see how the mitigating effect that social security benefits historically were meant to have on insecure life situations of claimants were invalidated whenever "cancellations" occurred. What is more, the inability or failure to provide "proof" of one's financial situation with regard to gaps in employment was often treated with suspicion by authorities accessing welfare claims. This is how claimants and staff members understood what they felt were unreasonable demands that authorities placed on applicants in order to qualify for benefits. For example, as support workers at Groundworks and others project workers in Glasgow mentioned, in some cases individuals had been asked to provide proof of their arrival date in the UK in the form of their original plane or bus tickets,

¹⁰⁸ Housing Benefit is a form of social security benefit that is means-tested and thus depends on the claimant's income and personal circumstances.

¹⁰⁹ P45 is an official letter given to an employee upon termination of his/her employment. The letter, which contains details about the income earned and the amount of tax paid during his/her employment, is then usually passed to the subsequent employer or other relevant agencies.

even though people had arrived several years earlier. Just as migrants were increasingly asked to provide extensive and sometimes very specific information in order to qualify for or re-activate their benefit payments, what I noticed during my fieldwork was how this, in turn, multiplied potential reasons for welfare authorities to reject someone's application or stop or suspend a payment for substantial periods of time.

The case of Lucia Zelenáková demonstrates another aspect of the link between social security and insecurity. As soon as she entered the meeting room at Groundworks for an advice session, she begged the support worker: "Can you please call the Job Centre? They have stopped my [Jobseeker's Allowance] payment and I don't know why!" What is more, the suspension of this benefit meant the automatic suspension of another, as her Housing Benefit payment had also been stopped for two weeks. After calming the visibly distressed Ms Zelenáková down, the support worker picked up the phone and called the Job Centre to enquire on her behalf. While waiting to be connected, the worker asked her if she had attended her scheduled appointments with the Job Centre, to which she gave an affirmative reply. The support worker then asked the Job Centre staff about the benefit suspension and what the reasons were. The Job Centre employee replied that they had suspended the payments because "Ms Zelenáková hadn't been looking for work", but that they would now put the payments "straight back on". No further explanations were given. Once Ms Zelenáková had left the room, the support worker explained to me that this was a typical case of a benefit suspension in which payments (in this case Jobseeker's Allowance) had been stopped without the claimant being made aware of it. Those affected and support workers treated this and similar cases as instances of arbitrary "cancellations". In this case, the decision to stop the payment had been made to the surprise and distress of the claimant who was not given any notice or explanation as to why the payment had been stopped and then reinstated without further action other than getting in touch with the Job Centre.

Under such circumstances, it was not surprising that informants talked about "luck" with regard to benefit payments, as if welfare was ruled by a game of chance rather than a legal right owing to their status as EU citizens. The practical implications of *zkancelovali*, such as running up debts, having to invest time and effort in obtaining paperwork, or running a household on reduced incomes for weeks or months, then appeared as a streak of "bad luck".

More importantly, experiencing 'the system' as irrational in its administrative requirements and decisions called into question the very security it was meant to provide: not only were insecurities triggered as a result of "cancellations" as stated above, but from the perspective of those relying on state support, insecurity had become an intrinsic part of the entire welfare system.

6.1.2 Welfare reforms in the UK: from security to conditionality to sanctions

The widespread "cancellations" and experiences of insecurity amongst research informants that I have described in the preceding section are part of wider and ongoing changes and transformations in the UK welfare system. Importantly, I conducted my fieldwork throughout 2012, at a time when various, partly contradictory developments with regard to welfare entitlements of A8 nationals were taking place. On the one hand, transitional restrictions on access to benefits for Czech and Slovak nationals had just expired in the previous year, giving them, in theory, the same legal rights to state support and public funds in the UK as other EU nationals. At the same time, with the current UK coalition government coming to power in 2010, the already widely negative public and political discourse around immigration (Anderson 2008) reached new heights, perhaps most poignantly signified by the trope of "benefit tourism" being declared a key concern in the government's policy-making (Hough and Whitehead 2011).¹¹⁰ Furthermore, social welfare provision by the British state became highly prominent on the political agenda as well as in public discourse; most notably, the introduction of the Welfare Reform Act by the current Coalition government in March 2012 was touted as the single most significant reform of the welfare state in sixty years. A far-reaching piece of legislation aimed at "simplifying the existing system and making sure work pays" (Duncan Smith 2014),¹¹¹ the Act was the result of a continuous focus of the current UK government, which had come to power in 2010, on reducing the welfare bill and tackling what it called "welfare dependency" and "worklessness" (unpaginated). Prior to the Act becoming law in 2012, "tougher penalties" had already been introduced for benefit claimants, the effect of

¹¹⁰ Similar concerns underpinned both the introduction of 'transitional measures' by the UK government as well as a significant part of the existing empirical literature assessing post-accession migrants' impact on the British welfare state which I discussed in chapter 1, section 1.1.1.

¹¹¹ Simplification entails combining various benefits into one single payment which is called Universal Credit.

which is also visible in the significant increase in the number of sanctions imposed on people receiving welfare support. For example, Webster (2013) found that the number of people having their Jobseeker's Allowance sanctioned rose considerably from 500,000 in 2009 to 860,000 in 2013, the latter figure amounting to one claim in five being sanctioned. Although benefit sanctions have intensified since the start of the Conservative-led Coalition government, it is worth noting that the introduction of such measures and, connected with it, the aim of cutting welfare predate this period.

Various researchers have identified the late 1970s and early 1980s as the beginning of a crucial period that marked a significant shift in welfare provision in the UK and elsewhere (Korpi and Palme 2003; Starke 2006). Under the leadership of the Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the UK and the Republican President Ronald Reagan in the US, both governments argued that the welfare system had become "a *source* of social and economic problems instead of a solution" (Starke 2006, p. 105, emphasis in original). In addition, it was argued that having a large welfare state was not only difficult to sustain financially but also a threat to individual empowerment and freedom (Korpi and Palme 2003). This marked the launch of neoliberal policies based on ideas of "deregulation, privatization, and withdrawal of the state from many areas of social provision" (Harvey 2005, p. 2). Adopting a *laissez-faire* approach, the then Conservative UK government started to restructure the welfare system and cut welfare expenditure with the goal of diminishing the size and interventionist role of the state. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, neoliberal policies and what has been termed 'welfare retrenchment' in social policy and welfare studies became dominant (Starke 2006): "a reduction of welfare state generosity, i.e. lowering of the level or conditionality of benefits for the unemployed, the sick, the disabled and the elderly" (Schumacher and Vis 2012, p. 3). Despite a change in administration, the aim of putting an "end to the Big government", called for by US President Clinton in his State of the Union address to Congress in 1996, was also adopted in the UK by the New Labour government which came to power in 1997, as well as by other governments elsewhere in Europe such as in France, Spain and Italy (cited in Wacquant 2009, p. 42). With regard to the UK, the government stepped up the privatisation of public services while simultaneously extending the element of conditionality from the unemployed to other categories such as single parents and the disabled. Conditionality referred to mechanisms that tied the provision of benefits to the

behavioural compliance of claimants, for example, the requirement to evidence a minimum number of job applications in a specified time period. With responsibility (and blame) shifting from the state to the individual and reframing social problems as individual failings, the attention turned away from social guarantees (Rustin and Chamberlayne 2002) and increasingly towards sanctions (Griggs and Evans 2010).

As already mentioned, the current UK Coalition government has continued with this neoliberal tradition and introduced measures to cut the welfare budget even further, while simultaneously introducing more conditions and sanctions for benefit recipients. These sweeping measures have received a significant amount of criticism (and continue to do so), especially from civil society campaigners and organisations. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, a prominent British social policy research and development charity, for example, has published several reports in the last two years detailing the financial, social and emotional impacts of these reforms.¹¹² Even a recent independent review on benefit sanctions for JSA claimants on mandatory back-to-work schemes, commissioned by the Department of Work and Pensions, found that the most vulnerable were affected the most by such measures (Oakley 2014). Yet despite the criticism voiced in different sectors of society, the major political parties as well as large sections of the mainstream media remain, to a large degree, supportive of these reforms and the accompanying strong rhetoric (Oakley 2014, p. 6), leaving the current government relatively unchallenged to press ahead with cutting welfare.

6.2 State and welfare

The "cancellations" of benefit provision and experiences of insecurities amongst the Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow that I described earlier should thus be understood in this wider historical and contemporary context of ongoing transformations. Continuous and radical reform of the UK welfare state has given rise to and consolidated an individualised

¹¹² For more details on these reports see: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/search/site/welfare%20reform>. There have also been various other studies documenting and predicting the impact of the 2012 Welfare Reform Act and the austerity measures introduced by the Coalition government, for example, Beatty and Fothergill (2013) on the effect of these reforms on local and regional level, Williams *et al.* (2013) on housing, Duffy (2013) on disabled people, etc. Providing an overview of these studies and/or a discussion of the (actual or potential) impact of the Act is, however, neither the focus nor the aim of this chapter.

notion of welfare. Often, this direction of change has been interpreted as a 'rolling back' of the state. From this perspective, the so-called benefit sanctions are understood as resulting from cuts to welfare budgets and a diminished role of the state in people's negotiations of insecurity (Harvey 2005). Such an interpretation has, however, been rejected by Wacquant (2009) who argues that far from retreating, the state is actually becoming more invasive in people's lives. For Wacquant, what we have seen over the past three decades in many Western countries, especially the US and the UK, is a reconfiguration of the state, increasingly moving away from its social mandate and agenda to a penal one. Theoretically, rather than treating the state as a coherent, functional entity, Wacquant draws on Bourdieu's notion of the state as a bureaucratic field entailing various forces seeking to define and regulate the allocation of resources. This is illustrated by an analogy of "the Left hand" and "the Right hand" of the state; the Left hand symbolises the protective and caring side such as provision of health services, housing and welfare, whereas the Right hand is tasked with enforcement of regulations and rules and the disciplining of the population via budget cuts, economic regulations and so on. Wacquant extends this metaphor to include the police, the courts and prisons as central elements of the Right hand of the state (p. 289) and puts forth the image of a strengthening of the Right hand and a weakening of the Left hand of the state in recent years. He sees the 1990s when the New Democrats in the US and New Labour in the UK came to power as the beginnings of a period which is marked by what he calls the "punitive turn".

With regard to the UK, for example, the number of people imprisoned rose sharply between 1992 and 2004 despite a falling crime rate (p. 309). The increase in the incarceration rate is symptomatic of extended activities by the police, justice and correctional state bodies which are becoming more intrusive in the lives of the poor (p. 6). This signifies the advent of what Wacquant calls the "neoliberal government of social insecurity" in many Western countries. Under such government, the poor and unfortunate are not only expected to deal with insecurities on their own (as empowered individuals) but are punished for problems and anxieties wrought by economic restructuring and neoliberal globalisation such as fragmentation of wage labour, growth of informal and precarious working conditions and diminishing of workers' rights. Here lies the difference between Wacquant and other commentators on neoliberalism; for the former, "the invasive, expansive, and expensive penal state is not a deviation from neoliberalism but one of its constituent ingredients" (p. 308). In

other words, Wacquant understands neoliberalism not as an economic project gone wrong but as a political project facilitating and depending on the immiseration of large sections of the population, namely those deemed dangerous, deviant or dependent. He emphasises the need to reconceptualise the notion of social welfare and analyse it within a broader framework of statecraft that includes "prisonfare", that is,

the extended policy stream that responds to intensifying urban ills and assorted socio-moral turbulences by boosting and deploying the police, the courts, custodial institutions (juvenile detention halls, jails, prisons, retention centres), and their extension (probation, parole, criminal data bases and assorted systems of surveillance, supervision and profiling such as "background checks" by public officials, employers, and relators), as well as commanding images, lay and specialized idioms, and bodies of expert knowledge elaborated to depict and justify this deployment (chief amongst them the tropes of moral indignation, civic urgency, and technical efficiency) (pp. 16-17).

Crucially for my argument here, Wacquant's analysis leads us to examine my informants' various experiences and encounters with social welfare providers in Glasgow not merely within the confines of what is traditionally understood as social policy but as shaped by and informing processes of state-building. However, his account mainly remains on the societal and discursive level and does not engage in detail with the everyday and the empirical realities of statecraft as experienced by ordinary people. To fill this gap, I draw on conceptual approaches to state-making which are concerned with the routine and mundane practices and workings of the state.

This body of literature on the modern state gained momentum especially during the 1990s mainly within anthropology (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). This literature questioned the commonsensical view of the state as a discrete, institutionally and geographically fixed entity, manifest in its policies, laws and institutional system and gave rise to new conceptualisations of the state. States were now considered "powerful sites of symbolic and cultural production that are themselves always culturally represented and understood in particular ways" (p. 981). In these conceptualisations, the state was not taken for granted as empirically given but seen as a regulating force (Foucault 1991) or bureaucratic field (Bourdieu 1999) that (re-)enacts, 'stretches' and 'translates' itself into the life of people (Gupta 1995; Fuller and Benei 2001), while simultaneously regulating and containing its symbolic power. This perspective moved the attention of scholars beyond formal institutions and opened up new terrains in which the

workings and effects of the state could be examined. Studies looked, for example, at how the state is experienced and imagined by ordinary people as being both 'above society' and enclosing its population and territory; how the state makes itself felt, how it materialises in everyday life; and how it maintains its aura and secures legitimacy. Concerned with these questions, various objects of study were considered: material manifestations such as passports, identity cards, documents and files (Torpey 2000; Hansen & Stepputat 2001; Navaro-Yashin 2007), borders (Kelly 2006), roads (Harvey 2005), as well as broader themes such as terror (Aretxaga 2000), bureaucracy (Herzfeld 1992) and corruption (Gupta 1995). Alongside images of and discourses about the state, these studies drew attention to the mundane, routine practices of state agents and non-state actors and their varied interactions that happen 'on the ground', all of which was seen as constitutive of the state.

Drawing on these insights, the fieldwork data I introduced at the beginning of the chapter can be read as more detailed empirical examples of how Wacquant's notion of the punitive state variably materialises in the everyday experiences of Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants in Glasgow. The ways in which welfare is presented and framed *vis-à-vis* welfare applicants and the general public and the ways in which the state makes itself felt not only through the provision but, perhaps even more so, through the removal or suspension of welfare payments can then be thought of as illustrating how the state reproduces itself. Benefit sanctions or other (sometimes unexplained) measures by the welfare authorities seemed to have become rather 'normal', as the prevalence of anxieties around welfare provision and resulting insecurities showed. These experiences point to a strengthened 'Right hand' of the state; this is well captured in the term 'sanction' deployed in the official discourse of the government and the relevant state authorities. 'Sanction' entails an element of wrongdoing and places the blame on the benefit recipient. Interestingly, this is in contrast to how my research informants understood these events; their use of the rather neutral term 'cancellations' points to the fact that they did not perceive these suspensions or rejections as caused by their own behaviour but, instead, related to a malfunctioning of the British welfare system or the arbitrary actions of individual state agents. It is in this sense that, from the perspective of my research informants, state benefits became associated with a game of chance and, thus, as governed by (bad) luck rather than rules pertaining to welfare entitlements. In other words, the political goal of the

'lean state'¹¹³ materialised in everyday life as a 'mean' state. In some ways, however, the element of punishment remained unacknowledged by those it was imposed upon, thus resulting in hardship for those affected without actually fulfilling its supposedly 'educative' aim. Hence, while insecurities resulting from benefit sanctions are likely to be experienced more widely by benefit claimants in the UK, who find themselves being blamed and shamed for their misfortune,¹¹⁴ the theme of 'cancellations' points to specific ways in which Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants understood and interpreted the wider transformations of the British welfare system.

6.3 Nation building, welfare, and migration

So far I have set out the theme of "cancellations" and the resulting problems and fears that affected many of my informants in receipt of welfare payments. I have located these experiences within the wider context of current UK welfare reforms and indicated that they are not restricted to my research participants but are likely to be more commonly found. Likewise, on the theoretical plane, Wacquant's account of the ascent of the punitive state mentions 'immigrants' only in passing but does not analytically distinguish them from other groups within the broader category of urban poor such as the working poor, the unemployed, the disabled, the destitute. In the subsequent sections, I will focus on what is specific to the migrants who participated in my research and thus extend Wacquant's argument to suggest that my informants' encounters with social welfare providers can be interpreted not only as part of state-making but also, more specifically, as constitutive of nation-building processes. To set out my argument, I will begin by introducing further instances of everyday state-making from my data as they particularly relate to migrants in my field, namely the practice of

¹¹³ In 2013, Prime Minister David Cameron spoke about the government's aim to build "a leaner, more efficient state" on a permanent basis, pointing to "practical", economic reasons such as the budget deficit and "out-of-control" debts for pursuing such policy (Watt 2013, unpaginated).

