Exploring the socio-legal aspects of low-level corruption: A study on the perceptions of informal practices of long-term local residents and migrants in Scotland and Hungary

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I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that 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.

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Abstract

This thesis aims to provide a nuanced insight into people's understanding of everyday corruption practices, by exploring the practices themselves, as well as the norms surrounding them, through people's participation in them and perceptions of them. I examine everyday corruption, which I understand as a socially constructed phenomenon, through a non-judgemental approach to the lived experiences of long-term residents and migrants in two differing research contexts of Budapest and Glasgow. This investigation includes the examination of the norms of carrying out everyday corruption practices as well as the processes that help people to develop a sense of acceptance of these informal practices that are divergent from, and contrary to, formal norms. I use Ehrlich's 'living law' theory as the underlying theoretical framework, which advises my overall conceptual framework, having made some modifications that enable me to apply this theory to an empirical analysis of the everyday corruption practices and their norms.

The thesis is based on fifty-one in-depth interviews and five focus groups conducted between February 2017 and March 2019 in Budapest and Glasgow with four groups of participants: long-term Hungarian residents and British migrants in Budapest, and long-term Scottish (British) residents and Hungarian migrants in Glasgow. This thesis is an investigation within and between contexts, as my study takes place in two research locations. The migrants' perspective has a particular importance because migrants move between social settings, which means that their lived experience can provide a more nuanced insight into learning the norms of, and participating in, everyday corruption in their new context. The study reveals that although it is important to consider and situate people's understanding of everyday corruption in their local context, there are other more generalisable factors and processes (rationalisation, learning, and routinising) that contribute to construct this understanding. Moreover, these processes, combined with the factors that enable people to take part in informal practices according to their norms (procedural acceptability), on occasions lead to people perceiving these practices as being right (moral acceptability). The generalisable factors that people consider when constructing their understanding of informal practices are the external pressures in the context and internal pressures within social associations, and the perceived harmfulness of the informal practices. I argue that considering these factors, which I call the 'matrix of acceptability' can be applied more universally, which can challenge simplified, cultural explanations of everyday corruption and people's participation in and perceptions of those.

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Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Growing up in Budapest during the democratic transition period in the 1990s, and as a young adult living through the time when Hungary joined the European Union in 2004, I experienced how 'getting things done' informally was part of people's everyday lives. As a child I noticed that my parents (a teacher and a tradesman) had to take extra work, often contributing to the second economy, because otherwise we as a family would not be able to make ends meet. As a young adult I experienced how people regularly gained access through their connections to education or health care services. This led me to learn that gaining access in a formal way was not always possible, and that following formal procedures can be disadvantageous in a situation when most ordinary citizens know about, and take part in, informal practices. I encountered many informal practices, which I accepted as the normal way to do things, because I grew up with them and was consequently socialised into them. I kept on hearing the ever-present narrative that taking part in these practices was a necessity explained by the post-socialist environment, and later in the 2000s by the political corruption that was rooted in taking advantage of the transitional period.

When I first moved to Sweden in 2010, and then to the UK (Scotland) to continue my studies, I expected that in the context of these Western countries, things would be done differently. In 2013, settling in Scotland and gradually getting familiar with the environment, I learnt and observed that 'getting things done' informally in ways which were normal and accepted in the Budapest context was sometimes different in Glasgow. I noticed that in some areas of living, informality was perhaps less necessary or less expected, but also that there were similar practices present (e.g. the contribution to the second economy). It seemed to be possible to arrange some matters, and access certain services, without informality (e.g. access to health care), but other things were inaccessible, perhaps because of people's lack of personal connections. This led me to wonder whether in Scotland, despite the Western context (in contrast to some particular economic, social and sometimes political pressures that I experienced in the Hungarian context), informal practices might be present and important for 'getting certain things done'.

My experiences suggested that in both the Budapest and Glasgow contexts there are informal practices both co-existing with, diverging from, or even contrary to formal norms that people regardless find acceptable, although to a different extent and perhaps for differing reasons. This triggered my interest not only in informality and corruption, but also in ordinary people's understanding of them, and about who engages in these practices. My perspective as a migrant led me to ask questions about how other migrants deal with learning and negotiating informal practices in contexts where the need to participate - and knowing how to carry out an informal practice - is present and a part of people's everyday lives.

The ambiguities surrounding informal practices, specifically those that diverge from and are even contrary to formal norms but are nonetheless considered acceptable, were my early motivation to research the type of corruption which in this thesis I call "everyday corruption", i.e. corruption which is part of people's everyday life. My realisation of the importance of having the knowledge of how to 'get certain things done' - knowing the practices' hidden rules and the ways to carry them out - invokes important questions about how people negotiate and how they perceive these practices. Moreover, I am interested in the questions of how people negotiate challenges to 'get things done', and how they understand the meaning of informal practices as well as how they perceive their own or others' behaviours. Driven by these curiosities I embarked on a PhD journey to explore how everyday corruption is experienced by migrants and long-term local residents in the two arguably differing contexts of Budapest and Glasgow. I wanted to know what everyday corruption means for my participants - and how they arrive at these conclusions, if there are any. The more nuanced insight into how people define and understand corruption helps me to answer some conceptual questions regarding how informality and corruption work on a day-to-day level, as well as the mechanisms by which people explain their involvement in them, and develop degrees of procedural and/or moral acceptance.

1.1. The aim of the thesis and research questions

The purpose of the study is to gain a nuanced knowledge of people's understandings, definitions, and judgements of corruption, considering both the importance of the context and of context specific characteristics, and more generalisable patterns surrounding people's perceptions of informal practices. The research questions focus on interrogating and

unpacking people's perceptions, understandings, and socially constructed definitions of informal practices by taking into account the perspectives of both long-term local residents and migrants. My research participants are Hungarian long-term residents and British migrants in the Budapest context, and Scottish (British) long-term residents and Hungarian migrants in the Glasgow context. The overarching research aim is to gain a more nuanced and informed understanding of everyday corruption practices that people find acceptable. I am also interested in the ways in which this perception of acceptability is constructed, and how patterns of behaviours which have normative meanings for the participants emerge from people's interactions, i.e. what people's lived experiences tell us about acceptable corruption practices. These issues will be explored in detail in the conceptual framework, and I will present some relevant discussions in the Methodology chapter as well, before providing a deeper analysis of my original findings in the empirical chapters.

The thesis has three specific aims. First, to identify situations, areas of life, and institutions in Hungary and Scotland where migrants and long-term local residents predominantly follow an informal normative order instead of, or alongside, state law. With this I explore what it is that people do and observe other people doing, and what meanings they ascribe to it. Secondly, to provide a nuanced understanding of the nature of everyday corruption by exploring practices and understandings of law as it is lived by migrant and long-term resident groups in Hungary and Scotland. Thirdly, to challenge the East-West divide by exploring migrants' and long-term local residents' perceptions and practices in Hungary and Scotland, to gain a sense of both how the specific context might encourage or generate certain practices, and how these might travel with people upon migration. Here I investigate the ways and extent to which such travelling practices and perceptions evolve as people adapt to the new setting, and the elements of continuity which persist. Overall, this thesis aims to present a theoretically informed and empirically grounded account of the lived experiences of migrants and local residents with regards to everyday corruption practices.

More specifically, the thesis seeks answers to the following research questions:
How do practices, understandings and definitions in relation to everyday corruption differ or show similarities (coincide) in Scotland and Hungary (in a Western and CEE context) when taking into account both long-term local residents' and migrants' perspectives?

- Under what circumstances, and for what reasons do long-term local residents and migrants take part in informal practices?
- How do long-term local residents and migrants regard informal practices, and are those perceptions determined, altered, or show continuity when living in new social settings?
- How do long-term local residents and migrants know and learn when and how to carry out everyday corruption practices as a way to 'get things done' in everyday life?

1.2. Situating the research

Corruption as a phenomenon can at the same time be hidden and widespread as part of people's everyday interactions, concealed and openly discussed in conversation and justified and condemned according to people's perceptions (Blundo, 2017:27), therefore it is often referred to as the 'open secret of the society' (Ledeneva, 2018b:vii). People participate in these informal practices to 'get things done' (Ledeneva, 2018b:vii) in everyday life, while the practices are acceptable to some who participate in them, but are condemned by others, and at the same time are known to many people but usually practiced covertly. Informality (i.e. informal practices) and corruption are related and overlapping phenomena and concepts, and they are often studied in tandem. I will discuss more specifically the relationship between them, both in the conceptual framework and empirically as the thesis develops.