¹¹⁴ Discourses around 'benefit scroungers' and skivers', have become commonplace, as hardly a day goes by without benefit recipients being 'targeted' by the media and politicians. 'Welfare claimant' itself has become a stigmatised category, rendering somehow obscene the idea of people relying on the state for support (Baumberg et al. 2012). The controversial documentary series *Benefit Street* (broadcast in January 2014) on Channel 4, an independent UK television broadcaster, illustrates the extent of such stigmatisation; not only are those in receipt of welfare support targeted and demonised as 'scroungers', but their situation has also become a topic for consumption: televised 'entertainment' for the public.

document retention by welfare authorities as well as face-to-face encounters with state agents at a local Job Centre in Glasgow.

6.3.1 'Documentless' citizens

Perhaps the most striking example of what was experienced as the arbitrary administration of the welfare system was the retention of identity documents such as passports, birth certificates and ID cards by the welfare authorities. As well as a completed application form for certain benefits, presenting personal identification documents to the authorities was often a part of the bureaucratic procedure that applicants had to undergo in order to have their entitlement to welfare benefits assessed. As I found during my fieldwork, applications were sometimes "cancelled" based on doubts raised by the relevant welfare authorities about the 'genuineness' of documents provided to them. On one occasion, for example, Viktor Hnilica, a 40-year old Slovak man came to Groundworks for advice on how to retrieve his Slovak ID card which – to his bewilderment - had been kept by an advisor at the Job Centre. Mr Hnilica had attended a routine appointment in relation to his unemployment assistance only to have his ID card retained by the Job Centre staff. The Nosáks, a middle-aged Czech couple, had also been affected by this practice. The couple's residence cards were held for eight months by the local Job Centre on suspicion that they were "not genuine" even though these had been issued by the UK Border Agency.

Mrs Nosáková: I had a residence card. The Scottish [authorities] did not believe it, they said it is false, invalid. Then I said to them: "Why has Liverpool [the UKBA] issued it? Why did I wait for it for half a year? Why did I send my passport there?" [...] The Job Centre told us that we are not entitled to money [Jobseekers' Allowance].

Mr Nosák: You know what the worst thing was... when we were not entitled to the money [JSA], and we were deleted from the Job Centre [system], we did not receive a penny. For eight months in a row, we went through the streets gathering scrap metal, so we could buy gas and so that my wife and I could feed ourselves. And guess how much debt I've accumulated? It was outrageous! And just because of stupid authorities.

Mrs Nosáková: I was so angry, and I had to sell the plasma [TV].

Mr Nosák: So many papers, I'd have liked to show it to you. Such a huge amount of documentation for both of us. Descriptions of why and everything. I wanted to tell this to the news... when we won the case, so that the people realized then that we were entitled to it. And what did we endure? It was awful.

This extract from a transcribed conversation with the Nosáks illustrates vividly the impact of a "cancellation" that was based on unfounded suspicions regarding their identification documents and conveys a sense of the stress and hardship the couple went through when they were left without state support for eight months. Despite longstanding efforts by their local law centre to recover these documents and urge the Job Centre to resume the processing of their claim, it was only after the intervention of a local MP that the residence cards and, eventually, the benefit payments were released.

The support workers at Groundworks confirmed that document retention was a rather frequent occurrence and happened to many people who attended the advice service. The extent of these practices was also documented and criticised in an earlier report (December 2011) conducted by a community controlled law centre based in the south of Glasgow (Paterson *et al.* 2011).¹¹⁵ The report stated that the "retention of passports [was] commonplace" (p. 6) and highlighted the unreasonable amount of time (in some cases up to two years) that the authorities held these documents without any progress in the assessment of individuals' claims. When documents were returned to the claimants, the report further pointed out, there was "no covering letter or explanation" (p. 16) provided by the authorities as to why this had happened.

The retention of identity documents by the authorities, however, did not only mean the "cancellation" of one's benefits; it also left affected migrants without personal documents - in some cases for longer periods of time - and thus unable to access other public services or travel abroad. One Slovak woman, for example, told me about the difficulties she experienced enrolling her 14 year-old daughter at the local school because their passports were being held by HMRC for several months. Also, being abroad meant for those concerned that obtaining a replacement for their passports or IDs was expensive and not a straightforward matter. UK

¹¹⁵ Although Paterson *et al.*'s report focused on Roma migrants only, as I have discussed here, document retention extended also to non-Roma individuals. (A more detailed summary of this report can also be found in chapter 1, section 1.1.4.)

authorities would forward 'suspect' documents to the Slovak or Czech embassy in London, which would then send all documents to the Ministry of the Interior in Slovakia or Czech Republic as a matter of procedure. The support workers at Groundworks routinely enquired about ID replacements with both embassies in London, which were, as one of the workers put it, "inundated with valid IDs and passports" that the UK authorities had doubted. The extent of this practice was briefly covered in the Slovak media. In August 2012, a Slovak TV correspondent reported that the Slovak Embassy in London had received as many as 385 passports and 1005 birth certificates by the UK welfare authorities within a week.¹¹⁶ In order to retrieve their IDs or passports, affected individuals in Glasgow had to first attend their embassy in London to obtain a temporary travel document, which would then enable them to travel to Slovakia or the Czech Republic and get it back from the relevant authorities there. Some, however, could not afford to travel to London, let alone further to Slovakia or the Czech Republic. In these cases, people were left in limbo, hoping that one day their documents would be returned to them by the British welfare authorities or that they would save enough money to afford the journey to London or further afield.

These practices and processes through which these migrants are dispossessed of their official identification documents give rise to what I have termed 'documentless citizens'. As noted earlier, in the UK, Slovak and Czech nationals, on paper, became entitled to the same welfare benefits on a par with UK nationals on the basis of their EU citizenship once the temporary restrictions were lifted in 2011. While EU citizenship does not substitute for national citizenship, it is directly conferred on every person holding nationality of an EU country by the *Treaty on the Functioning of the EU* which also enshrines a prohibition of discrimination based on nationality (European Commission 2012). The above experiences of document retention that emerged during my fieldwork in 2012 shine a light on how, in practice and at a relatively early stage after the restrictions expired, these migrants' entitlements to welfare benefits were variously implemented and sometimes, in effect, denied. In this sense, I employ

¹¹⁶ This short televised news clip titled *Shame for Slovaks - non-existing children were added on passports* suggested in a scandalising narrative that Slovak nationals living in the UK were getting non-existing children registered on their passports. The programme had racist undertones in that it seemed to imply, through the references to specific regions in the east of the country, that it was Slovakian Roma who were 'bringing shame on the nation'. While the programme, however, did not provide any evidence of any wrongdoing, it included a brief reference about the numbers of identification documents received by the embassy in London (*Televízia JOJ* 2012b).

the term of 'documentless citizen' to refer to a seemingly paradoxical category of citizens who are dispossessed of their official identification documents and thus become 'documentless' with adverse consequences. This notion intentionally contrasts with the term 'undocumented migrant' which is often used with reference to persons who have no (longer a) legal right to be in a specific country. Differently from the latter, Slovak and Czech nationals living in Glasgow are *de jure* granted privileged access to state provided welfare in Britain but in some cases find these rights being *de facto* nullified or inaccessible for sustained periods of time.

The making of documentless citizens, however, does not only entail the retention of people's documents and, with it, the hindrance of their access to welfare and other state services or the impediment of their movement across national borders, but it can also be read as a practice of statecraft. The important role of identification documents in relation to state formation has been highlighted by various scholars who have argued that routine bureaucratic procedures such as issuing passports or IDs for the (national) population or checking the validity of documents of foreign nationals at the border or within the country at immigration offices, are central to the functioning of the state (Torpey 2000; Hansen & Stepputat 2001; Kelly 2006; Navaro-Yashin 2007; Hull 2012). Through these kind of mundane and ordinary practices the state maintains its monopoly over controlling the movement of people across its borders and reproduces its legitimacy, affecting how it "comes to be imagined, encountered, and re-imagined by the population" (Sharma & Gupta 2006, p. 12). However, more specifically, with regard to the area of welfare provision I argue that the practice of document retention that some of my informants experienced is not only a mode of statecraft but also of nation-building. While the nowadays extensive requirements for providing documentary evidence to welfare authorities that Mr Nosák, for example, spoke about above already indicate the intricate control mechanisms employed by the state *vis-à-vis* all welfare applicants, the retention of documents illustrates a specific form of state intervention in ordinary people's lives which I assume to be particular to Czech and Slovak migrants (and perhaps nationals from the other A8 countries) in the UK.

With regard to the welfare system, decisions on individuals' benefit applications rest, *inter alia*, on their nationalities as attested and materially represented in their official identification documents. The welfare system is both a highly contested and changing field and a means

through which the state "control[s] the entrance doors to the national home of solidarity" (Wimmer 2002, p. 251), i.e. it defines the criteria for membership to the national community. Regulating access to welfare provision effects boundaries between members and non-members and thus constructs who is and who is not deserving of state care. This point is currently rather apparent with regard to persons who have come to the UK from outside the EEA countries; legally, they have no recourse to public funds such as support provided by the welfare state. For these people 'the door is shut' and can only be opened by gaining a legal status that allows them access such as through naturalisation. In contrast, as mentioned above, due to their status as EU citizens Czech and Slovak migrants in the UK enjoy, in theory, the "same rights and obligations" (European Commission 2013, unpaginated) as British citizens. While this does not mean that the former have unrestricted access to welfare support, as some restrictions, mainly in form of residency requirements still apply, overall, EU citizenship aims at 'opening the entrance doors' to the British national community for EU nationals in the UK. The ongoing, highly controversial public and political debate about EU citizens' rights to welfare in the UK already reminds us of the fragile nature of such political promises of belonging.

However, I argue, it is fruitful to look beyond the level of policy or regulation but examine the actual workings of the state as it takes place in the myriad of welfare offices around the country and through the various interactions with state agents at different levels. From such a vantage point of the specific and concrete settings and encounters with the welfare state, the experiences of document retention and its consequences that I focus on here can then be understood as calling into question or highlighting the limits of EU citizenship in Glasgow (and perhaps elsewhere) for those affected by these practices. Having one's identification documents taken away for prolonged periods of time, often without any explanation given other than that the validity of the documents was doubted, openly signals that one's membership to the national community is being challenged. Such practices split the 'us' projected in the shared notion of EU citizenship into an 'us', the British, and a 'suspect you', the other. In some ways, for Slovak and Czech citizens who enjoy freedom of movement under EU rules, the drama of the passport control at the border has been moved into the seemingly ordinary offices of welfare authorities which are increasingly taking on immigration-related roles (often without the relevant expertise). As much as through national and supranational citizenship rules, integration policy, or public discourses on Britishness, it is in those offices

that membership criteria are concretely enacted, boundaries redrawn and nation-building takes place. Rather than being able to rely on a safety net provided by the state, my informants displayed a general sense of being mistrusted and felt their entitlement as well as their sincerity being questioned by the British welfare authorities (or particular officials). Often, these feelings were framed as issues of injustice, or in Mr Nosák's words, 'people not realising that we were entitled to it'.

6.3.2 "*Ideme na policiu*" ("We're going to the police")

In the previous section I discussed how particular bureaucratic practices that my research participants experienced in relation to welfare authorities are implicated in processes of nation-building. Here, I focus on face-to-face encounters between Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants and state agents by providing a more detailed account of their interaction at a local Job Centre. Alongside HMRC, the Job Centre was the other main authority that informants mentioned in relation to their benefit "cancellations". Most communication with HMRC, or "Revenue" as informants called it, was carried out on the phone or in writing, and some informants had difficulties coming to terms with a service that lacked a reference point or building where one could go and talk to someone directly, unlike in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. On the other hand, the services offered by Job Centres to those looking for work were available face-to-face and locally. But while Job Centres were approachable and perhaps provided the more 'conventional' type of state support that Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow may have been familiar with, in practice these were also places that generated a great deal of anxiety and stress for some migrants. As I mentioned earlier, several individuals had their payments suspended or stopped, or their documents retained by the Job Centre, while various others spoke repeatedly about "bad stories" and the "awful treatment" that they had received, especially at one of the local Job Centres that was located a short walk from the Groundworks service in the south of Glasgow.

I witnessed some of these events first hand when I accompanied one of the informants, Martina Třípková, a 50-year old woman from a town in eastern Slovakia, to her scheduled appointments at this particular Job Centre (May/June 2012). I had come to know Mrs Třípková

at Groundworks, which she regularly attended for help, and she was one of those who had repeatedly complained about difficulties when attending the Job Centre. She had only recently arrived in Glasgow (2010) and spoke little English, so Mrs Třípková was particularly grateful when I offered to interpret for her during her appointments. Often, she explained, her 15-year old daughter would accompany her when attending the Job Centre, which meant that the daughter would miss school as a result of her mother's (fortnightly) appointments. I met Mrs Třípková in front of the Job Centre as usual. This time she was waiting outside the building together with her friend, a Slovak woman who looked of a similar age to Mrs Třípková. Their appointments with the employment adviser were scheduled at the same time, and as they lived in the same area, they often walked together to the Centre. As we entered the building, Mrs Třípková showed her appointment card to the security guard who asked her to wait in the waiting area until her name was called by an advisor. I explained that I was there to interpret for Mrs Třípková, as she spoke little English. Approving my request, the security guard asked us to make our way to the waiting area. In the waiting area, Mrs Třípková kept scanning the various advisers' desks in the open-plan office and began to quietly 'prepare herself'. She tried to anticipate which adviser would be calling her. "That man sitting over there, he is nice (*on je dobrý*)", she observed, hoping that he would "take" (*brat'*) her again. "The blonde woman over here", she continued, "is also nice - she has taken me before". "That woman to the right," she said lowering her voice, "she is really bad". Visibly tensing up, Mrs Třípková was dreading to see her or any of the other "bad" ones. Luckily for her, on that day it was one of the "nice" advisers who called Mrs Třípková to his desk. As we both approached the desk I explained to the advisor that I was there to interpret for Mrs Třípková. The adviser nodded but asked me to sit a few meters back, adding that he would call me if needed. As the session began, the advisor asked Mrs Třípková for her date of birth and address. But while she was able to give her date of birth in English, she struggled with giving her full address to the advisor. Blushing and with a trembling voice, she turned back to me and asked me in Slovak to explain to the advisor that she could not remember the flat number. At this point, the advisor asked me to join them, which I did. With Mrs Třípková looking much calmer now, we continued the session with me acting as an interpreter.

The advisor continued by asking Mrs Třípková whether she was doing an English language course, to which she replied that she would like to, but unfortunately there were no places left

on the English course provided by a local organisation. She then took a piece of paper out of her bag which confirmed that she was on the waiting list and showed it to the adviser. Next, the adviser asked her whether she was interested in a job vacancy as a cleaner. "Yes, I would do any job", she answered eagerly. The cleaning job was based at a university, the adviser explained, and required the completion of an online application. "Do you have internet at home?", he enquired. Mrs Třípková said that she did not own a computer herself, but her daughter would be able to help her as she had access to the internet at school. The advisor printed out the job information pack and handed it over to her. Lastly, picking up a piece of paper from his desk, he asked me to explain to Mrs Třípková that the government had changed the rules with regard to the travelling distance to work for unemployed persons like her. From now on, he read out, the distance that jobseekers were expected to travel to look for work would be extended from 1 hour to 1 hour and a half from their home. Mrs Třípková nodded, signed the paper and the attendance register and we left.

On the way out, we went past Mrs Třípková's friend who had been sitting with the woman who Mrs Třípková had referred to as the "bad" advisor. Visibly distressed, her friend noticed us leaving and asked me if I could interpret for her and explain to the advisor why she had changed her address recently. However, as I approached their desk to offer my help, the advisor gestured to me to leave the building and instantly called the security guard who ushered me outside. We waited for Mrs Třípková's friend outside and once she came through the doors the three of us walked slowly back towards their homes talking about what had happened inside. As Mrs Třípková's friend told us, the advisor had threatened to stop her payment because of a change of address which she allegedly had not reported. She had tried to explain the reason for this change but had found it difficult to do so because her English was limited, which is why she had tried to get me involved. Once we had left the building, the case worker had continued to ask her questions about the change of address in an increasingly annoyed and loud tone and had demanded answers which Mrs Třípková's friend could not give in a way the case worker understood. What felt very much like a hostile interrogation lasted for around 20 minutes. In the end, "luckily", she said, her benefit payment (Jobseeker's Allowance) "had not been cancelled this time". But Mrs Třípková's friend looked exhausted and almost in tears; the appointment which was meant to offer her support and advice to find employment had been a gruelling experience for her.

Such distressing encounters at the local Job Centres seemed rather commonplace and had earned the latter the title "the police": "*Ideme na policiu*" ("We are going to the police") was an expression I often heard when people talked about attending the Job Centre for an appointment, not without a pinch of sarcasm. This related to claimants' experiences of interrogation-style encounters with the Job Centre staff, in which they were made to feel like suspects or at fault, always under pressure to prove themselves 'worthy' of state support. As I have discussed in the previous sections, people were, for example, required to produce extensive documentation for all kinds of life events and situations, which can be understood as the increasingly punitive element in the welfare system as the state shadows ever more areas of people's lives. Here, this is not only signified by the presence of security guards on the premises of a service aimed at supporting the unemployed. We can discern a kind of bureaucratic-logic-as-control at work, to which the claimants are already accustomed, illustrated by the way Mrs Trpková had brought with her a letter from a local organisation to verify her account. Similarly, in her friend's case, what seemed like an ordinary occurrence, i.e. her change of address, was treated by the Job Centre worker as a suspicious act, immediately turning the conversation to potentially sanctionable behaviour. Even though these two interactions that day seemed to be contrasting in their tone and intensity, both show how the state materialises itself and exerts its authority through and in such concrete face-to-face encounters with individual state agents. It also shows how, in practice, the state is not a uniform entity but individual state agents may represent and embody the state differently via their performances (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). Mrs Trpková's differentiation between 'good' and 'bad' adviser captures this point rather well. Spaces that are recognisably organised and dominated by the state also contribute to such statecraft; here, for example, the way the staffed desks were positioned in the open plan office in close proximity to each other and without any separating structures, so that interactions at the desks were hardly private and visually exposed to persons sitting in the waiting areas. In these respects, the above encounters involving various facets of control and threatened sanctions, anxieties and pressures might resemble what jobseekers around the country experienced at a time of increasingly neoliberal policies, irrespective of whether they were migrants or not.

What is important to note, however, is that amongst the affected migrants and support staff at the various third sector organisations in Glasgow that I was in contact with there was great

bewilderment and indignation about the fact that all too often Job Centre staff seemed to disregard the public sector equality duty to provide language interpreting when a claimant "cannot communicate adequately in English" and he or she "cannot or does not want to provide their own interpreter" (DWP 2011, p. 4). As in the case of Mrs Trpková, this led some Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants with limited English language knowledge to use their children as interpreters whenever possible, as the outcomes of these appointments (continued benefit payments or sanctions) were often crucial for the livelihood of whole families. Relying on children for interpretation not only meant that the latter missed school but that those children also experienced first-hand their parents' difficulties and anxieties at the Job Centres. In the case of Mrs Trpková's friend, on the other hand, neither did she have a family member to help her nor was I permitted to support her as an interpreter. Even though the case worker she was allocated to that day must have realised early on in their interaction that the claimant had difficulties expressing herself in English, the staff member apparently chose to carry on with her 'advice session' regardless, threatening sanctions and increasing the pressure on Mrs Trpková's friend the longer this situation went on. Clearly, the advice worker in this case seemed not to care very much about developing an understanding of her client's circumstances or needs; rather, I argue, the encounter can be read as a "degradation ceremony"¹¹⁷ (Garfinkel 1956, p. 420) in which the claimant was made to look like a fool, 'exposed' as deficient and lacking English language skills, as the one not understanding and possibly breaking the (bureaucratic) rules. The transformation of Mrs Trpková's friend's public identity which took place in a quasi-public way, i.e. audible and visible for everyone in the open plan office, left her feeling humiliated and shaken. More specifically, since in this process of status degradation the spotlight was put on her lack of English language skills and related 'deficiencies', she was marked out not only as a "Failed Citizen" (Anderson 2013)¹¹⁸ but, additionally, as 'different', as 'the other'. It showed her up as not belonging and thus undeserving of care, which is a central part of nation-building processes in which boundaries

¹¹⁷ Garfinkel (1956) defines degradation ceremonies as the following: "Any communicative work between persons, whereby the public identity of an actor is transformed into something looked on as lower in the local scheme of social types" (p. 420). Housley (2009), in his discussion of the notion of degradation ceremonies uses welfare benefit eligibility interviews as one example of such processes, next to the "cross-examination, political hearings, basic trainings, reality T.V. shows" (p. 77).

¹¹⁸ The notion of the "Failed Citizen" denotes "those individuals and groups who are imagined as incapable of, or fail to live up to, liberal ideals. It includes a wide range of people, folk devils like the Benefit Scrounger with too many children [...]. The Failed Citizen is both a disappointment and threat to the local community and/or the nation. They have a problem of culture, fecklessness, and ill-discipline leading to them making the wrong choices and also to welfare dependence" (Anderson 2013, p. 4).

are drawn between citizen and non-citizen/immigrant. In this way, her (abstract) entitlement to welfare support was transformed into some kind of 'favour', graciously bestowed upon her by the case worker. Mrs Trpková's friend's interpretation that she had been "lucky this time" not to have her benefits stopped reflects such degradation effects of her encounters with the British welfare authorities.

6.4 Conclusion: Making immigrants out of citizens

This chapter has focused on state support provided to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow. Based on my fieldwork data I introduced the term "*zkancelovali*" as signifying a particular set of experiences amongst my research informants related to the refusal, suspension or termination of state provided welfare. My interest in the semiotics of "*zkancelovali*" resulted in the intermediate finding that the research participants seemed to understand the British welfare system as a 'game of chance', unpredictable and highly dependent on 'good or bad luck'. I discussed how their experiences with major (national) welfare providers, i.e. HMRC and the DWP, were marked by both material consequences and resulting hardships as well as a strong sense of insecurity and anxiety pertaining to their everyday lives. I considered these experiences as more widely shared across the UK population at the time, and thus as not only affecting Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants, by discussing the wider changes and transformations of the British welfare state in the context of contemporary neoliberal currents. Wacquant's conceptualisation of the relation between state and welfare combined with anthropological perspectives on the everyday workings of the state were considered useful here to grasp my informants' experiences more fully as part of state-making processes. At the same time, this led me to the question of what was specific to my research participants' experiences with the British welfare state; to that end, I discussed two different modes in which the welfare state materialised itself, namely bureaucratic practices that gave rise to 'documentless citizens', and the role of English language interpretation in face-to-face encounters between welfare claimants and state agents, more specifically at a local Job Centre.

These various aspects, I argue here, amount to processes in which Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants encountering the welfare state in Glasgow were transformed from citizens

to immigrants, or to be more precise, from EU citizens with certain entitlements in the UK to suspect outsiders who were made to feel that their privileges could be questioned and withdrawn at any time. In other words, in and through the practices of retaining identity documents and in and through degradation ceremonies their membership-through-citizenship could practically be invalidated and subjected to *zkancelovanie*. As I argued, these modes of statecraft entail nation-building processes in which boundaries between 'us' and 'them' were redrawn locally and in the realm of the everyday.¹¹⁹

Finally, it should be noted that I am not arguing here that all Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants in Glasgow were subjected to these negative experiences, in every instance and all the time, as should be clear, for example, from my description in the final section of Mrs Trpková's encounter with another case worker. Indeed, Mrs Trpková's whispered 'introduction' of the various case workers on duty at the Job Centre, telling the 'good' from the 'bad', indicates that experiences varied. However, even when one's appointment went smoothly or one's benefit payments were reinstated this was generally attributed to "good luck" (e.g. in getting a 'nice' advisor) and it did little to diminish what appeared to be a strong sense of anxiety with regard to the welfare authorities. Another point can be made with regard to the question of who was affected by the above trajectories: in relation to suspicions of forged identity documents the assumption can be made that, theoretically, all non-British applicants could be subjected to this practice. However, the recent lifting in 2011 of the restrictions on 'A8 migrants' access to state-provided welfare might have contributed to what emerged as a widespread problem amongst Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow, as welfare case-workers were unfamiliar with several 'new' national identity documents. In addition, preconceptions and prejudices against East Europeans in general might have also played a role. Regarding practices of status degradation in face-to-face encounters with state agents, it seems likely that individuals who appear to be vulnerable due to their limited knowledge of the

¹¹⁹ This making of EU immigrants out of EU citizens is also captured, on the discursive level, in a comment made by EU commissioner Cecilia Malmström in 2011 in response to a letter to the Council of the European Union, co-signed by the UK, which expressed concern about 'EU immigrants' and their negative impacts on national welfare systems, schools, and health care. In her comment, she particularly criticised the signatory governments for their populist language and highlighted that the concept of 'EU immigrant' does not exist: "They're mixing apples and pears quite freely. They're mixing up internal EU movement with immigration. They're listing problems without giving a single figure, a single concrete example, and want us to change the principal of free movement" (The Local 2013).

English language will be exposed to such performative reminders of their non-belonging and their unwantedness. It would, of course, need further research to determine whether these experiences continue to this date and whether they are found at similar levels across various nationalities and beyond the locality of Glasgow.

Chapter 7: Exploring potentialities of care in Glasgow and beyond

The preceding empirical chapters have explored various aspects of insecurities and risks as they pertained to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow. The empirical data introduced and interpreted in each chapter hinted at different forms of support that the research informants drew on in the face of uncertainties and threats, but I did not yet systematically examine the various ways in which the individual migrants dealt with problems and risks and arranged security. So far, support and services provided by state and third sector organisations in the city were at the centre of my discussions. In this final empirical chapter, I shift and extend the analytical scope: drawing on an expansive notion of social security that does not prioritise state-provided nor material forms of support and assistance (Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 1994; 2007; Read and Thelen 2007; Kay 2011),¹²⁰ I look not only at institutional but also at informal ways of providing and receiving care and building security. This, in turn, invites a consideration of various ideas, resources, and relationships that come to play a role in my research informants' negotiations of social security in Glasgow and beyond. These are discussed with regard to the literature on transnational practices and care arrangements in the context of migration.

The chapter is divided into three parts: in the first, I focus on issues around healthcare, in particular the informants' experiences of care provided by health services in Glasgow and their considerations of seeking treatment abroad. I discuss various empirical cases in relation to the existing literature on medical tourism and medical returns of migrants to their countries of origin. The second part deals with transnational care arrangements involving migrants' families in varying ways and with different outcomes. The empirical data are interpreted with recourse to studies on care in transnational families. In the third and final part, I draw out linkages between formal and informal aspects of care and support as well as highlight limitations in transnational care arrangements. I conclude the chapter by arguing that my research participants' negotiations of social security 'here and there' can be best understood as explorations of potentialities of care.

¹²⁰ I have discussed the centrality of this more comprehensive notion of social security for my study in chapter 1, sections 1.2.2 and 1.3.

7.1 "A paracetamol and goodbye"

Irena Herčeková, her partner Stefan Materák, and their baby boy had just returned from a two-week holiday in Slovakia when I met them at their home in north Glasgow in early October to catch up. As well as seeing their family, relatives and friends, this time they had also taken their one-year old boy to a paediatrician in their home town, and they told me about the professional manner in which the health check had been conducted. Amongst other examinations, the paediatrician had also carried out a blood test and "told us straightway what the problem was", enthused Ms Herčeková. This account and the enthusiasm with which it was presented to me have to be understood in the context of several previous conversations around worries about illness and issues of healthcare in Glasgow. Their baby, who seemed to suffer from abdominal pain, had caused the couple great concern for several months, and they had wanted to find out what was causing it, but also, more generally, to check his health with a specialist.

In our previous meetings, the Slovak couple had brought up several incidents involving their local GP. Regarding her baby's ongoing suffering from abdominal pain, for example, Ms Herčeková had consulted her GP several times but to her frustration the latter had not, she felt, addressed her concern. On one occasion, she told me, she had even taken the baby's soiled nappy with her and showed it to the GP in an attempt to get the doctor to take this issue more seriously. However, this desperate attempt came to little avail. On the contrary, as Ms Herčeková reported, her bringing the nappy along with her rather "shocked" the doctor who asked her disparagingly: "Oh, is that what you do when you are in Slovakia!?" For Ms Herčeková, this remark only added to her frustration, which was mixed with feelings of being discriminated against. "It wasn't enough that I was worried about my son, but the doctor was also making jokes about my country", said the 32-year old with bitter disappointment. It was "little situations like these", she continued, "that drove me crazy with healthcare here".

The couple's dissatisfaction with the local health service and their worries, moreover, extended further back beyond the birth of their son. I had known Ms Herčeková and her partner since I recruited them as interviewees in one of the pre-studies for my PhD project conducted in 2010, and back then they had also experienced resentment on several occasions when visiting the

doctor. In our interview in 2010, Mr Materák expressed his frustrations with his GP. Once, he explained, he had gone to see his doctor because he was suffering from a chest infection. To his surprise, the doctor did not use the stethoscope but, after listening to his account, told him that his illness might be stress-related, and that if the pain continued he should take painkillers to cope with this. The doctor's swift diagnosis angered Stefan Materák because "I didn't feel like I was under stress. But to be honest, that he didn't examine me, that he didn't seem to be interested, that stressed me out." In the end, he continued, "I had to force him to use the stethoscope, and that is why I'm so angry with health care here". Similarly, Ms Herčeková described the following incident: once she went to see her GP because she was having pain in her lower belly. The doctor, however, did not carry out a "proper examination" but, having quickly had a look at her, told her that the pain was related to her being stressed and that it would eventually go away. "So the doctor gave me some pills and asked me to leave!", she said with bafflement. She had to beg him: "Please, touch my belly! How can you say that this [the pain] is stress-related if you are sitting two metres away from me and are just looking at me!?" She contrasted this account with her experiences of medical examinations in Slovakia. "Back in my country, doctors always examined me, at least they touched my hand, arm, measured my temperature or something... but those doctors here, they just look at you and give you a pill" (Guma 2010).

Encounters like these had left the couple extremely worried about the prospect of having and raising a child in this country, and this was further exacerbated when their baby boy seemed unwell. During their recent visit to Slovakia, finally, they had a paediatrician 'properly examine' their baby. He had explained the test results to them, advising them about the medical causes for their baby's colic as well as providing them with other information about the general state of his health. Although they had to pay for these medical services privately, getting a diagnosis and gaining a picture of his overall health was a relief for the couple, as it brought a long phase of insecurity to an end. In fact, after this experience they planned to take their boy for further routine medical checks whenever they visited Slovakia, usually twice a year; to this end, they had registered their son with the paediatrician in Slovakia.¹²¹

¹²¹ This was in addition to their son remaining registered with a GP in Glasgow.

Feelings of frustration and concerns about local healthcare provision emerged as a widely shared experience throughout my fieldwork in 2012. The Šimkos,¹²² a Czech couple in their early fifties, for example, who were both having health issues, spoke repeatedly and at great length about their continuing concerns with the way doctors in Glasgow were treating them, including what they perceived as GPs' readiness to prescribe painkillers as a panacea: "All they do is give you paracetamol and say goodbye", remarked Mr Šimko several times. Such complaints also came to my attention during my involvement at the drop-in. On one occasion, for example, Eva Mešková, a regular attendee, told me the story of her husband who went to see his GP after he had injured his back at work. But the doctor "gave him only paracetamol", she stated looking perplexed. "He didn't give him an injection or anything, but paracetamol!?", added the 30-year old.

7.1.1 Seeking medical care abroad

In order to deal with these concerns about the quality of health care in Glasgow, my research informants considered and/or used health services in their home countries. This was, for example, the case with the aforementioned Slovak couple, Ms Herčeková and Mr Materak, who took their baby son to a paediatrician in Slovakia. This was a rather long-term strategy in the sense that they registered their baby with a practice in Slovakia and planned to carry out routine examinations of their son's health whenever they visited the country. In other cases, however, medical care abroad was sought *ad hoc*, and often under difficult circumstances. The experience of Mrs Mešková, the regular drop-in attendee that I briefly mentioned above, and her family (husband and two children) illustrate this. The Meškos left for Slovakia a few days after the GP had told her husband that his back injury was not serious and had prescribed him paracetamol to cope with the pain. The decision to seek medical treatment in Slovakia was not taken lightly. Like many others attending the drop-in, the Meškos' finances were already stretched to the limit (Mrs Mešková was unemployed at the time, whereas her husband was participating in an unpaid work scheme when the accident occurred), so they were very worried about the costs for their flights to and healthcare in Slovakia, especially given the last-

¹²² See also chapter 3 where I discuss issues around employment that the Šimkos faced in the context of the international movement of capital and labour.

minute arrangements. Dissatisfied and mistrustful of the GP's (failure, in their view, to make a) diagnosis the couple managed, over the course of several days, to raise money from relatives and friends living in Glasgow to buy flight tickets and leave for Slovakia. For the Meškos, dealing with an imminent health issue was thus facilitated by a collective effort involving their local family and friendship network in Glasgow. However, this came at a high risk. As the family had managed to borrow just enough money to purchase one-way tickets to Slovakia, Mrs Mešková was worried that they might not be able to return to Glasgow. Coming back to Glasgow would again involve a collective effort, only this time in Slovakia. And if they eventually came back to Glasgow, they would have to pay back the several hundred pounds that they had borrowed. Nevertheless, fearing for Mr Meško's health, the family felt they had no choice but to go to Slovakia to have his back 'properly' checked. When I ended my involvement with the drop-in several weeks after my last conversation with Mrs Mešková, she and her family had not yet returned. I do not know what happened to them in Slovakia and whether they eventually came back to Glasgow.