Addressing the dilemma that everyday corruption can be widely practiced, but at the same time somewhat hidden, seems to be one of the main reasons for a fascination with informal practices - especially amongst scholars examining their manifestations in the local context. I recognise, like many other scholars engaged with the research of informal practices, that understanding and examining them in their local context can reveal systemic and structural dimensions of corruption (Anders and Nuijten, 2007:2, Ledeneva, 1998, 2008, 2009; Zaloznaya, 2012; Urinboyev and Svensson, 2013). Reversing this notion, this means that informal practices are situated in the local context and embedded in the social relations of the society. Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis it is essential to examine and consider informal practices in their local context. The context might include structural pressures and power-relations that are important in understanding some aspects of everyday corruption. Moreover, the main focus of the thesis corresponds with the approach that conceptualises

corruption not as an individual act, but as a phenomenon that is embedded in the wider matrix of power-relations in society (Anders and Nuijten, 2007:2). Subscribing to the notion that corruption is not an individual act, but socially constructed, I am interested in how the norms surrounding informal practices emerge from people's interactions. Therefore I recognise that it is worth paying attention to the context, because it allows us to consider whether there might be certain 'conditions' that encourage corrupt practices to thrive (Shore and Haller, 2005:2). Additionally, I am also interested in how informal practices, and understandings of them, are manifested and interpreted in different contexts. To gain a better understanding of the meaning of corruption in the local context also requires recognising that informal practices might have functions other than gaining undue advantage, for example they might be essential for individuals to achieve their everyday aims and meet their needs, as well as the coordination and functioning of economies and societies (Ledeneva, 2018a:425, Polese et al., 2018).

Ledeneva (2018a:419), like many others, argued that the specific idea of corruption can vary greatly across countries, societies, and even between individuals. This notion resonates in the findings of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) evaluation report from 2002, which notes that in Hungary 'certain forms of minor corruption are widespread, affect large social groups and are generally accepted by ordinary citizens as 'normal' practice' (GRECO evaluation report, 2002:2). Supporting this notion, Shore and Haller (2005:5) argued that a culturally produced understanding of corruption may include more or less acceptable practices and behaviours, and in the same way everyday forms of corruption might include practices that are acceptable to the participants. However in this research I also consider that the same people may also participate in practices which they acknowledge to be unacceptable, or only partially acceptable, due to a range of constraints and mitigating circumstances. In this research I consider people's perceptions, understandings, and judgments of corruption, i.e. what makes an informal practice 'normal' or acceptable.

Similar to the GRECO report, Blundo (2017:34) argued that when corruption is commonplace, such as in the African context where it is practiced daily between state officials and ordinary citizens, it becomes one of or sometimes the only possible way to access state services. In this situation researchers can observe the paradox that everyday corruption 'is so visible that it stops being considered deviant behaviour and is submerged within other morally acceptable social practices' (Blundo, 2017:34). In this context not

participating in informal practices constitutes a ‘deviation’, and formal norms are replaced in daily life by ‘practical norms’ (Blundo, 2017:34). Varese (2000:109) presented similar arguments when considering countries with pervasive corruption such as Russia, Central Eastern European countries, and Italy, arguing that everyday corruption practices can become the dominant and primary way to ‘get things done’ in certain situations. Additionally, Shore and Haller (2005:8) suggested that when examining informal practices, researchers might find that ‘there are rules (informal) and cultural codes that govern the way corruption itself should or does take place’. This means that these researchers observed that there are co-existing informal norms that govern people’s everyday life when ‘getting certain things done’. In this research I set out to examine these informal rules that govern people’s everyday interactions and participation in informal practices.

A normative approach, i.e. understanding corruption as a deviation from the dominant normative system (formal law), might be problematic - for example in societies with systemic corruption (Ledeneva, 2018a:425), where these practices are part of people’s everyday life. In this situation the norms of the corrupt practices can be just as important (or more important) for ‘getting things done’ than the formal norms. Therefore, this situation of co-existing informal and formal rules can only be investigated by adopting a non-judgmental approach to examining corruption. Scholars researching informal practices in differing contexts such as Africa, Central Eastern Europe, or more globally concur that reducing the examination of corrupt practices to their normative dimensions (to their legality) leads to losing sight of the fact that they are strongly embedded in ordinary forms of social interactions (de Sardan, 1999; Blundo, 2017:28, Curro, 2017, Ledeneva, 2018b). Ledeneva (2018a:425) argued that understanding corrupt practices requires looking closely into the local meanings and explanations of the informal practices and ‘suspending moral judgement in order to comprehend the social and cultural contexts’. Advocating a non-judgemental examination of corruption, Anders and Nuijten (2007:2) argued for a perspective into the investigation of law and corruption that does not conceptualise law and corruption as opposites, but rather as constitutive of one another. According to Anders and Nuijten (2007:12), if there is a formal law in place, the possibility of transgression of that law is already present in the law itself. This perspective allows researchers to investigate the moral and legal complexities of illegal practices in a nuanced way, which greatly resonates with my investigation of everyday corruption practices. They argued that in many situations people exhibit behaviour that is justifiable on moral grounds but prohibited by the formal or

state law. This is due to the existence of alternative sets of social and moral norms that can condone illegal behaviour (Anders and Nuijten, 2007:2). Therefore, Anders and Nuijten (2007:12) suggested that what is defined as corrupt according to one legal order conforms to another set of rules. This means that rather than examining formal law and informal norms that regulate informal practices as opposites, and moreover viewing formal law as the dominant normative system, this approach encourages the examination of informal norms as another, equally important, normative system in people's everyday life and in 'getting things done'.

Going further, Shore and Haller (2005:8) raised the question of whether having these informal rules, and moreover having these rules in all societies, means that some aspects of everyday corruption are 'a unitary phenomenon cross-culturally'. This question resonates with my research interest, because it implies that everyday corruption is not a cultural norm or phenomenon, rather it exists, albeit to differing extents, and manifests, in a variety of forms, in all societies. My study contributes to existing research, and also pushes forward the boundaries of knowledge through its examination of informality and corruption that moves beyond the local context. Most sociological and anthropological studies of corruption and informality are grounded in empirical evidence and have prioritised a specific local context, therefore are not obviously generalisable. Studies of these phenomena in the economic and political sphere tend to be more universal in application. In his seminal work on 'institutions', North (1990) argued for considering the importance of informal and formal institutions (norms) in societies' economic performance. North (1990:3) proposed that institutions are the 'rules of the game' in society, or 'humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction'. North (1990:36) also suggested that informal institutions are found in all contexts and societies. In other words, even in the most developed societies formal rules and pervasive informal rules are both part of the sum of constraints that shape people's choices (North, 1990:36). Ledeneva (2018b:20) showed that informality is universal, but can be invisible (or less visible), for example in more Western societies. She goes on to explain this invisibility by suggesting that the informal norms in a Western context are less visible, pushed out of sight and 'hidden behind the façades of formal institutions' (Ledeneva, 2018b:20). The notion that informality is part of all societies resonates with my research aims, which are to examine informal practices in two (arguably differing) contexts, and also move beyond the contexts by examining how practices travel, adapt, and are learned in a new context, and whether it is possible to establish a somewhat more generalisable (non-

culture and context specific) understanding of how ordinary people perceive and understand everyday corruption as part of their lived experience. This coincides with the research problem that Shore and Haller (2005:9) also raised, namely 'whether the concept of corruption is translatable across cultures in a way that allows for meaningful comparison'.

1.3. The research contexts: Budapest and Glasgow

This research is situated in Budapest and Glasgow. The rationales behind the selection of these two cities are my personal access to these locations and contexts and the comparable features of the two cities, despite their different histories and development. Kiss (2002:71) argued that similar processes and changes happen in Western post-industrial cities, like Glasgow, and post-socialist cities, like Budapest, due to the shift in world economy since the 1970s in the former, and the change in political system in 1989 in the latter. Kiss (2002:69) suggests that the industrial transformation of Eastern European cities began later than in the West, and accelerated after 1989 when the political changes permitted economic and social reforms. The similar processes include a common decline in the significance of industrial production while shifting the focus to knowledge-based sectors, and subsequently the decline of industrial employment, while increasing foreign interests move into the cities (Kiss, 2002:71, Kintrea and Madgin, 2019:3). These changes naturally induce change in the everyday life of the people who live in the cities. For example, Kovacs (1994:1081) explained that the dynamic growth of the service sector and business-oriented employment in Budapest generated a population change and improvement of the socio-economic status of some Budapest neighbourhoods. In both cities the de-industrialisation created employment possibilities in the service sector. Both Budapest and Glasgow's economies are underpinned by a large public sector, especially in health and education (Kintrea and Madgin, 2019:3). Another similar feature of both cities is that they are surrounded by extensive outskirts, and there is a process that can be described as the suburbanisation of poverty which has been happening in both Glasgow and Budapest in the recent decades. This means that lower income people who cannot sustain themselves in the city are moving away to the outskirts, while some parts of the suburbs remain affluent (Bailey and Minton, 2018:839, 909; Kok and Kovacs, 1999:138-139).