Not all informants, however, did find the means to go abroad for treatment. Amongst them were the Šimkos, who were increasingly concerned about their ongoing health problems. Both suffered from severe pain in their joints and limbs but, to their frustration, they had not received a clear diagnosis: "What is worse is that we still don't know what the problem is", complained Mrs Šimková. In one of her recent health checks, when the doctor had asked her whether she had previously suffered a heart attack, she got angry and exclaimed: "It's my legs, it's my legs that I have a problem with, not my heart!" While they dreamed of undergoing 'proper' health checks in the Czech Republic, the couple had not been able to travel to their hometown since they lost their factory jobs five years ago and were struggling to make ends meet. Although Mrs Šimková's sister was also living in Glasgow - the only family member that they had close by - she herself was struggling with health issues and with finding stable employment. The Šimkos found themselves in a situation in which they were unable to mobilise sufficient support from their family and other networks in the city. This led to feelings of vulnerability which came to the fore in expressions such as "We're just guinea pigs for them". From the couple's perspective, the doctors in Glasgow were not caring for them but

'experimenting' with them.¹²³ The reference to "guinea pigs" also hints at feelings of being trapped and isolated, which were sometimes vented in sudden outbursts such as the following:

I did not come here to die. And since I have worked here and I have paid [National] Insurance [contributions] and I have done everything right, I believe that they have to look after us a little. (Iveta Šimková)

7.1.2 Uncaring GPs

Having little confidence in the way healthcare was provided to them in Glasgow, my research informants contemplated and/or sought medical treatment in their home countries. At first sight, my research participants' use of health services abroad, that is in Slovakia or in the Czech Republic, may be interpreted as a matter of consumer choice, as part of the free movement of EU citizens and the globalisation of medical services. From this perspective, they could be framed as 'medical tourists' who, free from immigration controls and with readily available transport links between Scotland and Central European countries, chose to access medical care in these locations. This would place them amongst the rising number of people who utilise medical services abroad. Hanefeld *et al.* (2013, p.1), for example, found that in 2010 63,000 UK residents sought medical treatment¹²⁴ outside the country, a phenomenon which the authors anticipate will grow rapidly in the coming years. As the term 'medical tourism' connotes, studies of transnational medical care have been largely framed by neoliberal discourses around 'lifestyle care' (Sobo 2009) and 'consumer choice' and have often privileged the experiences of wealthy individuals (Horton 2013). Indeed, medical tourism has been defined as "consumers [who] elect to travel across international borders with the intention of receiving some form of medical treatment" (Lunt *et al.* 2011, p. 7). In this sense, the term 'medical tourism' emerged with reference to the one-directional flow of people from the (rich) global North to the (poor) global South in search of cost-effective care. The experiences of my research informants, however, do not sit easily with such a description. Cost-effectiveness was not the rationale for accessing healthcare in the Czech Republic or

¹²³ The Czech expression *pokusné králíky* that I have given here as 'guinea pigs' literally translates as 'experimental rabbits'.

¹²⁴ The study identifies fertility, cosmetic, and bariatric treatments as the most sought after services.

Slovakia; on the contrary, instead of relying on free NHS healthcare services in Glasgow they had to pay privately for treatments abroad as I indicated above.

At the same time, it is increasingly acknowledged that 'medical tourism' has become a global phenomenon and a rapidly expanding and profitable industry with people moving for varying reasons, in various directions, and between different countries around the world to seek healthcare (Kangas 2007; Sobo 2009; Kelley 2013).¹²⁵ Kangas (2007), thus, suggests replacing the term 'medical tourism' with 'medical travel' as the former does not adequately capture the diverse experiences and contexts of people seeking transnational healthcare. In her study of Yemenis travelling to India (and other countries) for treatment, she shows that some of her research participants were not rich but felt compelled to seek care alternatives abroad due to what they perceived as a lack of an adequate and caring Yemeni healthcare system. Her study also reframes medical travel as an emotional journey (with financial implications) that has little resemblance with purchasing a holiday package as a (medical) tourist. The notion of 'medical tourism' has also come under scrutiny from a different direction, with critiques, for example, pointing to the spread of 'organ trafficking' and the commercialisation of body parts, developments that raise substantial ethical questions, especially as predominantly vulnerable populations in the global South are affected (Kelley 2013, p. 23).

Within the context of globalising healthcare and an increase in medical travel, there has been little research focusing on migrants' experiences (Horton 2013). Amongst the few studies available is one by Lee *et al.* (2010) of South Korean immigrants living in New Zealand. Their research found that dissatisfaction and frustration with local doctors led many middle-class Korean migrants to seek medical treatment back in South Korea. Unlike medical travellers, these migrants framed their experiences around ideas and idealisations of 'home' and 'homeland'. For many, the decision to travel to Korea was also about receiving treatment in a place that they felt comfortable and familiar with, a place that they associated with 'home' (p. 113). This included familiar hospital settings, the presence of competent, experienced and trustworthy doctors, familiar surroundings in terms of language, and so on. Thus, the authors

¹²⁵ In 2012, for example, Singapore was the top destination country for medical treatment, receiving 850,000 'medical tourists' (Kelley 2013, p. 23). The above study by Hanefeld *et al.* (2013) found that the UK had now also become a destination country for medical tourism, an industry that produces a net benefit to the country's economy (p. 4).

argue, by travelling to Korea migrants were not only seeking "effective health care but also affective care in which notions of being 'in-place', trust and familiarity [were] significant factors in promoting feelings of well-being" (p. 114). A similar finding was reported by Horton and Cole (2011) in their qualitative study of Mexican immigrants living in the US who travel to Mexico for health treatments. Their research suggests that these migrants access healthcare services in their home country due to their preference for a specific "Mexican medical practice" (p. 1847) over that in the US, which their interviewees experienced as impersonal and heavily reliant on medical tests and surgeries. Horton (2013) extends this argument in her more recent research on socio-economically disadvantaged Mexican immigrants living in California who return to Mexico for health treatments. In this later study, she interprets Mexicans' use of medical services in their home country through the lens of social class: "Crossing the border affords Mexican migrants a dual class transformation, as they transition from Medicaid recipients [in the USA] to cash-paying patients [in Mexico], and from poor rural peasants to a privileged elite" (p. 418). In other words, seeking treatment transnationally enabled them to receive a quality of healthcare that they would not have been able to access in the USA (where they lived now) nor in Mexico (had they not migrated).

In my research participants' accounts, a striking contrast was drawn between healthcare in Scotland/UK and in Slovakia/Czech Republic. The lack of "proper examinations" by the local GPs was a common theme which was juxtaposed to the more thorough checks that doctors would routinely carry out in Slovakia/Czech Republic, such as measuring a patient's temperature, blood pressure, undertaking blood tests, palpating a painful body part and so on. A further contrast of young versus old was made with regard to the doctors; Ms Herčková, for example, referred to her GP as a "young boy", that is someone without much professional experience. The prescription of the painkiller paracetamol as opposed to remedies treating the causes of ill health such as antibiotics which doctors would "normally" prescribe to patients in Slovakia/Czech Republic was another comparison. More generally, the GPs in the UK were perceived as having little interest in the individual patient but being more concerned about following a standard procedure. Comparisons and evaluations that were regularly employed by my research informants are summarised in **Table 1** below:

Scotland/UK	Slovakia/Czech Republic
Short visit	Proper examination
Paracetamol	Antibiotics
Inexperienced	Experienced
Young doctors	Old doctors
Disinterested	Personal
Not trustworthy	Competent
Gatekeepers, "Bouncers"	Specialists

Table 1. Evaluations of healthcare

Overall, the Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants I encountered during my fieldwork perceived GPs in Glasgow/UK as impersonal, 'cold', and not trustworthy, which is similar to Lee *et al.* (2010) and Horton's (2013) findings highlighted above. Both these studies seem to be in line with an assumption that migrants are employing a 'dual frame of reference', which informs their experiences and actions in the 'host country'. This is the case with the observation that migrants may feel better cared for in a medical environment which is familiar to them both with regard to broader cultural aspects (such as language and ideas about the body) and medical practice. It could, for example, be argued that my research informants had specific expectations towards healthcare services based on their personal experiences and cultural understandings in their countries of origin. Historically, in socialist Czechoslovakia, a 'modernist', i.e. scientific and rational, approach to healthcare had been promoted, focusing on physical and biological care and relegating emotional care to the realm of family and kinship relations (Read 2007, pp. 204-208). While ideas and ideologies around medical care provision have started to change post-1989, some of the older values may still continue to shape medical culture in the Czech Republic (Read 2007, p. 216) and Slovakia and explain my informants' complaints regarding a lack of examinations and medical tests by their 'unprofessional', 'unskilled', and 'cold' GPs in Scotland.

To some extent, my informants' everyday comparisons also reflect differences in the organisation of institutionalised health care in Scotland/UK and Slovakia/Czech Republic. Take, for example, the opposition between 'gatekeepers' and 'specialists'. The healthcare system in Scotland/UK consists of two key components: GPs who provide primary care (and thus are the first point of contact for patients) and hospitals that provide specialist or secondary care (Robson 2011). The key arrangement in this system is that it is GPs, as primary

service providers, who refer patients to further services such as specialist examinations and surgeries in hospital if they (the GPs) deem it necessary. In Slovakia and the Czech Republic, on the other hand, there is no such rigid differentiation, as hospitals and/or polyclinics provide both primary and secondary care (Bryndová *et al.* 2009; Szalay *et al.* 2011). This means that patients are able to access specialists such as paediatricians, gynaecologists, physiotherapists directly, without the need for a doctor's referral. This resonates with Horton and Cole's (2011) findings regarding differences in national healthcare practices between Mexico and the USA that partly motivated Mexican immigrants' medical returns.

However, it has to be noted that my research informants' evaluations of their healthcare experiences were not based on a distinction between rather uniform 'national' healthcare cultures, that is between a British/Scottish as opposed to a Czech/Slovak way of providing healthcare. In fact, their frustration mainly referred to primary care provision in Scotland/UK. Ms Herčeková, for example, drew a clear line between the bad quality of primary care and the good hospital service or secondary care in Glasgow. She was very satisfied with the hospital treatment that she received when she gave birth to her son the previous year. In particular, she liked the patient-centred approach that placed importance on the birth plan that she was allowed to draw up. She found this approach to be more relaxed and natural, one which she contrasted to the rather "pushy" doctors in Slovakia. "Here, health professionals [at the hospital] are good but not the GPs", she remarked. Generally, my research informants did not complain about secondary health care provision in Scotland/UK, as at that stage their expectations regarding medical examinations and treatment seemed to be met; those who had received hospital treatment in Glasgow/UK spoke positively about their experiences.

This kind of rather detailed differentiation not only between but also within these healthcare systems questions the rather static notion that is implied in concepts of cultural difference or 'dual frame of reference'. Rather than ascribing to the migrants I engaged with here a fixed reservoir of knowledge from 'back home', which supposedly clashes with a homogeneous Scottish/British understanding or practice of healthcare provision, the analysis points to a more dynamic and ongoing construction. In contrast to the study by Lee *et al.* (2010) which emphasised the relevance of 'home' and 'homeland' in migrants' experiences and choices regarding healthcare, notions of 'home' were not invoked by my informants when talking

about their decision/wish to travel to Slovakia or the Czech Republic for medical treatments. While emotions played an important role in my research participants' healthcare perceptions and actions, I argue that a notion of caring/uncaring underpinned their experiences specifically with GP services in Glasgow which led many to consider or seek treatment abroad. In other words, incidents and encounters with local GP services in Glasgow did not only evoke feelings of bewilderment amongst the research informants; being prescribed the 'wrong' medicine, not getting 'properly' examined, receiving derogatory remarks about one's country of origin, all gave rise to a sense that their health was not taken seriously, that they were, as the Šimkos put it, 'not being looked after'. Even though the research informants sometimes suspected their GPs of treating them indifferently or in a derogatory manner because of their 'otherness', it is important to highlight that what led them to consider/seek 'caring care' in their countries of origin was their experiences of the GPs in Glasgow as uncaring. Here, care referred not only to the medical practices administered by GPs meant to (perform) care by profession but to the quality of the relationship between migrant patients and GPs. These different "constructions of care" (Read 2007) mean that, from the migrants' point of view, the availability and accessibility of healthcare through the NHS in Glasgow did not automatically translate into 'receiving care'. Seeking healthcare abroad was thus not simply a matter of cultural preference or consumer choice but one way of responding to experiences of 'uncaring care'. At the same time, as the case of the Šimkos shows, drawing on healthcare resources abroad is not always a realisable option; for some, it remained out of reach, while for others like the Meškos, it was only achieved at great (emotional, social, financial) cost. My analysis, thus, differs from Lee *et al.* and Horton and Cole's findings also in emphasising that the phenomenon of medical returns amongst migrants was not equally available to all.

7.2 Arranging 'informal' care transnationally

So far I have focused my analysis on how my research informants experienced a specific form of care provision, namely formalised care delivered through the NHS, and the various ways in which they negotiated (or could not negotiate) health issues transnationally. While, as noted earlier, scholars have only recently begun to take an interest in and study how migrants accessed 'formal' healthcare within a transnational framework, there is, as a rather separate

field of inquiry, a substantial body of academic literature on 'informal' aspects of care provision amongst migrants, a topic I turn to in the following sections. With the emergence of a transnational perspective on migration in the 1990s, scholars also paid attention to care practices and arrangements within transnational family and kin networks that crossed national borders (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Parreñas 2001). This strand of research has emphasised the ways in which migrants 'cope' with their separation from their families 'back home' and maintain family links across borders.

In contrast to the kinds of care discussed in the previous section, here care refers to forms of emotional support and practical care-giving amongst family members and relatives spatially separated by migration. This notion of care, that is, as a resource that individuals draw on to secure themselves and their family, relates to the broader social security concept that frames this study. In this sense, it differs from scholarly work on care practices within transnational families that conceives of care primarily as work or labour and has largely been influenced by feminist critiques (Hochschild 2000; 2002; Morokvasic 2004; Parreñas 2001; 2005; Fresnoza-Flot 2009; Marchetti 2013). By inquiring into various inequalities based on gender, 'race', and class at work in care arrangements, this body of research has highlighted the specific experiences, challenges and exploitation faced by migrant women involved in (both paid and unpaid) care work. In doing so, these authors have emphasised the unequal distribution of care provision and discussed the institutions and contexts that shape and reproduce these inequalities and hierarchies. Theorisations of care practices and arrangements amongst transnational families have been particularly inspired by the international migration of Filipina women who are involved in domestic care work in the global North (Hochschild 2000; Parreñas 2001; 2005; Fresnoza-Flot 2009), a migration pattern which continues to engage scholars to the present day (Madianou 2012). Issues of gender, class and ethnicity have also been highlighted with regard to care and domestic labour migration within Europe. Various studies have, for example, pointed to the large number of East European migrant women involved in (low-paid) care and domestic work (e.g., as carers, au pairs, cleaners) in Western European countries (Morokvasic 2004; Lutz and Palenga-Möllenbeck 2012; Marchetti 2013). Alongside this literature which focuses on domestic labour migrants, researchers are also increasingly exploring 'informal' care arrangements amongst (East) European migrants who do not necessarily fall into this category (e.g., Ryan 2010; Ryan and Sales 2013; Deneva 2012;

Krzyżowski and Mucha 2014). Here, I aim to contribute to this literature on transnational care practices in the context of EU migration by discussing how my research participants arranged care and built security involving resources and people in and beyond the locality of Glasgow.