Glasgow has an extensive migrant population and history (which includes CEE migrants amongst many others since 2004) that is supported by the availability of work (especially in low-skilled sectors) and by low-cost housing that is attractive for settlement (Kay and Trevena, 2019:159). However, affordable housing often means living in more deprived areas of Glasgow, which means worse housing, schools, and lower quality personal networks (Kay and Trevena, 2019:172). While amongst CEE migrants (including my participants) the discrepancies between educational background and work undertaken is common (Pollard et al., 2008:37), the availability of stable employment, welfare support and affordable housing provides a safety net (Kay and Trevena, 2019:167) which is in contrast to the difficulties experienced in the home country (Kay and Trevena, 2019:161). Budapest is also a migration destination, but of a different type, as highly educated Western migrants (Redei, 2009:44) move into the city. It is worth emphasising that these Western migrants have different reasons for moving to Budapest to the CEE migrants who move to Glasgow, which was in response to increasing demands for migrant labour in global cities and the expanding service sector (Kintrea and Madgin, 2019). Egedy and Kovacs (2011:173-184) explored the drivers behind transnational Western creative workers settling in Budapest, which included the low cost of living, good quality of life, cultural aspects of the city, and the attractiveness of housing conditions. My research deals with two distinct types of migrant groups: Hungarian 'economic' migrants in Glasgow and British 'lifestyle' migrants in Budapest. The migrants' experiences are contrasted to those of long-term local residents in each city. The similarities between the two cities mean that while long-term local residents might have a similar lived experience in Glasgow and Budapest. However, the migrant participants' experiences can differ significantly due to their migration characteristics, which I take into consideration. I will discuss both the contexts and the groups of participants in more detail in the Methodology chapter.

1.4. Contribution of the thesis

This thesis aims to provide a contribution to existing theoretical, methodological, and empirical discussions and research on informality and corruption in area-studies and studies focusing on informal norms, as well as addressing the socially constructed understandings of corruption. The thesis makes the most substantive theoretical contribution by developing and modifying Ehrlich's original idea of 'living law' to a framework that enables its use as

an analytical tool in such contemporary settings. I achieve this by combining Ehrlich's 'living law' with research studies which see corruption not as an individual act or decision, but rather as a phenomenon that is embedded in larger social structures, focusing on the processes which neutralise corruption in these formal and informal structures. First, this thesis contributes to the literature and debate on informality and corruption, which postulates a role for local context in understanding the meaning of informal practices. Secondly, by employing an approach of seeing corruption as socially constructed, and exploring its construction in terms of meaning and norms by looking into the interactions between people in subgroups of society (social associations), this research establishes a link between two research areas that are most commonly treated separately. These research areas are anthropological and sociological studies examining corruption in their local context and studies examining more general processes related to corruption (e.g. neutralisation). Thirdly, I contribute to the debate on whether informality, including corruption, is context-bound, but how the context does not necessarily need to be country or culture-specific. This means that rather than providing culture-specific moral explanations for perceiving practices which are contrary to formal norms as being acceptable, I provide a more nuanced understanding that is still context-specific, but considers other, more generalisable and constant aspects (such as external and internal pressures, and people's perceptions of harm). To conduct this investigation, besides considering the locals' perspectives, I also use the migrants' perspectives which reveal more in-depth insights into certain processes of how people learn and routinise norms and rationalise taking part in everyday corruption practices.

My research is an investigation into corruption that applies the idea of 'suspended judgement' as part of a scientific inquiry, which is keeping in line with Ehrlich's approach, and as a methodological contribution my investigation succeeds in tackling other problems associated with corruption research. Corruption is commonly thought of as being an area which is 'hard to research', because corrupt practices happen covertly, and therefore they are not easily observable. I conducted 51 in-depth interviews and 5 focus groups between February 2017 and March 2019 in Budapest and Glasgow. The originality of the research design that includes two stages of data collection enabled me to connect research locations and nationalities. The first stage, that consisted of in-depth interviews, enabled me to capture the ways in which the informal practices are experienced, understood, and perceived. The second stage, the focus groups, provided a platform for participants to discuss and reflect on everyday practices and experiences of informality and corruption that often happen covertly.

Also, with this method, the research goes beyond the context (Eastern-Western) divide by providing opportunities for participants to reflect on practices that took place in the other research context. Therefore the research design brings the collected data, the two locations and the four groups of participants together, instead of producing a comparative research based on differing datasets. Finally, because I can speak Hungarian and English fluently, I was able to interview participants in their native languages, which enabled me to make a contribution to the nuanced understanding of local practices. Conducting the research in two languages and transcribing the Hungarian data to English presented challenges, but my method of transcribing enhanced the richness of the data, because I paid attention to translating the Hungarian material to English in a way that was closest to the original meaning and expression, which often required careful consideration (Gawlewicz, 2016:32). I will explore this aspect of the data collection in more detail in the Methodology chapter.

Empirically, the originality of the research lies in its focus on the migrants' perspectives. It contributes to language-based area-studies by presenting research on the lived experiences of Hungarian migrants in Glasgow, which has been understudied compared to the research on Polish migrants in the UK (Burrell, 2010). This thesis also contributes to the empirical research on British 'lifestyle' migrants, which is often addressed in a South European context, but not in a Central Eastern European (Hungarian) context. This research specifically focuses on informality and corruption, exploring meanings through participants' lived experiences, participation, and perceptions. This represents a new angle of investigation in the context of both 'lifestyle' and 'economic' migration research. I also recognise the value of the focus on migrants' experiences as helping to gain an insight into the mechanisms of everyday corruption practices, and people's experiences of those, therefore this thesis makes a substantial contribution not only to migration research, but to using the migrants' lens to develop more nuanced understandings of a social phenomenon in a local context and beyond.

1.5. Outline of the thesis

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 critically examines the existing literature on informality and corruption and situates my study and research design in relation to the previous debates. It shows how my investigation is built on the existing literature, but also

moves beyond it. In this chapter I outline the conceptual framework for this thesis, first, by introducing Ehrlich's original theory of 'living law' as an underlying theoretical framework, focusing on its key concepts that provide the basis for the overarching framework for my thesis, which are social associations, normative pluralism, and the non-judgmental approach. Secondly, by elaborating on how I apply and where necessary, modify Ehrlich's concepts to be able to study informal practices and their norms. Thirdly, by addressing the relationship between informality and corruption; and finally, by establishing a working definition of everyday corruption for the thesis.

Chapter 3 deals with the methodology and empirical strategies that I employ by using an interpretivist epistemological approach. I outline the research design for the thesis by explaining the methods that I used to collect, organise, and analyse the data. I describe the rationale of the research strategy and establish a connection between my research questions and the methodology of the thesis. I review the methods that I used to implement my research, including the recruitment process and data collection procedures. I address aspects of the research process that contributed to producing robust data, such as ethical considerations, my positionality as a researcher, and the use of language. In the final section I cover the analysis of the data by explaining the development of the coding framework and providing reflection on the analysis process itself.

Chapter 4 explores the rationalisations that emerged from the empirical data around participants' explanations for taking part in everyday corruption practices. I argue that providing rationalisations contributes to explaining the reasons why participants would take part in informal practices contrary to formal norms. In this chapter I structure the arguments around the types of informal practices most prevalent in the research contexts of Budapest and Glasgow, based on my own typology of practices. These are informal practices with the function of achieving either economic or social type of gain. Through examining the rationalisations offered by participants who typically either referred to external pressures or the perceived harmfulness of the informal practices, this chapter also reveals a nuanced understanding of similarities between the ways in which things are done in the two research contexts, despite the differing reasons for (and extent of) corruption practices, and different rationalisations. I pay attention to how the context contributed to those differences, and to what the differences tell us about the context. In conclusion, I identify the importance of

external issues and perceived harmfulness of the informal practices in people, developing a procedural acceptance of taking part in everyday corruption.