7.2.1 "I wish she was here"

I began this chapter with a description of how the Slovak couple Irena Herčeková and Stefan Materák arranged healthcare for their baby son transnationally, which involved travelling to Slovakia for periodic medical examinations. Here, I introduce other care arrangements crossing international borders that unfolded in the opposite direction: the couple's family members coming regularly to Glasgow from Slovakia to offer care and support to the couple. As I mentioned earlier, I had known the couple since 2010, and just before I started my ethnographic fieldwork in 2012, they had become (first-time) parents of a newborn baby. Throughout that year I observed how they variously readjusted their everyday life routines several times in order to accommodate the needs of their child and of parenthood. During the maternity leave period, childcare provision rested mainly with Ms Herčeková as her partner worked full-time. When her six-month leave ended, she returned to work part-time and childcare had to be rearranged accordingly. The couple then shared childcare duties between themselves, at least for several months until their son's first birthday. The arrangement was that Mr Materák would look after the baby for two days a week when Ms Herčeková was working, and that she would care for their son the other five days when her partner was at work. Alternating between themselves enabled the couple to negotiate work and childcare without incurring any childcare costs. However, with no family in Glasgow to turn to for occasional help, maintaining this routine over a long period of time proved demanding. On several occasions, for example, Mr Materák mentioned being constantly tired and talked about the sacrifices that he was making to accommodate the changing needs of his family, especially putting up with his boring and low-paid job in the hospitality sector. Even though he felt trapped in his current job, he had postponed his plans of starting his own business and returning to his craft as a carpenter, considering it too risky under these circumstances. Moreover, sharing childcare between themselves left little time for the couple on their own, let alone for the family as a whole. This was evident in Ms Herčeková's disappointment about the

lack of family occasions and her longing for "little things like the three of us going for a walk in the park". Amidst these changes and difficulties, Ms Herčeková often "dreamt" of having her mother around: "I wish she was here so I could have a little nap or even a shower."

Given the everyday challenges, the arrival of Mr Materák's mother from Slovakia was expected to be of great help: she would babysit and allow the couple to have some much-needed rest from their everyday commitments as well as some time for themselves. In addition, her visit was also an opportunity for the family to be together and spend time with their new member. This was the first time that Mr Materák's mother had visited them in Glasgow; interestingly, the couple had been living for about six years in Glasgow but their parents had only come to visit them after the birth of their child. In fact, this was a common theme even amongst other research informants who were single; hardly anyone's parents had been to the UK to visit them and see how their (adult) child(ren) lived abroad. Many research informants' parents were not used to flying abroad, and there seemed to be a sense that travelling had to be purposeful, such as when combined with other commitments and motives. In this instance, Mr Materák's mother had come to Glasgow following the sudden death of her husband, and her open-ended visit to look after her grandson in Glasgow was also an opportunity to spend time with her son and his partner and thus be in a caring environment during a time of great grief. In this sense, inviting Mr Materák's mother over and arranging her visit was more than just about having childcare support; it was also underpinned by duties, obligations and emotions of belonging and care that shape relationships amongst family members (Finch 1989; Svašek 2008) and thus was an expression of and contributed towards maintaining family ties.

Her visit, however, did not go according to plan. When I met up with Mr Materák during his mother's visit from Slovakia, he expressed his surprise about some unexpected limitations regarding his mother's ability to support them. He explained that while his mother had been of great help in terms of providing practical support around the house such as cooking and doing housework, she had been anxious about looking after her grandson without the couple being present in the house because of her lack of English language skills; the thought, for example, of having to call the hospital in case of an emergency without being able to communicate in English had made her apprehensive about babysitting on her own. Her fears had been further

compounded by the fact that, as mentioned in the earlier parts of this chapter, there had been several occasions when the couple had sought emergency care for their baby. Her ability to provide care and perform her role as a grandmother, mother or (potential) mother-in-law was thus unexpectedly constrained by being in a different country/society. Feeling anxious about communicating in English and finding her way around the area had made her rather dependent on their help and company. The visit which was supposed to offer the couple some relief and keep Mrs Materáková 'busy' ran the risk of becoming a burden for everyone involved.

As well as cutting short the visit, this setback was a reminder of the limitations of negotiating care transnationally, not only in terms of receiving face-to-face support from their parents abroad but also providing care to them in return. The difficulties of this initial visit diminished, at least for some time, the prospect of Mrs Materáková's frequent (short or long) visits and care provision from Slovakia to Glasgow. However, this was not the case with Mr Materák's sister, whose visits to Glasgow were more 'successful'; as well as offering practical help and supporting the couple with childcare, she combined her stays with other activities such as learning English by enrolling on part-time language courses. In the sister's case, visiting her brother and his family in Glasgow was also seen as an opportunity to acquire new skills, find out more about life in Glasgow and even explore the possibility of moving to Scotland with her husband.

Nevertheless, the family visits also prompted the couple to reflect on the extent that they could draw on family support from Slovakia. While the couple routinely travelled to Slovakia to meet their relatives and friends and also shared news and concerns with them through communication by phone, Skype, emails and social media such as Facebook, physical meetings with Mr Materák's mother would now mainly be restricted to the times when they met in Slovakia. At the same time, more regular visits to Glasgow by other family members such as Mr Materák's sister looked possible and likely. In this sense, these varying experiences of trying out transnational strategies also contributed to the couple's acceptance of life abroad, away from their parents and wider family. Interestingly, at the time, the couple seemed fairly content with their lives in Glasgow overall, an evaluation that contrasted with the indecision that they had expressed on previous occasions. When I had met up with the couple after their first trip with their newborn baby to Slovakia earlier in 2012, they had been uncertain about

raising their child away from their families. Ms Herčeková, for example, had been sad that her parents "would not be able to see their grandson as often as they would if we lived in Slovakia". Following that visit, the couple had even been considering whether to move back to Slovakia so their child would grow up as part of a larger family. In addition, she had also seemed worried about her parents growing older and thus needing care at some point in the future.

By the end of 2012, however, the couple's outlook had changed considerably.¹²⁶ "I could see us staying here for another 60 years!" announced Stefan Materák with laughter. As Ms Herčeková explained, "I feel we got used now to this coming and going at the moment. I remember, in the beginning it was so difficult to say good-bye to my father at the airport, we used to cry and keep hugging each other. Now that's no longer the case." Despite some limitations that they experienced due to the spatial distance from their families in Slovakia as well as with regard to transnational negotiations of support, the realisation that some transnational care arrangements 'worked' and that there were more options of "coming and going" still to be explored seemed to have brought about this change of outlook. At the same time, locally available resources, including their friends here, were coming more into view and contributing to the couple's settling in Glasgow. As well as enrolling their son at a nursery they also participated in local parenting groups and made more regular use of playgroups for children. "Slowly, slowly becoming part of the system here", was how Irena Herčeková summed up their changed orientation to and experiences of sources of support in Glasgow.

A different trajectory emerges in the case of Pavel Hubar, a 48-year old divorcee from the Czech Republic. I introduce his experience here as a contrasting example of when efforts to arrange care transnationally proved unfruitful. In Mr Hubar's case, it was his adult daughter and her two children who came to Glasgow at the end of 2011 to join him. This was a long-term family plan that would benefit both him and his daughter; the latter would come to take care of her father whose health condition had been gradually deteriorating since he had had an accident four years ago, injuring his back. At the same time, their move would be an

¹²⁶ This highlights that such evaluations and meanings were not fixed but changed multiple times. When I interviewed Ms Herčeková and Mr Materák in 2010, they both emphasised the notion of independence they had achieved as young persons by leaving home and managing life in Glasgow. This changed notably when they became parents and again later following Mr Materák's mother's and sister's visits as detailed above.

opportunity for his daughter and two grandchildren to escape their difficult economic situation back in the Czech Republic and 'start a new life' in Glasgow. When we first met in 2012, the 48-year old was using a walking stick to support himself. When his back pain intensified, the doctor had prescribed him various strong painkillers to help him cope with the pain, which he described as "intolerable" at times. The doctors had also told him that an operation on his back was risky, and the thought of ending up in a wheelchair had really scared him. Over the past years Mr Hubar had increasingly wished for emotional and practical support in his everyday life.

Upon the arrival of his daughter and her children, Mr Hubar had arranged for them to stay with him at his small flat until she found work, and then they would all move to a bigger place. Just after his family's arrival, however, they became at risk of being evicted by the housing association as his housing benefit had been suspended causing rent arrears. Given his difficult financial circumstances, he could not afford to pay for private accommodation. While awaiting the appeal decision regarding the suspension, he sought help and advice from Groundworks for his daughter. The support that the organisation could provide to her, however, was limited due to her being a recent migrant and thus having no entitlement to social welfare in the initial months. When his daughter could not find employment immediately, she and her two children were not able to stay in Glasgow and were forced to return back to the Czech Republic three months after their arrival. In one of our conversations, I became concerned about the toll that his illness and the departure of his daughter was taking on his mental health when he described his suffering in the following way:

Lately, I have been really looking for a rope, [but] there was none on the pavements, [or] on the trees. I wanted to throw it around my neck. 'For god's sake', I said to myself, 'there is not even a rope outside!' I thought that I would find it. I walked around the tenements. Nothing.

What impacted negatively on his attempt to reunite the family and provide care to each other in Glasgow was the precarious situation of both Mr Hubar and his daughter. Since his accident four years ago, he had only managed to find work for a few months in between and had found it increasingly difficult to gain any suitable employment for himself (see also chapter 3, section 3.3.2). At the same time, his legal status as an 'A8 migrant' had also contributed to

such precariousness. The accident that Mr Hubar had suffered four years ago happened during the 11th month of his full-time employment at a cash and carry company, which had severe repercussions regarding his social welfare entitlements. As I mentioned in chapter 1, section 1.1.2, from 2004 up until 2011, citizens of the Czech Republic and Slovakia (and members of the six other European countries that joined the EU in 2004) had been subject to restrictions that the UK government put in place as part of 'transitional' measures for these nationals. As well as introducing the Worker Registration Scheme, which required all A8 citizens to register with the UK immigration authorities before they started employment, these measures also included a 12-month employment rule, that is, A8 nationals were required to work continuously for 12 months in order to be entitled to most social welfare benefits.¹²⁷ Amongst the few benefits that Mr Hubar was entitled to was the Disability Living Allowance - a form of financial support given to those who are unable to work - which he applied for successfully with the help of Groundworks and a local law centre. Although he managed to somehow get by on as little as £50 per week for more than two years, the longstanding financial insecurity (compounded by suspensions of his payments on several occasions¹²⁸) meant that he was often unable to pay the rent and thus accumulated arrears. Such precariousness, a direct consequence of his legal status, proved costly when attempting to draw on transnational support and arrange for his daughter to join him in Glasgow. This emphasises, once again, how formal and informal forms of support are interlaced with each other (cf. Kay 2011); Mr Hubar's and his daughter's lack of access to (more substantial) state support precluded them from having access to familial care.

Having no other family members in Glasgow, Mr Hubar, however, had made friends during his six years in Glasgow, whose support he valued highly. These were individuals who he had met in Glasgow or who he knew from his town back in the Czech Republic. He was also appreciative of the support and help that he had received from individuals who he did not necessarily know well (e.g., language interpreters, local shop owners) but who, as he put it, "have been more than family to me" (*Sú to cudzí, ale pomôžu mi viac ako rodina*) as they had

¹²⁷ The social welfare benefits that were subject to these restrictive measures included: Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit, Housing assistance from local authorities. A more detailed explanation of these benefits can be found in Appendix C.

¹²⁸ One of the support workers at Groundworks who had kept an individual record of Mr Hubar's use of the service for the past two years reported to me that this had happened a number of times (see chapter 6).

helped him when no family support was available. Their assistance could range from helping him renovate his flat and offering him free transport of materials, to inviting him for a coffee and giving him advice. Moreover, various local organisations were also important sources of support for Mr Hubar, not only in terms of offering a wide range of services in Czech (e.g., on housing, health, welfare) but also as places he visited to share his concern and socialise. He was, for example, one of the 'regulars' at the Groundworks service and sometimes came by more than once a day. For people like Mr Hubar, the service offered a space where they felt free to talk openly in Slovak/Czech and express their thoughts and concerns in their native language, or simply enjoyed hearing or being amongst people talking in Slovak or Czech.¹²⁹

Overall, Mr Hubar's story presents an ambivalent case: what amazed me during my encounters with him was his resilience and the endurance with which he managed to mitigate the hardships in his everyday life. He displayed a real capacity to maintain and draw on a wide range of 'weak ties' (Granovetter 1973) locally and rely on many acts of kindness, which he often returned, for example, by sharing information freely as well as with his wit and enthusiasm for people and music. At the same time, one cannot deny the marginal position he found himself in, feeling 'stuck' in this part of the world without any 'close' friends or family around and unable to negotiate support transnationally to provide him with the daily practical and emotional care that he increasingly required.

7.2.2 Transnational families, care, and migration

How can we interpret the above examples of my research informants' care arrangements and experiences? As noted earlier, unlike research on seeking 'formal' care abroad which is still in its early development, there is a large amount of conceptually rich literature on 'informal' aspects of transnational care in the context of migration. One of the key concepts developed by migration scholars to account for migrants' care-giving practices across borders is 'transnational mothering'. Initially coined by Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997), this notion

¹²⁹ It was in this context that some of my research informants referred to the Groundworks service as "*komunitné centrum*" (community centre), i.e. a place where people could not only get help but also socialise and engage in conversations in their native language.

was employed by researchers to understand experiences of migrant women and how the latter negotiated care for their (mostly young) children and families back in their countries of origin. The concept of 'transnational mothering', however, resulted from empirical research on specific groups and migration contexts. This included studies on domestic labour migration - with the focus here being overwhelmingly on Filipina migrant women working as domestic labourers in different countries around the world (Parreñas 2001; 2005) - and/or on migrants whose agency was severely constrained due to their immigration status - e.g., undocumented migrants living in the USA (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Fresnoza-Flot 2009). These studies highlighted that transnational care arrangements are not shaped merely by geographical distance but also the significant socio-legal barriers that these migrants faced (such as restrictions on family reunion, social welfare entitlements, and settlement rights). It is therefore not surprising that studies on 'transnational mothering' often emphasised the practical and emotional challenges and hardship associated with providing care at a distance. At the same time, by highlighting various transnational strategies that migrants employ to 'bridge' the distance and cope with their separation (for example, by leaving their children in the care of relatives, paying 'home visits' whenever possible, sending remittances, having regular contact with their families via various communication technologies), these studies argued that, far from 'abandoning' or 'leaving their children behind', migrant mothers developed new ways of negotiating and providing care across geographical distance. The emergence of these new arrangements challenged the existing dominant notions of place-bounded motherhood and family-hood (Ho 1993; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Parreñas 2005).

In the context of transnational mothering and care, Hochschild (2000) has drawn attention to the unequal distribution of care on a global scale. She has argued that migrant women employed as domestic workers formed part of a 'care chain' with various links, in which care flowed in one direction from the poor to the rich. This amounted to a 'care drain' in the global South, as "women who normally care for the young, the old and the sick in their own poor countries move[d] to care for the young, the old and the sick in the rich countries, whether as maids and nannies or day-care and nursing-home aides" (2002, p. 17). The 'care drain' perspective has, however, been heavily criticized for providing a somewhat simplistic account of often complex transnational care arrangements and negotiations (Baldassar and Merla 2014, p. 29); for portraying women as 'mere' caregivers and as victims in a global exchange of care

(Dumitru 2014); and for neglecting the role and experiences of (migrant) men as both providers and receivers of care (Scrinzi 2010, pp. 46-47).

More recent developments in electronic communication technologies can play a significant role in care negotiations and for maintaining family ties across nation-state borders and geographical distance. Although communicating over distance through letters, the phone or email have been part of transnational family lives for a long while now, over the last few years human communication has further diversified and undergone a radical transformation (Miller 2011). Nowadays, many people are able to stay 'in touch' with others on a daily basis through new electronic media such as instant mobile phone messaging, internet-based video conferencing platforms, and social networking sites. This diversification, which Madianou and Miller (2012) call "polymedia", provide new and affordable ways in which families can negotiate care transnationally. In her study of Filipina migrants living in London, Madianou (2012), for example, shows how migrant mothers carried out almost all aspects of care for their left-behind children through frequent texting and video-calling, (for example, by making sure that their children ate well on a daily basis, dressed properly for school, by singing songs to them, or engaging in a "communicative binge" with their family members (talking to them for several hours)). According to Madianou (2012), such "intensive mothering at a distance" not only generated a 'feeling of co-presence' between Filipina mothers and their left-behind children and families, but it also empowered "women to perform mothering in ways that suit[ed] them" (p. 289). This enabled families who were separated by migration to stay connected and "ensure migrants remain[ed] very much a living part of family life" (Baldassar and Merla 2014, p. 54).

Now, the realities highlighted by these studies differ from the experiences of my research informants in various substantive ways. Firstly, although geographical distance still presents a barrier for many, the distance between Glasgow and cities and villages in Slovakia/Czech Republic is relatively short in comparison to, say, Filipina migrants living in the USA (Parreñas 2001) or Ecuadorian migrants living in Italy (Boccagni 2010). More importantly, the distance is also less pronounced with only one hour time difference between Scotland/UK and Slovakia/Czech Republic, allowing people to communicate with each other without requiring major adaptation to diverging day-and-night cycles and everyday life rhythms. Furthermore,

many transport links were readily available between these points of departure and arrival (from budget airlines to coach and car travel). While not everyone could (easily) afford the trip, still many research informants travelled regularly to visit their family members abroad, with the latter returning the favour on special occasions. Secondly, in the case of my research participants, no immigration barriers existed as they and their family members were free to move within the EU, including to and from Scotland/UK. In this context, as both examples of the Slovak couple and Mr Hubar show, my research participants' care arrangements were not mainly restricted to 'coping' at a distance. Even though they, indeed, stayed connected with family members and friends abroad (to various degrees) through the telephone, emails, via Skype, social media platforms, but also by sending and receiving parcels of food and other gifts to each other, they had a wider range of care arrangements at their disposal, including regular visits by family members to provide support and help or even the long-term reunification of their families in Glasgow (even though with varied outcomes). Thus, while establishing forms of co-presence via routinely conducted telecommunication and/or the occasional remote exchange of material objects were considered as important elements of their care negotiations, producing physical proximity and bodily co-presence in order to establish more immediate and 'hands on' support and care relationships emerged as a 'real' possibility for my research informants. This high level of transnational movements and activities has also been documented amongst European migrants and their families elsewhere. For example, Morokvasic (2004) discussed the effective and sometimes complex care arrangements organised by Polish migrant women working in Germany, who - by "shuttling" between the countries and creating "rotation systems" (p. 16) - managed to creatively combine paid care work in Germany with (unpaid) care for their children and families back in Poland. In a more recent study of Bulgarian migrants living in Spain, Deneva (2012) drew attention to a different kind of transnational, "circulatory" activity, that of elderly women travelling frequently between the two countries to provide (child) care for their family members in both settings.

The latter already points to the inadequacy of the concept of 'transnational mothering' for understanding the extended relationships involved in the care provision amongst my research informants. Obviously, none of the migrants involved was a migrant mother who had 'left' young children behind in her country of departure. Rather, in the two examples that I have

discussed above, care-giving did not only involve mother-child caring relationships (Mrs Materáková and her adult son) but also father-daughter (Mr Hubar and his daughter), sister-brother (Mr Materák and his sister) and so forth, with variations regarding who had migrated and who had stayed. In addition, we have seen in both examples that care was considered to be and provided reciprocally, and indeed in a multidirectional way: while Mrs Materáková travelled to Glasgow to visit her son and his family and look after her grandchild, she was also invited by her son and his partner so that they could support her during a difficult time following the death of her husband. Similarly, Mr Hubar's plan to bring his daughter to Glasgow to care for him was also underpinned by a wish to help her and her family to build a better future for themselves in the city.

The concept of 'care circulation' that Baldassar and Merla (2014) have recently introduced more aptly captures the diverse care exchanges. According to these authors, 'care circulation' can be understood as "the reciprocal, multidirectional and asymmetrical exchange of care that fluctuates over the life course within transnational family networks subject to political, economic, cultural and social contexts in both sending and receiving countries" (p. 25). This definition significantly widens the scope of analysis to include a wide range of people and relationships beyond the mother-child relationship. From this perspective, care practices are construed as gift exchanges involving extended family members in a "circuit of care" (p. 28) which forms a basis for and draws on a shared sense of family-hood. I have already emphasised how, amongst my research participants, care flowed in various directions. In both cases we can also see how concerns around care changed over the life course of the individuals. The arrival of Ms Herčeková's and Mr Materák's baby demonstrates this rather clearly. Furthermore, when Ms Herčeková had moved to Glasgow six years earlier she was not worried about her parents' care needs. In 2012, however, reflecting on her latest visit to Slovakia, Ms Herčeková expressed sadness about the fact that her parents were growing old in her absence and that she would be unable to care for them while living abroad. While in her case such realisation occurred rather gradually, for Mr Materák it was brought about rather abruptly: the sudden loss of his father also led to worries about his mother's health and wellbeing back in Slovakia. At the same time, both his mother's and his sister's stay in Glasgow over several weeks only became possible at a time in their lives when they did not have work commitments in Slovakia (due to retirement and a phase of unemployment

respectively). Care needs emerged unexpectedly in the case of Mr Hubar, too. When he left the Czech Republic to come to Glasgow in 2006, he was in his early forties and physically fit, looking forward with excitement to a life abroad. The accident that he suffered two years later, however, severely impacted on his health and his dream; in 2012, he could only walk with the aid of a cane and increasingly wished for everyday care and support.

The cases also highlight that care arrangements were not about drawing on all resources available but were also influenced by and linked with notions of family obligations and expectations towards individuals' roles such as that of 'a good grandmother' or 'a caring son'. In other words, the (attempted) arrangements not only sought to produce a level and quality of support that, from the research informants' point of view, could not easily be expected from or left to friends or institutions (coming to terms with a bereavement, around-the-clock childcare and care for the elderly or chronically ill), but they were also opportunities to perform familyhood. In the case of the Materáks, we saw how through regular visits to and from Slovakia, care was exchanged and a sense of family belonging was created and reinforced on these occasions. However, the differing experiences of how 'practicable' or 'successful' Mr Materák's mother's and sister's care-giving in Glasgow respectively were, reminds us of the limitations to such transnational care circulations among families separated by international migration. From this point of view, the concept of care circulation is helpful to gauge a wide spectrum of relevant practices and participants across time and space. However, its broad definition runs the risk of losing a sense of how those affected actually experience the quality of these care exchanges and how, in some cases, care circulation can be significantly disrupted, halted or come to nothing. This is how we could understand Mr Hubar's trajectory: he was estranged from his parents and his ex-wife in the Czech Republic and had no more dealings with them; his daughter was one of the very few close family members that he could draw on for support and care. As we have seen, however, even within a context of freedom of movement, their attempt to intensify their care exchange and reunite in Glasgow ended without success. Although this could be read as a temporary 'break' in the care circuit which could be 'reactivated' in the future (Baldassar and Merla 2014, p. 50), the care circulation perspective tends to make invisible the reality of Mr Hubar being left without the care he needed at this specific point in time.

7.3 Conclusion: Exploring potentialities of care

This chapter examined various ways in which Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants negotiated care in Glasgow and beyond. In the first part of the chapter I focused on issues around 'formally' provided healthcare in Glasgow that emerged during my fieldwork as being widely shared amongst my research participants. I showed that many migrants considered and/or sought medical treatments in their countries of origin and discussed this finding with regard to the more general literature on 'medical tourism' and the migrant-related concept of 'medical returns'. I argued that it was not migrants' unfamiliarity with the UK healthcare system as manifested in Glasgow but their experiences and understanding of GP services as 'uncaring' that created feelings of frustration and insecurity and led many to seek 'caring care' abroad. The analysis of different ways in which the research informants drew on healthcare resources transnationally, however, revealed an unevenness, as such an option could not be appropriated by everyone equally. The second part of the chapter that inquired into 'informal' aspects of care particularly within families separated by international migration highlighted a similar finding of limitations to transnational care arrangements. Discussing examples from my fieldwork, I considered different practices of care-giving as being part of a circulation of care and of 'doing family' across international borders and spatial distance.

What is important to emphasise here is that the above distinction of 'formal'/'informal', physical/emotional, material/immaterial forms of support and care that I used to structure this chapter was to foreground these different aspects but mainly derives from the fact that the relevant literatures I drew on developed separately from each other. While studies of formal care seem to be compartmentalised in accordance with policy areas such as healthcare and social care services, the role of social and family networks are often not considered in the analysis (Thomas 2010). In the literature on care in transnational families, on the other hand, 'formal' or 'institutionalised' forms of support have been largely ignored or left to public health or policy researchers. Yet, as my research participants' examples show, in practice, they used both 'formal' and 'informal' resources of care, and the boundary between the two was far from clear-cut (cf. von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 1994; Read and Thelen 2007; Kay 2011). To give an example, the Meškos could only seek medical treatment in Slovakia

with the help of their relatives and friends in Glasgow. It was by drawing on this 'informal' support network that they were able to raise enough money to travel abroad and have Mr Meško's back 'properly' checked. Ms Herčková and Mr Materák also mobilised support through their social networks when taking their son to a paediatrician in Slovakia. This took, for example, the form of family and friends providing them with accommodation during their stay as well as advice and recommendations of a 'good' and trustworthy doctor to register their son with. Similarly, childcare support for Ms Herčková and Mr Materák involved not only their family members coming from Slovakia but also the 'formalised' provision of childcare through a day nursery as well as various parents' and baby groups in Glasgow. Mr Hubar tried to arrange long-term care by drawing on resources within his family but also relied on 'formal' support from local services and organisations to make such arrangement possible. Thus, I suggest here that, from the perspective of my informants, formal and informal forms of care were more closely interwoven. In a similar vein, it should be highlighted, once again, that even though I discussed migrants' practices of arranging care by going abroad (in the first part of the chapter) and by exchanging care remotely as well as in Glasgow (in the second part of the chapter), these migrants simultaneously drew on a multitude of resources both 'here and there'. In this context, their transnational care arrangements, in practice, were not understood here as an expression of or a means to maintain a life 'split' in two by a static dual frame of reference nor a life 'in-between' two countries. Rather, I suggest that my research informants actively and creatively explored and opened up possibilities in which insecurities or concerns could be addressed, encompassing informal and formal resources in Glasgow and beyond. As my selection of empirical examples indicated, this finding emerged as a result of considering not only instances of observed 'successful' care arrangements but also taking into account situations and periods when the actors in my field were unable to realise certain options or where the outcome was still uncertain.

Thus, part of this process of negotiating care were experiences of 'unsuccessful' or 'unrealised' strategies or solutions which emphasise the constraints and limitations of these negotiations. While for my informants their EU citizenship and freedom of movement between Slovakia/Czech Republic and the UK enabled them to hypothetically draw on a relatively wide range of options (as compared to non-migrants and other specific migrant groups such as non-EU migrants), what I tried to show in both parts of the chapter is that not all care

arrangements were equally viable and available to all. The interconnectedness between material and immaterial forms of support and care can lead to multiple exclusions, because care-giving and emotional forms of care are also dependent on the resources one has available (cf. Kay 2011), as the cases of Mr Hubar and the Šimkos illustrated. The financial costs of specific solutions (e.g. paying for private healthcare in Slovakia/Czech Republic or for extensive childcare in the UK, or the costs of accommodating a family member in Glasgow) were certainly an issue for most of my informants; however, the economic capital of my informants alone did not determine the different trajectories. For example, as the case of the Meškos pointed out, it was their social capital that enabled them to seek healthcare abroad.

More generally, however, prioritising and trade-offs between various options and risks were important elements in the migrants' negotiations of social security, sometimes even questioning or risking their life in Glasgow altogether in an attempt to contain or mitigate a concern that was considered of utmost importance (see, for example, the Meškos' case). Connected to this aspect is the finding that not all resources and options that are hypothetically available are drawn on; emotions and ideas, for example, around what constitutes 'good healthcare' or 'good motherhood' were important parts of care considerations which also changed over time, with changing knowledge and over the life course of individuals. In this sense, I argue that my research informants' transnational negotiations of social security can be best understood as an ongoing process of exploring potentialities of care.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This thesis aimed to provide an empirically-grounded understanding of risks and insecurities amongst Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants living in Glasgow. In doing so it has also explored the ways in which these migrants negotiate insecurities and risks and build social security in their everyday life in the city and beyond. More specifically, I inquired into insecurities and risks as experienced and perceived by Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants who came to Glasgow/UK after 2004. I was particularly interested in tracing the conditions under which these risks and insecurities emerge and in understanding what players and contexts play a role in their formation. At the same time, I sought to grasp what resources, relationships, and ideas these migrants draw on in order to secure themselves and their families against insecurities and risk. This included the question of how their negotiations of social security are shaped by their experiences and knowledges as well as by wider processes and structures.

As I elaborated in chapter 1, these questions were developed in the course of a critical review of the existing research on 'A8 migrants' in the UK, which identified several limitations of this work. I critiqued the predominance of methodological nationalism in much of the literature on social security and risk amongst these migrants which restricted the analysis to the UK context, problematised 'A8 migrants' as a (potential) rupture to the UK welfare state and British society, and tended to neglect migrants' backgrounds, experiences, and histories in their countries of origin. Where the background of recent arrivals was considered, the ethnic lens was often used, taking for granted and collapsing ethnicity, nationality, and culture, for example, in essentialising cultural explanations. The largely policy-orientated nature of the existing studies underpinned a prioritisation of concepts and categories used by service providers and other stakeholders, while paying little attention to the perspectives, understandings, and knowledges of migrants themselves. This was further exacerbated by the tendency to present descriptive and 'snapshot' accounts of risks and challenges faced by 'A8 migrants' that offered hardly any insight into and understanding of how migrants perceived and actively dealt with these problems in their everyday lives. Overall, these shortcomings seemed to result from a lack of a

more systematic engagement with social theories of risk and social security as well as a largely uncritical adoption of the 'host society' perspective.

8.1 Empirical findings and contributions

'Choosing' Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants as the research population was in part a response to the fact that hitherto very little research had been conducted on this group in the UK. Importantly, by focusing on this language-based group and recruiting a diverse sample, I also sought to overcome the crucial problems of methodological nationalism and the Herderian perspective in migration research (this is discussed in detail in chapters 2 and 4). Furthermore, in light of the existing research on post-accession migrants in the UK (chapter 1), the aim of this thesis was not to produce another descriptive enumeration of challenges and problems encountered by Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants living in Glasgow; rather, its contribution lies in offering an ethnographic, contextually rich and theoretically informed account of processes which give rise to certain risks and insecurities in the everyday life of this group of migrants and how they negotiated these as active subjects. This necessitated and was enabled by redirecting the researcher's gaze from a sole focus on the migrants as research objects to broader processes and forces in which these migrants' meaning-making activities and practices were situated and embedded. My interpretation of the empirical data presented in the thesis drew on theoretical perspectives and concepts beyond the notions of risk and social security to explore and incorporate elements specific to migrants and the migration experience. At the same time, the analysis remained grounded in their perspectives, narratives, and lived experiences.

Chapter 5 explicitly addressed the issue of risk and highlighted the relevance of migrants' perspectives when studying potential threats and dangers they face in the 'host country'. The chapter focused on the risk of children being taken away from their families by the British social services as an important concern that emerged amongst Czech- and Slovak-speaking Roma families in Glasgow and which I came across during my fieldwork at a local drop-in. Drawing on social-cultural theories of risk developed in the works of Beck (1992), Adams (1995), and Douglas (1992), I interpreted the differing accounts of Roma families and non-

Roma staff members as a struggle over the 'reality' of this specific risk. Regarding the wider context that gave rise to this contestation, I discussed transnational, historical, national, and local aspects of this phenomenon: the role of transnationally transmitted information via Slovak- and Czech-language broadcast and social media, reporting restrictions on cases involving children in the UK, as well as a collective history of persecution and violence against Roma that included forced sterilisation and the removal of children from their families in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. At the same time, I argued that, rather than their lack of knowledge of the British system, it was the everyday experience of (more subtle forms of) discrimination and stereotyping that many Roma families experienced in Glasgow, even from those with 'good intentions' towards them, that produced this risk of children being taken away for those living in the city. Conceiving of risk primarily as a socio-cultural construct rather than a quantifiable, scientific category, I argued that the risk of children being forcibly removed could not 'objectively' be denied. The analytic perspective suggested that non-Roma actors were able to define the risk of children being forcibly removed as low or non-existing in a social process that located (potential) blame with affected Roma parents. Equally importantly, rather than ascribing this risk evenly to all Roma migrants in Glasgow (which would amount to an ethnicisation of risk, cf. chapter 4), I suggested that risk perception and management depend on an individual's positionality. This was exemplified by the different ways in which Roma families acted upon and tried to mitigate this risk: from avoiding contact with state authorities, withdrawing children from certain public services, to seeking advice and support from friends and the staff at the drop-in.