Chapter 5 explores the workings of the social association. In the first part I address how social associations surrounding the informal practices can be understood as the sum of norms constituting them, which regulate how people carry out informal transactions. In the second part, I explore how the relationships between the members of the social association - and therefore the norms emerging from their interactions - are influenced by the ways people come together in their attempts to co-operate or associate in carrying out an informal practice. I also consider how power-relations, inequalities, and hierarchies between the people in these interactions can influence their relationships, and therefore their compliance with the norms of the social association. I examine how the mode of enforcement, which I consider as a necessary element of the norms of 'living law', is influenced by the power-relations within the social association, and by the formation of the social association. I address the importance of people's communication and negotiation strategies which they use while conducting certain informal transactions. Finally, I explore two processes, learning and routinising, which help to facilitate the reproduction of the norms of 'living law' and also contribute to the members of the social association regarding informal practices as acceptable, at least in a procedural sense, alongside the process of rationalisation that I have explored in the previous chapter.

Chapter 6 uses migrants' experiences as a starting point. I found that migrants' experiences of interaction with new social associations in the context of a new social environment amplifies wider trends and experiences. In the first part of the chapter, I address how existing, context-specific, and migration generated power-relations and inequalities, affect the interaction between the members of the social association in terms of coercion and pressure into compliance between members as an enforcement mechanism of the norms of 'living law'. I explore the migration aspects separately for the two distinct groups of migrants - British 'lifestyle' migrants and Hungarian 'economic' migrants. In the second part of the chapter, I consider the possible changes and/or continuities in migrants' participation in, attitudes towards, and perceptions of informal practices as an outcome of interacting with new social associations. Focusing on migrants' lived experiences with regards to the processes of the social association (learning, routinising and rationalisation) and tensions

within the social association, I explore the importance of the internalisation of the norms that can lead to moral acceptance of the practices beyond the procedural acceptance.

Chapter 7 on the socially constructed understanding of corruption explores participants' ambivalent explanations and perceptions of everyday corruption practices as they attempt to define corruption from differing viewpoints. It becomes clear that people's perceptions of corruption are ambivalent, changing and context specific, and therefore that there is not one socially constructed definition of corruption. The chapter also brings together the significance of the external and internal pressures, and people's perceptions of harm (which I explored in the previous chapters), and situates them in a 'matrix of acceptability'. Concluding, as an outcome I suggest that the 'matrix of acceptability', which represents common factors by which people understand corruption, is a useful tool for providing a nuanced understanding of corruption in any context, and challenging simplified, 'cultural' explanations. Whilst the matrix allows for context specific adjustment, which means that it does not necessarily give the same result in each case, it has fairly constant components which can help people construct their own understanding of corruption.

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.

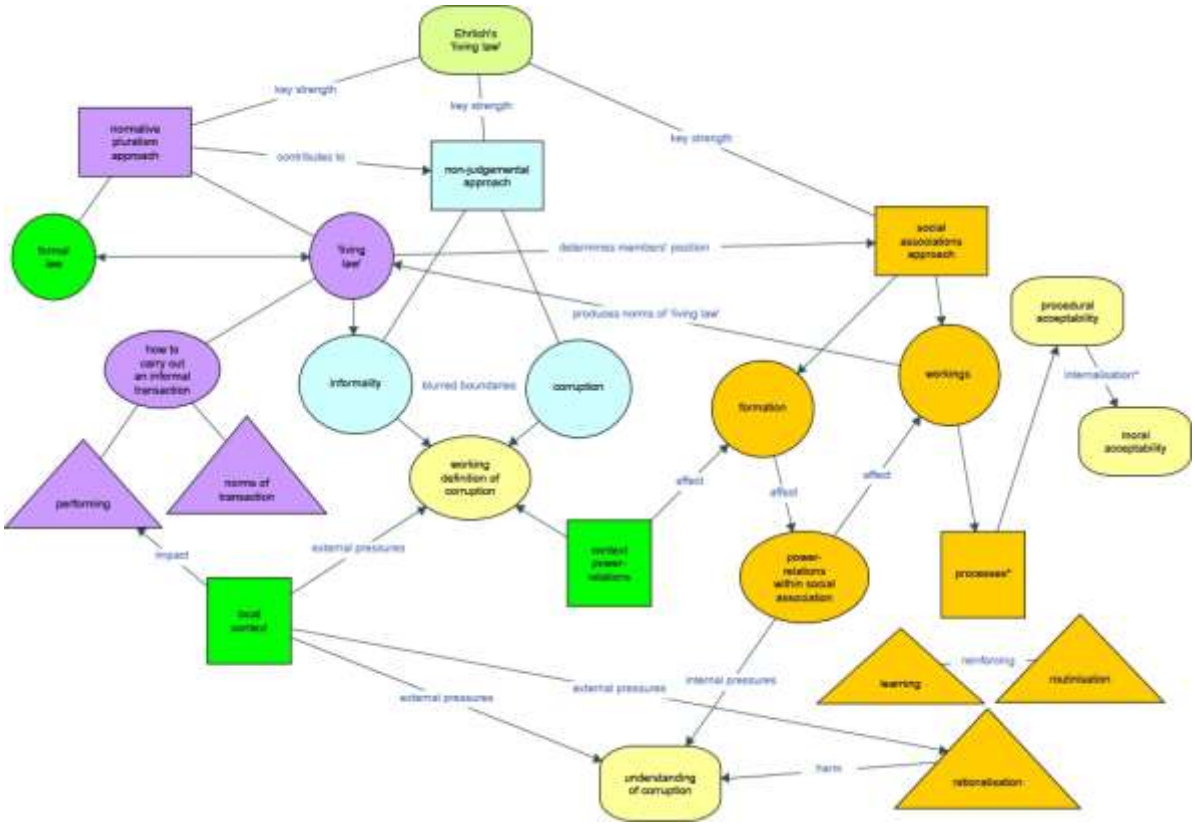
Chapter 2: Conceptual framework

The aim of this chapter is to bring together a range of concepts which will help to provide a framework for the data analysis. I also seek to present an approach that enables me to study informal practices in the two differing research contexts of Hungary and Scotland. In the previous section I explained and elaborated on a detailed outline of the research aims and questions, however if I have to summarise the purpose of the thesis in one sentence it would be to examine people's perceptions of everyday corruption in order to gain a better and more nuanced insight of their definitions and understandings of acceptable corruption. In this sense, an investigation of informal practices and their norms is crucial to this study. In line with Ehrlich's 'living law' theory, I also view these norms as emerging from the social interaction of people, or groups of people, through social associations. To be able to examine the norms surrounding everyday corruption practices, and what they reveal about people's understandings of everyday corruption, I chose Ehrlich's 'living law' theory as the key theoretical underpinning of my overarching conceptual framework. Having established a preliminary conceptual framework in this way, as my empirical analysis progressed, I revised it from time to time as the thesis developed and as new unexpected themes emerged[1].

In the first section of this chapter, I present the main concepts of Ehrlich's socio-legal theory explaining its appeal as an overarching theory, but I also point out the weaknesses that I needed to tackle. Starting in the second section, I then build up my conceptual framework supplementing Ehrlich's work with other more contemporary concepts in order to be able to analyse my data. This second section consists of three parts, each of which are based on one of the main cornerstones of Ehrlich's framework, which are relevant to my study (i.e. normative pluralism, non-judgmental approach, and social associations) and I develop these strains into a comprehensive conceptual framework by using and adapting appropriate concepts (Figure 2-1.)

[1] I describe this process in detail in Chapter 3 (in section 3.5.1.) on Methodology.

Figure 2-1.: Concept map



Note that there is no relevance attached to the shapes

Yellow – concepts empirically emerging, or developed for this thesis

Orange – concepts related to social associations

Green – external concepts affecting the workings of the social association and norms of 'living law'

Blue – concepts related to informality and corruption

Purple – concepts related to the norms of 'living law'

*The processes that lead to develop procedural acceptance (learning, routinisation, and rationalisation) and moral acceptance (internalisation) are not explored in detail in this chapter and are introduced in the empirical chapters.

2.1. Ehrlich's 'living law' theory

In this section I explain systematically how Ehrlich's (2002) 'living law' as an overarching theory can bring together the differing concepts that I use to examine everyday corruption practices and the norms connected to them. I start this section by introducing Ehrlich's (2002) ideas (originally published in 1913) as they were developed in their original context, and I address how these ideas have been applied and interpreted in contemporary studies. I outline the ways in which I apply and adapt Ehrlich's (2002) original concept for my thesis as I identify challenges I am faced with when I use the 'living law' theory in a way that enables an analytical investigation in my research contexts. I also systematically address the modifications to the original concept that I have to make, because I apply them in contemporary settings. I point out the strengths of the 'living law' concept, as well as the weaknesses when applying it as an analytical tool, and explain which elements need to be modified, and perhaps supplemented with other concepts.

As a guide, in the foreword of the Fundamental Principles of the Sociology of Law, Ehrlich himself attempted to summarise his extensive work in one sentence: 'At the present as well as at any other time, the centre of gravity of legal development lies not in legislation, nor in juristic science, nor in judicial decision, but in society itself' (Ehrlich, 2002: xv). Putting this statement into simple words, Hertogh (2004:457) suggested that Ehrlich focused on 'what do people experience as 'law'?', and he argued that with this approach Ehrlich established the basis of the European concept of legal consciousness. This seminal statement of Ehrlich's work is the one that has particularly resonated in present-day studies, and it is still significant today. The statement sets out an approach to the investigation of law (norms) from a point of view which advocates that there are norms in society, other than the state's norms, that have importance in regulating people's behaviour in everyday life. These other normative orders can regulate and influence social behaviour more effectively than the formal law (Urinboyev and Svensson, 2014:215). Ehrlich argued for an empirically based concept of law, which was broader than the state law, and existed independently of any outside authority (Banakar and Travers, 2002:33). Moreover, in this conceptualisation it is not a necessary element of the notion of law that law is created by the state (Tamanaha, 1995:503). Ehrlich focused on the patterns of actual behaviour of people in social groups (social associations), because he recognised the binding mechanism of law in people's social relations (Tamanaha, 1995:512-518). Ehrlich suggested finding the order of law in social life itself, as it was

organised de facto by the groups and networks of people in his local context (Banakar and Travers, 2002:43). Ehrlich's local context was the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the late 19th and early 20th century. More specifically, he observed the habits and customs of various ethnocultural groups[2] in Bukowina, where he was a university scholar of law. Ehrlich recognised that the normative order of these groups was mostly based on informal rules, while the formal law (imposed on them from Vienna) had limited impact and meaning in people's everyday life (Urinboyev and Svensson, 2014:214).

According to Ehrlich, 'all human lives are lived in associations - that is formal and informal groupings of numerous kinds' (Ehrlich, 2002:38). Ehrlich considered social associations as the foundation and essence of the social organisation of society (Banakar and Travers, 2002:43), i.e. he conceptualised that society as a whole is a collection of social associations (Hertogh, 2004:473). Ehrlich believed that these associations are created through the attempts of people to cooperate in different everyday relationships, therefore they could vary in size and function, from families to business communities, professions, clubs, a school or a factory, a farm, or the state itself (Tamanaha, 1995:504). By providing these examples Ehrlich identified some of these groups that could be, but are not exclusively, considered as social associations (Banakar, 2012:17). Ehrlich argued (2002:27-28) that 'man' (sic) in a society 'becomes the member of an almost incalculable number of associations of the most diverse kind'. According to Ehrlich, society consisted of many associations that were official or formal, and at the same time many that were informal (Banakar, 2012:17). Ehrlich (2002:83) defined social associations as 'a plurality of human beings who, in relation with one another, recognise certain rules of conduct as binding, and generally at least, actually regulate their conduct according to them'. Banakar (2012:17) explained that Ehrlich's work should be understood as an examination of a collective experience, because he concentrated on the life of groups or associations, exploring the norms emerging from them. It is the social association's norms that 'assign each individual his (sic) position and function' (Ehrlich, 2002:85). The act of assigning positions is referred to as the 'inner order of the social association'[3]. Ehrlich explained that the 'inner order' of the social association is determined

[2] Ehrlich himself described his research as a unique project aimed at studying the 'living law' of the people of Bukowina, where Armenians, Germans, Gipsies, Jews, Hungarians, Romanians, Russians, Ruthenians, and Slovaks lived side by side (Ehrlich, 1912:44; Hertogh, 2004:474).

[3] It is important to note here that the function of the social association in assigning rules to its members was interpreted by later scholars in a way that seems to be an extension of Ehrlich's original thoughts. Ziegert, when providing the introduction for the 2002 edition of the Fundamental Principles of the Sociology of Law, described the associations' internal regulations as possessing a degree of

by the norms of 'living law', i.e. not externally imposed (such as legal norms or formal law) but arising from the modes of thought that underlie the associations (Banakar, 2012:17). One of the main strengths of the 'living law' theory in relation to my research is that it enables me to gain a better understanding of the informal norms and practices emerging from multiple formal and informal groupings of people (social associations) in all societies, moving beyond context-specific explanations.

The norms of 'living law' are 'the law that dominates life itself, even though it has not been printed in legal propositions' (Ehrlich, 2002:27). Ehrlich argued that there are (at least) two kinds of law, such as the 'norms for decision' ('Rechtssatz' - legal rules), and the norms of 'living law' ('Rechtsleben' - legal life) (Nelken, 1984:159,161). Court rulings and state legislation are 'norms for decision' that tell judges and government officials how to perform their tasks. They include not only rules and norms, but also the actual patterns of decision-making by legislative bodies (Hertogh, 2004:473-474). The 'norms for decision' are rules and legal propositions found in civil codes, judicial decisions and in statutory enactments - these are legislative and judge-made laws (Nelken, 1984:161). To Ehrlich, the need for 'norms for decision' arises only in cases of dispute and conflict, whereas 'living law' prevails under normal circumstances (Banakar and Travers, 2002:44).

To identify and distinguish the content of 'living law' Ehrlich proposed an empirical approach. The source of our knowledge of this law is 'first, the modern legal documents[4] and secondly, direct observation of life, of commerce, of customs and usages, and of all associations - not only of those that the law has recognised but also of those that it has overlooked or passed by, indeed of those that it has disapproved of' (Ehrlich, 2002:27). Nelken (2008:446-447) argued that Ehrlich groups together a number of not necessarily homogenous phenomena, which triggered some general criticism of Ehrlich[5]. To clarify his

reflexivity. He explained that the legal norms provide the individual members with a relational 'reference point' that tells them not only what conduct is expected of them, but also, in relative terms, what they can expect from others (Trevino, 2014:12-13). He called this concept a 'reflexive web of normative expectations', however Nelken (2007:194) argued that Zeigert's interpretation is influenced by Luhmann's (a later scholar) thoughts.

[4] As an example of the 'modern legal document' Ehrlich discussed whether judicial decisions may be examined in such a way that they reveal the norms of 'living law' ('as to the truth of the legal relations described therein') (Murphy, 2012:183).

[5] For example, Kelsen stated that Ehrlich confused normative and descriptive analysis by giving this definition (Banakar and Travers, 2002:33-34). Furthermore, the definition of 'living law' has been criticised for its unrestricted scope, that tends towards absurdity by including all rules of conduct as law (Banakar and Travers, 2002:44-45), being vague and abstruse (Trevino, 2014:38-39) and specifically making a mistake by describing custom as law (Rheinstein, 1938).

perspective, Ehrlich provided a guide to distinguish the norms of 'living law' from other types of norms, such as those having to do with morality, ethical custom, and decorum (Trevino, 2014:8). His solution was that, despite the analytical difficulties in distinguishing legal norms and norms of 'living law' as well as other types of norms, it is possible to separate them 'practically', considering 'people's attitudes towards these norms' (Nelken, 1984:163), which can be understood as considering people's feelings and reactions (Urinboyev and Svensson, 2014:215). Ehrlich called this approach of distinguishing norms 'opinio necessitatis' (Ehrlich, 2002:165) based on the term used by the jurists of the Continental common law of his time. Within the group of norms, it was felt to be 'of great importance, of basic significance' (Ehrlich, 2002:167-168). Because of the lack of further elaboration Cotterrell (2009:90) explained 'opinio necessitatis' as 'the feeling or instinct of obeying a social necessity'. However, all scholarly work that I consulted (Murphy, 2012; Nelken, 2008; Cotterrell, 2009) concurred that this approach does not succeed in differentiating 'law' and 'non-law' (Murphy, 2012:191). Tamanaha (1995:505) wrote that the inability of the theory to provide a distinction between legal and non-legal norms prompted most socio-legal scholars to not use this concept of law. I identify this as one of the difficulties of using Ehrlich's 'living law' theory as an analytical tool, for example identifying and distinguishing the norms of 'living' law from other norms or non-norms, such as moral codes. I will address how to get around these weaknesses by supplementing Ehrlich's original work with other concepts and studies in order to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework in the coming sections.