If we consider chapter 5 as an account of how risk emerges as a complex phenomenon, chapter 4 can be read as an example of how a simplistic understanding of risk can lead to problematic (and unintended) consequences. Chapter 4 dealt with various practices through which 'the Roma' were constructed as a population 'at risk', thus requiring targeted and sustained support and assistance in Glasgow. Using Wimmer's (2007; 2008) boundary-making perspective on ethnicity, I showed how the ethnic category of Roma was rendered relevant in the field and acquired 'natural' status: in a specific interaction between a support worker and a Slovak-speaking migrant at the Groundworks service; as well as in and through local, nationwide and EU-level practices of mapping and ethnic classification; alongside discourses on Roma as a vulnerable ethnic group. The locally observed shifting of resources of statutory and

third-sector support and assistance to Roma migrants, I argued, could thus be understood as an ethnicisation of need which, ironically, resulted in the risk of (further) stigmatisation and marginalisation of Roma in Glasgow. This had wide-ranging effects: being set apart as the other, being marked out as needy, those self-identifying or being categorised as Roma had to make extra efforts to overcome the stigma. Simultaneously, those who were not classed as Roma were increasingly excluded from local support and services, irrespective of their individual needs.

In relation to the other empirical chapters, two important points about chapters 4 and 5 should be noted here: Firstly, in chapters 4 and 5 I focused on concepts and contestations of risk, whereas chapters 3, 6, and 7 dealt more in-depth with insecurities and problems as already experienced by my research informants rather than with future threats or danger. Secondly, while chapters 4 and 5 can be seen as providing answers to how Roma ethnicity was rendered 'real' (chapter 4) and how a risk that emerged as significant amongst Roma families was rendered 'unreal' (chapter 5) in Glasgow, the remaining empirical chapters make little mention of Roma. However, this does not mean that the understandings and lived experiences of those self-identifying as Roma are absent or excluded from the other chapters. In other words, chapters 4 and 5 should not be read as 'the Roma chapters' and the rest as covering 'non-Roma issues'. Rather, with regard to the issues and problems discussed in chapters 3, 6, and 7, the analysis of my empirical data did not hint at a division along the Roma/non-Roma line and showed that aspects other than ethnicity played a major role.

This applied to the problem of 'being trapped' in Glasgow that was identified in chapter 3. Here, I elaborated on contexts that gave rise to employment-related insecurities experienced by Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants in the city. Contrary to a prevalent understanding that explains post-accession migrants' employment problems such as joblessness, underemployment, and various forms of in-work exploitation by reference to their lack of human capital, especially English language skills and relevant qualifications, I situated these employment issues within transformations brought about by the movement of global capital and labour (Sassen 1988), as well as the neoliberal restructuring of work in the UK and locally in/around Glasgow. This included a discussion of the ambivalent role of recruitment agencies in the migration of Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants to Glasgow/Scotland and their

employment-related experiences even years after their initial relocation to Scotland/UK. While recruitment agencies initially enabled my informants to mitigate risks associated with moving to an unknown place, especially in their early years of migration up to 2008/09, in the longer term, reliance on agency-mediated work resulted in many of them feeling stuck: some found it difficult to find employment after 2008/09, and being unable physically to reach the few factory jobs still available outside Glasgow, they were trapped in the city. While others with better English language skills and formal qualifications had fewer difficulties in finding employment, they felt trapped in the low-paid and insecure jobs which they had not minded doing in the first years after arriving in Scotland. These findings challenged a human capital approach that tends to construe migrants primarily as deficient. In contrast to the common treatment of 'A8 migration' as an East-West movement of people under the particular conditions of EU free movement rights, the contribution of chapter 3 lies in bringing to the fore broader globalisation processes beyond the EU context that impacted on conditions of and evaluations around work and played out on the lived experiences of my research informants in Glasgow.

Another aspect that had previously received little academic attention with regard to migrants who came from the A8 countries to the UK was the focus of chapter 6, which closely examined the relationship between my research informants and state-provided forms of support. Instead of discussing Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants' entitlements and access to services and assistance in abstract or legal terms, the chapter elaborated on the 'native' (i.e. my informants') category of *zkancelovali* ('cancelled') and the notion of the British welfare system as a 'game of chance', which they employed to make sense of their various encounters with different welfare authorities. These terms referred to a heightened sense of insecurity in my informants' everyday lives and the risks of debt, homelessness, and destitution arising from increasingly common experiences of rejection of their applications, cancellations and delays of benefit payments, the prolonged retention of identity documents, 'degradation ceremonies' and so forth that these migrants faced in their everyday dealings with agents of the British state. By situating these experiences in the context of wider transformations of the UK welfare state towards the "punitive state" (Wacquant 2009) over the past decades, the analysis highlighted a discrepancy between the notion of benefit sanction and *zkancelovali*: while in the official discourse of the UK government and the welfare authorities a 'sanction' presupposes the

benefit recipient's wrongdoing, my participants' use of the term 'cancellation' indicated that they understood suspensions and rejections not as caused by their own behaviour but as manifestations of the malfunctioning British welfare system or the arbitrary actions of individual state agents. Drawing on anthropological conceptualisations of state-craft (e.g. Ferguson and Gupta 2002), I interpreted my research participants' encounters with and understandings of social welfare providers as constitutive of nation-building processes. The chapter thus provided grounded and concrete examples of the close association between state-provided social security and quotidian ways of nation-making in the case of post-accession migrants. More specifically, the contribution of chapter 6 lies in tracing the everyday processes through which Czech and Slovak nationals' *de jure* access to state-provided welfare in the UK was *de facto* impaired or nullified for prolonged periods of time, thus turning (EU) citizens into immigrants.

While chapter 6 focused on support and assistance provided by the state, it also referred to other ways in which my research informants tried to negotiate emerging insecurities and risks in their lives in Glasgow. Non-statutory organisations such as Groundworks, law centres and a local drop-in were amongst the services that they drew on for support and advice, alongside friends and family who could provide all kinds of practical and immaterial help, from interpreting during a Job Centre appointment, offering financial assistance, to emotional encouragement and backing. In some cases, the help of local politicians was also enlisted to resolve an impasse with the welfare authorities. Finally, the affected individuals displayed a high degree of resilience to get through periods of great insecurity and hardship (for example, collecting scrap metal in the streets or selling household items to raise funds). My informants' general resourcefulness in the face of adversity and threats was also reflected and discussed in chapters 3 to 5. For example, research participants made use of services provided by local NGOs and support groups (chapter 4) as well as by profit-oriented recruitment agencies (chapter 3). Chapter 5, on the other hand, pointed out more defensively-oriented, individual strategies to mitigate a risk (such as withdrawing children from free school meals) next to collective calls for organising a public meeting to discuss concerns about Roma children being removed from their families in Glasgow. While, therefore, all the empirical chapters included consideration of how Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in the city negotiated insecurities and risks, I foregrounded this issue in a more systematic manner in chapter 7.

Thus, in the final empirical chapter I sought to address more directly my research question regarding resources, relationships, and ideas that these migrants draw on in order to secure themselves and their families against insecurities and risk. Here, I focused on issues around state-provided care services, as well as care-giving amongst family and friendship networks, to discuss various ways in which Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants in Glasgow built social security in their everyday lives. In a first step, the analysis looked at two aspects of care and support separately: I began with a discussion of transnational practices with regard to formal healthcare before inquiring into informal care arrangements in the city and beyond. In relation to existing concepts of medical tourism (e.g. Lunt *et al.* 2011) and medical returns (e.g. Lee *et al.* 2010, Horton 2013), I argued that what drove my informants to seek medical care abroad was neither cost-efficiency or cultural preference, nor their lack of knowledge of the Scottish healthcare system, but their experiences of GP services as 'uncaring'. Elaborating on two different ethnographic examples of informal care-giving practices that involved transnational negotiations, I employed the notion of 'care circulation' (Baldassar and Merla 2014) to account for the varying arrangements between my informants and their family members outside the UK. I showed that these kinds of transnational care exchanges were multi-directional and changed over the life course of individuals. The analysis also highlighted that my informants did not automatically call upon all available resources 'here and there'; instead, care arrangements within family and kin networks were shaped by emotions, obligations, and ideals of family-hood while, at the same time, reinforcing a shared sense of belonging across spatial distance.

In a second analytical step, building on an extended notion of social security (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 1994; 2007; Read and Thelen 2007; Kay 2011), the chapter brought the two aspects of care together by highlighting that, in practice, my research participants simultaneously drew on 'formal'/'informal', material/immaterial forms of support and multiple resources of care. Chapter 7 thus provided empirically grounded examples of the concept of social security that I introduced as a key framing device in chapter 1, section 1.2.2. A central finding of the analysis was that my informants, as EU citizens who were free to move between the UK and Slovakia/Czech Republic and with relatively affordable means of transport between these countries, could potentially draw on a broad range of resources and

relationships both 'here' in Glasgow and elsewhere. However, the analysis did not stop with a celebratory image of Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants' ability to negotiate insecurities and risks transnationally: equally importantly, my findings emphasised the limitations and constraints of such arrangements. On the one hand, spatial distance still played a role as physical co-presence could not fully be substituted or easily approximated via communication media or transnational gift exchanges. On the other hand, the realisation of one form of support often presupposed the availability of the other. This was best exemplified in cases where individuals experienced multiple exclusions as when, for example, they could not seek healthcare abroad due to a lack of social and financial capital or failed in their attempt to bring a family member to Glasgow to act as a carer because they had restricted recourse to state-provided support in the UK. In the light of both possibilities and limitations of support and care, I proposed to conceive of the ways in which my research informants built social security as an ongoing process of exploring potentialities of care. Through this concept, I suggested that the research participants actively and creatively opened up, probed, re-evaluated, rearranged, and called upon possibilities through which concerns or threats could be managed and/or overcome. Seen from the perspective of their everyday lives, this ongoing process involved trade-offs, prioritisations, improvisations, and 'make-dos', which reminds us that the negotiation of risks and insecurities is not about reaching a fixed state of security but an elemental feature of getting through life and making sense of it in the face of ever changing uncertainties.

8.2 Theoretical discussion and contributions

With this ethnography I sought to arrive at theoretically generalisable concepts relating to migrants' negotiations of in/security in their everyday lives in the 'receiving country'. As I have set out in chapter 2, no statistical generalisations can be drawn from my findings, not least because of a lack of robust data on the population of Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow. However, the value of this in-depth, qualitative study of migrants' lived experiences lies in providing us with insights into the complex interplay between social security, risk, and migration in specific interactions, situations, and experiences from which more abstracted ideas about this nexus can be derived.

First of all, social security and risk were employed as the two key concepts framing this study. Interestingly, both concepts that I introduced in chapter 1 and further discussed in the empirical chapters developed within separate literatures but show considerable parallels: even though there are differences in the ways Adams (1995), Douglas (1992), and Beck (1992) have conceptualised risk, they share the basic idea that risk is socially constructed and that there is an inherent linkage between knowledge of a risk (risk perception) and acting upon it (risk management). Similarly, social security was construed by von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann (1994; 2007) as socially and culturally mediated and consisting of both perceived problems as well as ideas, practices, and other efforts to overcome these problems. There are also similarities with regard to ideas of how the past, present, and the future are linked together in and through these concepts; at the same time, predominant ideas about risk and social security were criticised in both literatures as ethnocentric and specific to Western societies. Moreover, the importance of subjective, emotional, physical, intersubjective, socio-cultural and political dimensions is highlighted in the theoretical notions of both risk and social security.

However, each of these concepts offers its own analytical framework and makes little or no mention of the other: sociologists of risk such as Beck (1992, p. 149) and Giddens (1999, pp. 1-2), for example, refer to social security mainly as an institutionalised form of support and protection that is provided by the state and that is highly contested due to the transition to risk society. The von Benda-Beckmanns, on the other hand, seem to use the term risk rather loosely and point only in passing to the literature on risk where they dispute the idea maintained by writers such as Giddens (1991, pp. 109-111) that non-western, 'traditional' societies had no concept of a "future full of problems which people could strive to overcome" and were thus different from modern societies (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 2007, p. 40).¹³⁰ Nevertheless, in this thesis, I considered these two concepts as complementary, as each accentuates different aspects: the approaches to risk discussed above focused our attention on the complex processes through which risks emerged and were defined and located, while the extensive notion of social security brought into view the multiplicity of

¹³⁰ Citing the anthropological record, their approach seems to converge more with Mary Douglas' (1992) view that all societies knew and had to deal with future dangers and that what we have come to know as the scientific, quantified understanding of risk is but one particular way of conceptualising problems that are anticipated now but whose realisation is uncertain.

social practices and relationships that were employed to deal with insecurities. The thesis thus can be read as an example of fruitfully combining these two notions in order to understand negotiations of in/security and risk amongst the research group.

Drawing on my empirical exploration of migrants' negotiations of risk and social security, several theoretical contributions to these literatures can be considered. First of all, the specific relationship between state-provided forms of social security and migration that I elaborated on in chapter 6 may not be all too surprising given the commonly found ideas of 'benefit tourism' and migrants as a (potential) strain on British public services (see also chapter 1) which encapsulate a perspective that challenges migrants' deservingness of publicly funded support. However, the notions of *zkancelovali* and of 'documentless citizens' that I discussed and developed took a different starting point, showing how (EU) citizens were transformed into immigrants in everyday encounters with the state. In some ways, my analysis can be read along the lines of the multi-layered analysis of social security that the von Benda-Beckmanns (2007, pp. 36-37) have suggested. From their multi-level perspective, my informants' experiences with social security providers point to discrepancies between the abstract ideals of the British welfare state, the principle of non-discrimination of EU citizens with regard to social security in the UK, the formulation of their entitlements and rights after the lifting of the 'transitional restrictions' in 2011, and the migrants' concrete encounters and relationships with state providers of social security in Glasgow, which led to often prolonged periods of insecurity and risks of destitution, homelessness, and ill health. However, I argue that the production of a rather chronic insecurity experienced by these Central and Eastern European migrants should not be merely understood as the (unintended) socio-economic consequence of these different layers of social security. Rather, it should be seen as an active part of nation-state building: social security as a specific Western form of support and assistance tied to the state inevitably enacts, expresses, represents the nation-state, a fact that becomes particularly visible in relation to migrants. The repeated and everyday questioning of migrants' belonging to the nation distinguishes the informants' understanding of *zkancelovanie* from more widely shared experiences of the 'punitive state' amongst non-migrant benefit recipients in the UK.

Importantly, the notion of *zkancelovanie* drew on migrants' everyday experiences in the UK, which guides our attention to the definition of knowledge in concepts of risk. In various

chapters I have considered migrants' past experiences in their countries of origin (both individual and collectively invoked histories) as well as their everyday experiences of life in Glasgow. While existing concepts of risk discussed risk perception and management as being closely related to knowledge (see chapters 1 and 5), knowledge was mainly construed as scientific or explicit knowledge, for example, which is involved in anticipating potential rewards or dangers. My interpretations, however, highlight the significance of everyday, including tacit knowledges to understand how risks are produced, experienced, and dealt with (e.g. chapters 5 and 6). The ethnographic approach particularly enabled me to consider these forms of knowledge as contained in the lived experience of individuals. Another important point related to this emphasis on the relevance of everyday knowledges is my suggestion of a non-static perspective on migrants' interpretative frameworks. Rather than assuming certain cultural traits rooted in migrants' home societies as uniformly shaping my informants' experiences in Glasgow (see e.g. chapter 7), I repeatedly showed how (the production of) what they 'know' is an ongoing process in which past and present experiences are time and again re-evaluated and remade.

This brings me to the third theoretical contribution. In chapter 5, I introduced the notion of positionality to account for the dynamic and relational nature of knowledge and its implications for our understanding of risk perceptions and negotiations. I argued that positionality, understood as the interweaving of social status categories one is ascribed to or one identifies with and one's individual experience, plays a role in the way we perceive and act upon risk because it informs the production and our interpretation of knowledge. This linkage between positionality and risk has theoretical value beyond the very specific risk that was explored in chapter 5: considering positionality allows for a more fine-grained picture that can capture differing perceptions of and responses to a particular risk amongst various individuals and/or across social groups. Academic and policy research inquiring into risks that migrants face and their ways of dealing with them should thus not disregard as irrelevant or irrational migrants' knowledges, including individual experience and collective histories, in and prior to their life in the 'host country' but examine their interplay with the socio-economic positions that they inhabit or are placed in. While not all risks may be contested in the same way or to such an extent as the risk analysed in this chapter, if we are to understand the concerns and risks that migrants experience, attention to the positionality of all the actors involved seems

not only necessary but fruitful for grasping how certain risks emerge, are magnified or denied and who is able to decide what those risks are and how they should be resolved (see also chapter 4).