Nelken (1984:173) argued that the theoretical development of Ehrlich's ideas 'depends on the development of a sociology of norms rather than a sociology of law'. Engaging with the sociology of norms, Svensson (2013:43) explained that in Ehrlich's concept there is no ontological difference between formal legal norms (legal proposition) and other type of norms. Ehrlich himself pointed out the co-existence of legal (normative) pluralities - 'In every society there is a much greater number of legal norms than legal propositions' (Ehrlich, 2002:38). Arguably, the main contribution of Ehrlich to the social jurisprudence was the recognition that not all legal norms are state norms, which leads to normative pluralism. Normative pluralism acknowledges the co-existence of multiple sets of rules that influence people's actions that apply to the same situation, thereby creating complex configurations of normative plurality within a social setting (Anders and Nuijten, 2007:13). As Anders and Nuijten (2007:2) noted explicitly about the relationship between corruption and law, a

normative pluralist perspective helps us to gain a more nuanced and informed understanding of the relationship between corruption according to the formal law and what people perceive as corruption. This is another important aspect of Ehrlich's theory that makes it a useful concept to examine acceptable everyday corruption practices in a non-judgmental way.

The conceptual framework that I will present in the following sections is based on the main cornerstones and strengths of Ehrlich's 'living law' theory in terms of my research focus. The idea that society is a sum of social associations allows for an examination of everyday corruption practices between differing contexts and can provide a more generalisable entry point to understanding of people's perceptions and understandings of everyday corruption practices which are not solely context dependent. I have identified the key notion of normative pluralism as one of these strengths, which is crucial to investigate the informal norms (norms of 'living law') that are just as important in regulating how to 'get certain things done' as formal norms in people's everyday life. This consequently allows for a non-judgemental examination of the norms of 'everyday corruption' practices. Utilising these three overarching notions (social associations, norms of 'living law', and a non-judgemental approach) allows the establishment of a framework to answer my main research question: How do practices, understandings, and definitions in relation to everyday corruption differ or show similarities (coincide) in Scotland and Hungary (in a Western and CEE context) when taking into account both the long-term local residents' and migrants' perspectives?

2.2. Social associations and everyday corruption

2.2.1. Formation of the social association

Based on Ehrlich's (2002) original theory, the norms of 'living law' emerge from the interaction of the members of the social association as people who come together in an attempt to co-operate (Banakar, 2012:18). For my research I interpret this as the formation of social associations around informal transactions, which starts with two or more people coming together in an informal way to co-operate in carrying out an informal practice. In this section I specifically address the formation of the social association surrounding informal transactions, which I consider as everyday corruption practices. As I explained in the general description of Ehrlich's original idea, Ehrlich gave some direction as to how to identify social associations by providing typical examples of them. Based on Ehrlich (2002),

Murphy (2012:189) argued that typically all people are simultaneously part of larger social associations (e.g. the global and transnational community), which can comprise smaller ones (e.g. local communities and families) and that there might be a cross-over among the categories. Having a multitude of social associations of numerous kinds (Ehrlich, 2002:38) means that there will be social associations with only few members (as few as two people) and larger social associations with numerous members. For my research purposes I identify social associations empirically, which is in line with Ehrlich's approach of empirically observing everyday life, people's actual habits, and enquiring into their thoughts to reify the 'living law' (Urinboyev and Svensson, 2014:215). Further discussion on identifying social associations is situated in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.5.2.) and the relevant empirical chapters.

Apart from the number of people associated with a social association (size), the members' relationships within the social association can vary in terms of being close knit or not knowing each other at all. In the context of my research - focusing on everyday corruption practices - social associations come together, crisscross, and overlap with formal or informal organisations and networks in different ways. This is an aspect that I need to pay attention to in order to gain a better understanding of the 'inner order' of the social associations, or the rules of conduct that regulate the members' behaviour in the social associations. In the section below I will consider how social associations are situated in specific local contexts, which are already shaped by pre-existing structures of power. These pre-existing power-relations might have an impact on how social associations form and these different ways of formation can ultimately affect the 'inner order' of the social associations (i.e. how the social association operates). Therefore, putting this notion into practice, when analysing the data, I explored the ways in which the formation of social associations might impact on its inner workings. This question is explored empirically in Chapter 5.

2.2.2. Power-relations in the wider social context

Addressing power-relations situated in the wider social context is important, because social associations are situated in these contexts. Anders and Nuijten (2007:15) argued for the importance of considering power, because 'corrupt practices cannot be dissociated from the operation of power'. Anders and Nuijten (2007:15) conceptualised power as 'A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests' based on Lukes'

(2004:30) research. Lukes (2004:26) argued that individual acts of exercising coercion, influence, and authority have to be situated in the 'socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions'. Anders and Nuijten (2007:15) emphasised understanding power in structural terms referring to relationships that are stable and hierarchical over a longer period of time, and to positions which are fixed and difficult to reverse. This refers to those asymmetrical relationships of power over someone, when the subordinated persons have little room for manoeuvre (Lemke, 2002:54). I find the structural perspective useful when I examine pre-existing power-relations in the social context in which the social associations are situated. Power-relations (in structural terms) determine who has the power and connections to carry out – or choose not to take part in - an informal practice. In other words, they determine who has room to manoeuvre in a social context. This implies that the opportunity to take part in everyday corruption (or not) is not evenly distributed amongst people more broadly in the social contexts. In other words, a structural perspective addresses the relationship of corruption to the unequal distribution of resources in society (Anders and Nuijten, 2007:15).

2.2.3. Power-relations within the social associations

In my conceptualisation the formation of the social association can also determine its 'inner order' in terms of internal power-relations and hierarchies. According to Ehrlich (2002:85), the social association produces the norms of 'living law' that assign roles to its members. This means that it regulates what is expected from the members in a particular context or transaction, and it determines their position in the social association. Ehrlich's original theory does not offer a sufficiently clear and detailed framework to facilitate empirical analysis in contemporary research regarding the role and importance of the power-relations and hierarchies within the social association - i.e. why members obey the norms of 'living law'. Therefore this aspect needs adaptation and modification in my conceptualisation. Taking a closer look at Ehrlich's examples of 'living law', the interaction between the members is not necessarily cooperative, especially in a situation that is contrary to the state norms. For example, Ehrlich (2002) illustrated the 'living law' in Bukowina by arguing that the wages of children placed in service were pocketed by their parents, even though this was contrary to the provisions of the Austrian Civil Code. Ehrlich regarded this as 'living law', because 'If we were to ask why children put up with such behaviour, we would be told that resistance would be unheard of' (Ehrlich quoted in Nelken, 1984:161). In another example,

Ehrlich argued how the regime of male ownership of peasant family property was accepted as a norm in Bukowina. The norms of ownership were maintained by the members of the social association, contrary to the fact that the Austrian civil code contained regulations on joint ownership of property, and that these would have been more advantageous to follow, for example in the case of separation (Nelken, 1984:167). These examples show that Ehrlich was more concerned with the actual norms of the social association, and did not question or analyse the effect and role of hierarchies and inequalities within the social associations in determining whether people had any room for manoeuvre in obeying the norms of 'living law'. In other words, Ehrlich was more interested in identifying and observing the norms of 'living law', rather than engaging with the reasons for compliance. Nelken (1984:174) argued that Ehrlich appeared to justify leaving 'working normative orders' alone, even when they were themselves based on the dominance over some individuals or groups by others. This is one of the weaknesses of using the concept of social associations as an analytical tool, therefore in my thesis I seek to adjust this shortcoming (i.e. not paying attention to power-relations and hierarchies, and therefore internal pressures) in my thesis. I take into account that the interactions between the members in the social association do not necessarily take place on a level playing field, and therefore it is important to consider power-relations, inequalities, hierarchy, and dependencies within the social association. In my conceptualisation, the question of power and inequalities within the social association drive many of the interactions, and this produces a more complex picture of moral conflict, enforcement, and compliance. Power-relations and hierarchies within the social association can mean that compliance with the norms can be voluntary to different degrees, which I will explore in the empirical chapters of this thesis.