Another point that this thesis has raised is the non-linearity and ambivalence of both risk and social security. Chapters 4 and 5, for example, emphasised that the well-meaning ideas of those working with and alongside Roma families in Glasgow (and elsewhere) did not automatically lead to positive outcomes for those intended to benefit from them. With regard to social security, in chapter 4 I showed how the various mobilisations of support by a number of actors and institutions to improve Roma migrants' social security in Glasgow simultaneously led to their continued stigmatisation. Similarly, for example, my informants' widespread usage of recruitment agencies as discussed in chapter 3 highlighted that migrants' efforts to mitigate or overcome risks do not automatically lead to increased security but can extend or give rise to new insecurities and risks. Private, profit-oriented recruitment agencies, furthermore, constitute a relatively novel kind of player in migrants' negotiations of social security, which do not fit easily into ideas around state-provided support or more 'traditional' forms of support, for example, in the form of friendship or kinship networks but are becoming increasingly relevant actors in people's migration and livelihoods. The growing influence of these private agents lends further weight to a strand in the literature that has highlighted and problematised the expansion of the market as a key agent of welfare in Western societies (e.g. Kingfisher 2002). Overall, the thesis shows that support and assistance provided/drawn on by various actors can have ambiguous effects.

This links to the final theoretical contribution of the thesis, which relates to my notion of people exploring potentialities of care that I used to describe the ways in which my research informants negotiated in/securities and arranged care. Not only can social security have unintended consequences, but efforts "to overcome insecurities related to [our] existence" (von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 2007, p. 36) can also fail or come to nothing. This complicates the functional approach to social security suggested by the von Benda-Beckmanns (1994; 2007) which "is functional because, instead of looking primarily at institutions normatively or symbolically designed for social security, it also considers relationships and institutions that are not primarily designed for it, but that take on a function

for social security" (2007, p. 6). While this conceptualisation is useful as it opens up a whole array of different practices and levels that can be considered as serving a social security function, it strongly favours an *ex post* perspective to determine this outcome. This problem has also been acknowledged by the von Benda-Beckmanns when they advocate the usage of both *ex post* and *ex ante* perspectives on social security to capture both "outcome sets" and "opportunity sets" (2007, pp. 52-53). However, I suggest that we go beyond the functional approach so as not to lose sight of unsuccessful attempts at drawing on/offering specific resources or relationships to build security. This way, we can see not only the various options but also assess their constraints and limitations: not only do people find themselves in situations when they are left without fundamental security (as, for example, when the relationships and resources they have available do not cover what they need) but specific options are also not equally available to all. As we have seen in chapter 7, in the case of migrants, social security arrangements may extend beyond the locality in which they live. Among numerous potentialities of care, however, only particular options will be employed depending not only on people's resources (financial, social etc.) but also on their priorities, experiences, perceptions, and ideas. Moreover, I suggested that including in the analysis both 'futile' attempts as well as efforts where the outcome is still uncertain is necessary to grasp how, in their everyday lives, individuals negotiate in/security and risks in an ongoing process of exploring, seeking out, trying, reassessing potentialities of support and care.

8.3 Reflections on this study and further research

The thesis inevitably presents only a selection of the empirical material and analytical work that was produced in the course of my research. Many of the stories, events, concerns, problems, and issues that the research informants shared with me or that I observed during the 12 months of my ethnographic fieldwork in Glasgow could not be included here due to limitations of space. As mentioned briefly above, the study did not aim to comprehensively cover or quantify all the ways in which this group of migrants built social security or all the insecurities and risks that they were faced with in the city. Rather, the analysis focused on aspects that were widely shared amongst my research participants and/or of great importance to them, and sought to provide an in-depth and nuanced understanding of some of these issues

in their complexity. At the same time, on reflection, the empirical approach and analytical perspectives that I have taken throughout the research process have resulted in some unintended gaps. My attention to the problem of the 'ethnic lens' led me to create a language-based research group and include a heterogeneous sample. This necessitated an analytical engagement with issues of ethnicity 'in the field' to somewhat clear the ground for the discussion of other aspects of migrants' negotiations of in/security. Thus, for example, while existing Facebook groups of 'Czechs and Slovaks in Glasgow' and Scotland provided me with contacts and possibilities to conduct participant observation, I could not incorporate, due to reasons of limited space, an analysis of my informants' use of online media and other online practices to build social security. Similarly, there was not enough room to explore in more depth the role of friendship networks in Glasgow; this could have extended the analysis to include relationships and resources beyond the (co-ethnic) family ties that I have discussed here. Although my empirical data showed the relevance of informal social networks involving inter-ethnic relationships (e.g. with non-Slovak/non-Czech partners, colleagues, neighbours, religious groups, sports teams), these were left relatively unexplored here. A closer examination of the significance and role of both co-ethnic and intra-ethnic friendship networks and their interplay with regard to Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants' negotiations of risks and insecurities thus constitutes an area which invites further research.

Another interesting aspect that could potentially be explored more is the question of gender and whether and how the latter informed migrants' perceptions, experiences, and negotiations of insecurities and risk. Although my research sample included an equal number of female and male individuals, analytically my study did not pay explicit attention to gendered ways of negotiating in/security in Glasgow. For example, in the context of the risk of children being taken away from their families (chapter 5), women might have been differently affected by past practices of forced sterilisations (that were carried out on women) than men; also, I discussed a case of humiliating practices of some recruitment agencies (chapter 3) that seemed to target especially women. One could have, more generally, also inquired into potential differences in the composition of the varying resources men and women drew on, or on gender-specific practices within family networks. Finally, a theme that could not be developed further in this thesis relates to concerns about and plans for the research informants' long-term future. Ideas about and practices oriented towards the informants' own old age and retirement

were noticeable in my research data, for example, in the form of individual house-building projects in migrants' home countries as an asset for long-term security but also in terms of financial investments in and emotional commitments to further education or skills development and properties in Glasgow and beyond. How these plans changed over time and how they were shaped by people's experiences, knowledges, and outlooks remains a topic for future analysis.

Despite these limitations, the thesis provides original, empirically-grounded insights and ethnographically-derived concepts that can be of use in future research. With regard to the empirical findings, for example, quantitative studies could examine whether the extent and nature of the employment-related insecurities that I revealed in chapter 3 are found amongst Slovak- and Czech-speaking migrants elsewhere in the UK or amongst other migrant groups coming from Central and Eastern Europe. Future research could also investigate the question whether experiences and understandings of *zkancelovanie* (chapter 6) are shared more widely or whether they are very specific to the migrants I encountered in Glasgow. In relation to theoretical ideas developed in the thesis, for example, the relevance of the conceptual relationship between risk and positionality (chapter 5) is not restricted to contestations of risk between Roma and non-Roma individuals or migrants and non-migrant groups; it could, rather, feed into the analysis of social processes in/through which other risks are defined, contested, and managed. Another concept that might be usefully employed in future research is the notion of 'explorations of potentialities of care'. With its capacity to include various forms of support and assistance, its emphasis on individual agency and everyday practices as well as on structural limitations and opportunities, this notion offers a fresh perspective that could bridge the formal/informal divide in migration research relating to issues of social security and care.

Finally, the findings presented in the thesis have implications for future policy-making and practice. For example, the combined insights from across the chapters caution against a 'blanket ethnicisation' of insecurities and risk with regard to migrants. While the wish to tailor programmes or projects to specific marginalised groups may be legitimate, using ethnicity as a straightforward, 'naturally existing' category and making it a requirement for individuals' access to certain services can have problematic consequences. As I have discussed above, it can lead not only to the exclusion of others (who do not meet the ethnic criterion) from much

needed services but can also be counterproductive by perpetuating the stigmatisation and marginalisation of the target population. In order to avoid or limit such unintended negative consequences of institutionally provided forms of support, the latter should be set up to be as inclusive as possible and should have the capacity to adapt their remit upon feedback 'from below'. In addition, as I observed in many of the well-intentioned programmes and projects for 'East European migrants' or 'the Roma', there seems to be a growing recognition of the relevance of migrants' past experiences in their countries of origin for understanding their practices, views, and needs in the 'host society'. While efforts to foreground migrants' perspectives and past experiences should be welcomed, these should not stop at providing overly simplified and essentialising cultural explanations for an individual's situation or actions. Instead, and this might be the perhaps more challenging insight, taking their perspectives, everyday experiences, and concerns seriously requires our ability to question our own assumptions and the structures and ideas that underpin them: for example, about what kinds of services are relevant and vital so as to strengthen migrants' (other) capacities to arrange social security and care in Glasgow and beyond; or about how to ensure that migrants' entitlements are realised in practice. Due to the limited space of the thesis, these points have to remain rather rudimentary here but will be discussed in a policy paper that I will produce for Glasgow City Council over the coming months.

In this sense, I would like to end the thesis with a final example from my fieldwork that invites me to reflect on the value of this study beyond the academic realm. After a long conversation during my fieldwork in 2012, Simona Podkoniaková, a 49-year old research informant from eastern Czech Republic, expressed her shock and concern about the imminent closure of the Groundworks service, which had been a vital source of support for her. In the end, she suggested to me to "open a community centre and be an advocate for Czechs and Slovaks" in Glasgow once I had finished my thesis. While I will not be able to fulfill her expectations and put her worries to rest, I hope that the thesis helps us to consider that what the research informants perceived as in/securities and risk and what they did to manage these in their everyday lives was co-produced and shaped by various actors, processes, and contexts in which we were also involved. While I did not intend to and cannot speak for Czech- and Slovak-speaking migrants in Glasgow, I hope the study raises questions about the ways in which 'we' - that is, organisations and individuals who (are expected to) have a personal,

professional, academic, and/or moral interest in their well-being - are implicated in migrants' social security. In doing so, the thesis may at least in small ways contribute positively to the everyday lives of people like Ms Podkoniaková.

Appendices

Appendix A: Informants' socio-demographic characteristics

	Initials	Age	Gender	Arrived in UK	Relationship and family status	Educational background (subject area)	Occupation in 2012	Language spoken (Slovak or Czech)	Self - identified as Roma
1	KD	35	M	2007	Married, 3 children	Unknown	Car washer	SK	
2	TN	49	M	2005	Married 2, (adult) children	Vocational training	Factory worker	SK	x
3	PS	36	M	2004	In a relationship	Vocational training (welding)	Kitchen porter	SK	x
4	ML	33	M	2006	Married, 2 children	Secondary	Factory worker	CZ	x
5	PH	48	M	2006	Divorced	Vocational training (horticulture)	Not in employment	CZ	
6	IH	32	F	2007	Engaged, 1 child	University (psychology)	Project worker	SK	
7	SM	34	M	2006	Engaged, 1 child	Vocational training (carpentry)	Housekeeper	SK	
8	ZB	34	F	2004	Single parent, 1 child	University (earth science)	Project worker	SK	
9	MK	33	M	2005	Single	University (technical engineering)	Project worker	SK	
10	MH	24	M	2004	Single	University (multimedia and technology) [studied in Scotland]	Not in employment	SK	
11	ZM	30	M	2004	Single	Secondary	Factory worker	SK	
12	EM	30	F	2005	Married, 3 children	Unknown	Not in employment	SK	x
13	IŠ	54	F	2005	Remarried	Unknown	Not in employment	CZ	
14	KŠ	48	M	2005	Married	Vocational training (bricklaying)	Not in employment	CZ	
15	SP	49	F	2007	Divorced, 1 (adult) child	Vocational training (cosmetics, pedicure)	Not in employment	CZ	
16	JB	29	M	2010	Married, 2 children	Secondary	Car washer	SK	x
17	MS	25	F	2010	Married, 2 children	Unknown	Not in employment	SK	x
18	MT	50	F	2011	Married	Unknown	Not in employment	SK	
19	AL	30	M	2005	Single	Unknown	Interpreter	CZ	
20	BR	39	F	2005	Single	University	Interpreter	SK	

						(alternative medicine) [in Scotland]			
21	MČ	38	F	2005	Single	University (pedagogy)	Factory worker	SK	
22	ZZ	34	F	2006	Married	University (pedagogy)	Interpreter/ project worker	SK	
23	MK	43	M	2004	Married, 2 (adult) children	Unknown	Not in employment	SK	
24	PK	32	F	2004	In a relationship	Postgraduate (PhD - literature) [in Scotland]	Project worker	CZ	
25	DB	40	F	2005	Married	Unknown	Not in employment	SK	x
26	PB	29	M	2006	In a relationship	Unknown	Barista	CZ	
27	DB	28	F	2006	In a relationship	Unknown	Barista	CZ	
28	MG	25	F	2009	Single	University [studying in Scotland]	Housekeeper	CZ	

Appendix B: Evening drop-in survey

October 2012

The table below contains the results of a small survey/group exercise which I (and two Slovak workers) conducted at the drop-in on the second week of October 2012. The main aim of the survey was to gauge people's opinion of the drop-in and also to find out ways to improve the service. Attendees were divided into 5 large groups of approx. 6-7 individuals in each of them. Each group was then given a large sheet of paper containing one question on it. Two broad questions were asked:

- What do you like about this drop-in?
- What other group activities would you like to be introduced?

Below I have only included the answers (highlighted column) in relation to the first question. I have arranged the survey answers into three main topics/categories (left column) which emerged from it: children, place and food.

Key categories	What do you like about the drop-in? (what they said)	Key words/evaluation of drop-in
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - our kids can play here - there are toys for children - people working here like our children - children are happy that they can play here - children feel safe here - children can play here like in a kindergarten - children learn new things here - we (children) feel we learn a lot from you - we are very grateful for what you do for our children and us - you help us with everything, thank you for this - children are having fun, and learning too - children are looking forward to having proper Slovakian food 	<p><i>Children are playing, learning, developing themselves</i></p> <p><i>Children enjoy it and feel safe</i></p> <p><i>We (as parents) are appreciating the care shown towards children</i></p>
Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we have fun here - we all like it - it's very pleasant here, everything around us - we can meet people here - we have safe, nice place to come to - this place is so much fun, we are not bored - we can trust you 	<p><i>The place is:</i></p> <p><i>Great for children to play and also for socializing</i></p> <p><i>Trusted and safe</i></p>
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we like the way you cook - children enjoy the Slovakian food here 	<p><i>Great, especially for kids</i></p>

Appendix C: Relevant social security benefits¹³¹

Type of social security benefit	Weekly rates in 2012 ¹³²	Means tested
<i>Tax credits</i> are government financial subsidies that include two parts: <i>Child Tax Credit</i> (CTC) and <i>Working Tax Credit</i> (WTC). A person may qualify for Child Tax Credit if he or she is responsible for at least one child or young person, and may qualify for Working Tax Credit if he or she is on a low income. It is possible to qualify for both types of tax credits.	Variable, depending on personal circumstances (income, number of children)	Yes
<i>Jobseeker's Allowance</i> (JSA) is the main benefit for people of working age who are out of work or work less than 16 hours a week on average. If eligible, JSA is paid while a person is looking for work.	£56.25 (under 25 years old) £71 (over 25 years old)	Y
<i>Housing Benefit</i> (HB) and <i>Council Tax Benefit</i> *(CHB) are financial support to help people on low incomes pay their rent and housing costs.	Variable, depending on income and personal circumstances	Y
<i>Employment and Support Allowance</i> (ESA) provides financial help to people who are unable to work because of illness or disability. It also provides personalised support to those who are able to work.	£56.25 (under 25 years old) £71 (over 25 years old)	Y
<i>Disability Living Allowance</i> (DLA) is a benefit for disabled children and adults to help with extra costs that they may have as a result of their disability.	£54.05 (mobility component - higher rate)	NO
<i>Income Support</i> (IS) is extra money to help people on a low income. It is for people who do not have to sign on as unemployed.	Variable, depending on your circumstances	Y
<i>Carer's Allowance</i> is a benefit for those (16 years old or over) who spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone who is ill or has a disability.	£58.45	N
Other		
<i>Statutory Sick Pay</i> (SSP) is a payment made to employees who are absent from work due to sickness or disability. SSP is due for the first 28 weeks the employee is off work. SSP is paid by the employer and, although not a social security benefit funded by the state, it is a mandatory provision under Social Security law.	£85.85 (standard rate)	N

* *N.B.* Unlike the other social security benefits listed here, which are administered/regulated by the State, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit are administered by local authorities.

¹³¹ The list is compiled from information contained on the following sources: the UK government information website (<https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits>), the UK's tax authority (HM Revenue and Customs) website (<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/eimanual/eim76000.htm>), the Department for Work and Pensions website (<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/benefitrates2012.pdf>) and the local authority's (Glasgow City Council) website (<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4312>) [Accessed: 25th November 2013].

¹³² A report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that in 2012 the minimum weekly budget (excluding rent/childcare) for a single person in the UK was £193. <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/minimum-income-standards-2012-summary.pdf> [Accessed: 25th November 2013].

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