2.3. The norms of 'living law' and everyday corruption

2.3.1. Formal state law and informal norms of 'living law'

To be able to examine everyday corruption practices I need to look more closely into the relationship between formal and informal norms. North (1990) and Helmke and Levitsky's (2004) work helps me to conceptualise this situation in a way that I can incorporate into the conceptual framework. In the discipline of economic and political sciences, the importance of informal norms in society was addressed by North's (1990) original theory of institutions, as well as by Helmke and Levitsky (2004) in a way that is relevant to my research. North

(1990:6, 45) identified informal institutions as socially embedded and more resistant to change than formal institutions that are defined and governed by written law and regulations. This is because formal rules and regulations can be changed overnight (for example as a political or judicial decision), yet 'informal constraints embodied in customs, traditions and codes of conduct are much more impervious to deliberate policies' (North, 1990:6). Helmke and Levitsky (2004:227), developing North's (1990) work, defined informal institutions as 'socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels. By contrast, formal institutions are rules and procedures that are created, communicated, and enforced through channels widely accepted as official'. Helmke and Levitsky (2004:726) proposed this definition of formal and informal institutions to contribute to the comparative research on political institutions by presenting a systematic analysis of the informal 'rules of the game', and they asserted that they treat informal institutions and norms synonymously (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004:735). I can establish a conceptual connection between Ehrlich's 'living law' theory and North's 'institutions', because 'informal institutions' resemble social norms in Ehrlich's work as the norms of 'living law' are socially constructed and emerge informally from the member's interactions in social associations. North (1990), like Helmke and Levitsky (2004), focused on informal practices that not only co-exist, but also penetrate, diverge, and exploit formal institutions, conceptualised as types of interaction between formal and informal institutions (Ledeneva, 2018b:2).

Developing North's (1990) theory, Helmke and Levitsky (2004) not only demarcated formal and informal behavioural patterns, but also addressed the connection and relationship between formal and informal institutions in a nuanced way. I am less interested in the actual interaction between formal and informal norms, however understanding the relationship between them helps to explore people's attitudes towards and perceptions of both, and hence motivate the need for a non-judgemental approach. Helmke and Levitsky (2004:729) argued that if the informal institutions are divergent from formal institutions, and competing with them, then those informal institutions qualify as corruption. This situation might arise when informal institutions co-exist with ineffective formal institutions. In such cases, formal rules and procedures are not systematically enforced, which enables people to ignore or violate them. Helmke and Levitsky (2004:729) explained that, for example, in a corrupt situation, informal institutions structure incentives in ways that are incompatible with the formal rules, which means that to follow one rule, an actor must violate another. Following Helmke and

Levitsky's (2004) conceptualisation, informal practices can be considered as corruption if they compete with, diverge from, and are contrary to the formal regulation. Informal norms that regulate informal practices may comprise both co-existing and competing norms. Therefore, informality is a wider category than corruption, or, in other words, following Polese, et al.'s (2018:208) suggestion, it can be stated that corruption is a subcategory of informality. I address the relationship between informality and corruption using the non-judgemental approach in section 2.4. First however, I continue this section by addressing how everyday corruption relates to another aspect of the local context, which is connected to the existence of social norms in societies (that researchers commonly address as local moral codes or cultural norms), before discussing the demarcation of the norms of 'living law' from other social norms (for example local moral codes, traditions, religious norms).

2.3.2. Informal practices and local moral codes

Humphrey (2012) argued that informal economic transactions may reflect different cultural and functional meanings depending on the local context in a post-socialist setting. It should be noted however, that this notion is not restricted to area-studies in post-socialist societies. For example, Gupta (1995) examined clientelism, nepotism, and 'performative competence' in India, and de Sardan (1999, 2015) examined bureaucratic corruption and 'practical norms' in post-colonial Africa, which also demonstrated the importance of local norms that are embedded in the context. Therefore, I also use these studies to inform my research and build my conceptual framework. Nonetheless, it is also worth focusing on area-studies in post-socialist contexts due to my (partial) focus on the Hungarian context and on Hungarian migrants in Glasgow. Area-studies in post-socialist contexts often set out to focus on the comparison to the West. For example, Werner (2000), Rasanayagam (2011), and Kurkchiyan (2000), amongst others, have demonstrated the existence of local perceptions of moral codes and values present in informal transactions that significantly differ from 'Western' morality and standards, arguing that some of the local informal transactions would be labelled as corruption by Western standards (Urinboyev and Svensson, 2014:230). Curro (2017), similarly to others such as Morris and Polese (2013) and Ledeneva (2009), considered the role of local practices in the wider social and political processes in the local context, emphasising the discrepancies between the local practices and imposed norms by external formal institutions (e.g. World Bank, EU), and with this notion described a similar situation to that which Ehrlich observed in his historical Bukowina. Similarly, Urinboyev and

Svensson (2013:375) argued that many transactions in the Uzbek local context might come across (to a Western observer) as bribes - such as paying policemen or hospital staff. However, when taking into consideration the local cultural context and moral codes, these transactions can be considered as morally acceptable gifts (Urinboyev and Svensson, 2013:384). Working with the same data, methodology and framework, in a different research paper Urinboyev and Svensson (2014:229) found that in the Uzbek context there were informal transactions which were deeply embedded in cultural practices. Therefore, they suggested that when addressing or measuring corruption, social norms, moral codes, and local perceptions should be taken into consideration (Urinboyev and Svensson 2014:30). They also suggested that not all informal transactions are corrupt, and using corruption as a general term would hide the fact that there a set of different rules that are competing with those of the state (Urinboyev and Svensson, 2014:30), and they address this notion through Ehrlich's (2002) concept of 'living law' as a normative plural situation between the imposed state law and the local practices.

While conducting an ethnographic investigation of interactions between civil servants and ordinary people in the context of post-colonial Africa, de Sardan (1999) also observed the existence of informal norms co-existing and competing with the formal norms. De Sardan suggested (1999:35) that this double-view of formal and informal norms can be examined from the sociological perspective of 'practical norms'. 'Practical norms' are informal regulations of routinised practices that are not complying (at least partly) with official norms (de Sardan, 1999:49), which means that 'practical norms' can complement, bypass, or contradict formal norms. I recognise many similarities between the concept of 'practical norms' and Ehrlich's (2002) concept of 'living law'. For example, de Sardan (1999:47) explained that informal practices that are considered to be corruption from the perspective of formal norms are not necessarily viewed as corruption from the perspective of 'practical norms'. The official norms define corruption in terms of illegality, and the 'practical norms' are those that regulate practices that are illegal, but which are culturally legitimate or tolerated (de Sardan, 1999:49). In the context of these research studies, it makes sense to attribute the existence of informal practices to pre-existing local moral codes and to provide a cultural explanation, because they set out to emphasise the conflict between embedded informal practices and the imposed legal system, for example in post-soviet Uzbekistan or post-colonial Africa. Considering informal norms as culturally embedded practices highlights a normatively plural situation and the importance of understanding practices in

their context. However, my research takes place beyond and between contexts, therefore I need to move away from the strictly cultural explanation of informal practices to find a more generalisable way to examine them.

2.3.3. Identifying the norms of 'living law' for the research on everyday corruption

When I introduced Ehrlich's (2002) original ideas on 'living law', and his way of distinguishing them from other norms, I highlighted the analytical difficulties. Based on my collected data the boundary between the norms of 'living law' and other social norms (for example customs and traditions) can be blurred, and therefore requires a degree of interpretation. In this section I address how I make that distinction and identify the norms of 'living law' for my research purposes. To distinguish the norms of 'living law' from other social norms, I equip Ehrlich's (2002) original concept with some elements of North's (1990) work on informal and formal institutions. The key element of North's (1990) theory that helps me to better understand and distinguish social norms and the norms of 'living law' is the element of enforcement. North (1990:54-55) suggested that formal institutions have formal, institutionally supported enforcement mechanisms, and that similarly informal institutions have informal enforcement mechanisms, and, additionally, these informal institutions might be self-enforcing. North (1990:55) attributed enforcement to a number of differing mitigating factors in personal exchanges, such as the actors having a great deal of knowledge of each other, or the existence of pre-existing social relations (i.e. family bonds, reciprocal networks). North (1990:55) mentioned two examples of mitigating circumstances (by which parties attempt to assure compliance) in impersonal exchanges, which were the exchange of assurances, and the ostracism of actors who went back on promises. He also identified 'reputation' as a mechanism to enforce agreements in impersonal exchanges. Some of these factors are relevant and can be applied to my data analysis. Because North (1990:54) built his theory around economic transactions and their cost effectiveness, his explanation regarding enforcement mechanisms was also centred around transaction cost: 'Parties to an exchange must be able to enforce compliance at a (transaction) cost such that the exchange is worthwhile to them'. I also retain that the co-operation required to conduct a transaction usually needs to be perceived as worthwhile for in the actors. However, in my thesis, as I explained earlier in this chapter (in section 2.2.3.), I also consider another aspect that can influence the nature and the co-operation between the members of the social

association. This aspect is the existence of power-relations and hierarches within the social associations. In this research I understand coercion/pressures induced by hierarchies and power-relations as a mitigating factor that assures compliance, and therefore I include these into my framework as an informal enforcement mechanism. This means that some informal transactions that I will discuss in the empirical chapters are closer to being self-enforcing, especially if people have enough information about each other, as well as about the norms of how to carry out and informal transaction, and if these transactions are repeated (North, 1990:55). Other transactions are more likely to be enforced by applied pressures and different levels of coercion from certain members of the social associations.

Addressing the question of mapping enforcement to the concept of 'living law', I conceptualise (based on Ehrlich's original notion) that the norms of 'living law' are enforced by the members of the social association using informal mechanisms. Tamanaha (1995:514) argued that Ehrlich understood the norms of 'living law' as regularised patterns of actual behaviour and that 'the binding mechanism to maintain these patterns of behaviours is the complex network of social obligations'. It is the 'inner order' of the social association that guarantees everyday life normative patterns that people can follow (Urinboyev and Svensson, 2014:214), instead of (only occasionally) thinking about institutionally enforced sanctions when people engage in their affairs (Tamanaha, 1995:514). According to Tamanaha (1995:504-505), Ehrlich also identified basic 'binding mechanisms' supporting the norms of 'living law' as he acknowledged the significance of sanctions, however he denied that sanctions have a primary importance in compliance. Instead, Ehrlich (2002:64) wrote that 'a man (sic) therefore conducts himself according to law, chiefly because this is made imperative by his social relations' (Ehrlich, 2002:64). In this way Ehrlich identified informal enforcement. Tamanaha (1995:505) suggested that, according to Ehrlich, people followed the legal norms (both formal norms and norms of 'living law') because of positive inducement (because it was in their interest to do so) rather than from fear of sanction. In North's (1990:55) conceptualisation, kinship ties, various forms of loyalty, and groups in society can provide frameworks within which living up to agreements is 'worthwhile'. The norms of 'living law' are not enforceable by the courts, but seem to be largely obeyed. This implies that members, by subscribing to the rules of conduct of the social association, agree to follow the norms of the social association - this is what I identify as procedural acceptability of the norms.

Taking the importance of enforcement into consideration, I understand the norms of 'living law' as (1) a set of ways of acting that is experienced as obligatory and binding between a group of people in a common type of situation; (2) this set of ways of acting emerged from the social interaction of a group of people (socially constructed, empirical reality); (3) the group of people experience and believe that the set of ways of acting has a regulatory effect (enforcement, compliance, sanction). The relationship between, and weight given to each of these three aspects here, is still a matter of degree and depends on the participants' perceptions of the norms that regulate the informal transactions. I apply this framework of identifying the norms of 'living law' especially throughout Chapter 5.

2.3.4. Performative aspects of informal practices

Examining corrupt informal transactions requires addressing the question of the performative aspects of the interaction between the actors participating in them, which include hidden or implicit codes, gestures, and language (Blundo, 2017:3). Anders and Nuijten (2007:17) suggested that it is because of the contentious nature of corruption that carrying out such a transaction demands a great deal of performative qualities. The performative aspects of everyday corruption practices are often discussed in relation to local moral codes and culture. Werner (2000:16) suggested that the 'the informal procedures for successfully engaging in corrupt activities are also embedded in the local culture'. Similarly, Anders and Nuijten (2007:17) argued that the specific qualities required to negotiate an informal transaction are culturally codified. Anders and Nuijten (2007:17), like others, noted that corruption tends to be accompanied by secret idioms, symbol and codes, and furthermore in individual transactions the subtlety of wording is important, which could lead to the success or failure of the transaction. Gupta (1995:381) described performative competence of initiating low-level corrupt bureaucratic exchanges in the context of India. Gupta (1995:379) suggested that even if the process of bribe giving was public and openly practiced, there were performative aspects that had to be mastered. In the Hungarian context, Jancsics (2013:330) described communication strategies in carrying out everyday corrupt transactions. There were different ways of initiating a corrupt exchange that Jancsics (2013:330) observed, such as asking questions with a double-meaning as a 'mating dance', as opposed to the practice of 'asking it openly'.

The importance of the performative aspects of corruption is widely recognised in research on corruption, and highlights two separate issues. First, if someone wants to successfully carry out the transaction, they need to do it in a certain way, and secondly, that these ways need to be learnt. It is an acquired skill based on learning to gain knowledge of the 'rules of the game' (Ruud, 2000:289). My data also confirmed that there is an importance of communication when carrying out the practice, and in competence in negotiation. There is also the additional component of knowing the language, and different meanings and covert expressions in that language. These explanations reinforce the perception that the performative aspects derive from local moral and cultures. However, I conceptualise these performative aspects of carrying out an informal transaction as part of the 'living law' which is both specific to each social association and more universally observable. The rules of conduct of the social association contain norms that regulate participants' actions when performing an informal practice (Ehrlich, 2002:85), therefore the norms of 'living law' prescribe norms for communication between the participants of the informal practice, which again leads to a more generalisable understanding of the carrying out of the informal transaction, rather than simply attributing it to cultural norms. This is because although the specifics may be different for each social association or context, there are certain aspects of these patterns of behaviour and communication, and the ways in which they are learned and enforced, which can be more universally observed. This more generalisable understanding of the performative aspects is also necessary, because of my approach of looking at migrants' and long-term residents' experiences side by side. In Chapter 6 I will specifically focus on how migrant participants would potentially have difficulties conducting themselves in a culturally and linguistically less familiar setting compared with the long-term residents.

2.4. Taking a non-judgmental approach to the study of everyday corruption

In the introduction, and in the previous section of the conceptual framework, I established that it is appropriate to use a non-judgemental approach (as opposed to a normative approach) to examine everyday corruption practices. Ehrlich's 'living law' theory accommodates this approach, which stems from the idea of normative pluralism, because according to that notion there is no ontological difference between state law and the norms of 'living law'. However, I need to address that the normative approach is prevalent in corruption studies, as corruption can be considered as a deviation from the dominant

normative system (formal law), a notion which includes a moral and value-judgement of the informal norms and practices. Ledeneva (2018a:425) pointed out that a normative approach has its challenges, which are especially relevant in societies with systemic corruption, 'where corrupt practices are more of a norm than a deviation' (Ledeneva, 2018a:425). Ledeneva (2014a:19) also warned researchers (and policy makers) about 'labelling' all informal practices as corruption. This notion is particularly relevant for my research, because, for example, in the Hungarian context elements of systemic corruption can be found (Böröcz, 2000; Jancsics, 2014). The challenge of making a distinction between informality and corruption in a non-normative way needs to be addressed for my research purposes, as it points to important issues that need to be resolved in order to present a comprehensive conceptual framework, such as understanding blurred boundaries and ambivalence surrounding informal practices, and having an appropriate (inclusive) working definition of everyday corruption.

2.4.1. Informality and corruption

Connected to the difficulties with identifying the distinction between informality and corruption, Varese (2000) (in the research context of Italy and Eastern Europe) and de Sardan (1999, 2015) (in Africa) showed that in these contexts, the term corruption in a normative sense (as deviance) becomes somewhat unusable. This is because informality and corruption are not clearly distinguishable for reasons embedded in the local context. This means that analytical distinction between corruption and informality often proves ineffective when examining informal practices that are embedded in a 'particular set of constraints' (practical norms) (de Sardan, 2015) and 'moral economies' (Ledeneva, 2014a:19).

Putting this together with Ehrlich's theoretical framework, in particular using the normative pluralism approach, formal law (state law) is not necessarily perceived by people as the dominant normative system, just one of the many normative systems. In consequence, obeying the informal norms may be seen as deviating from another normative system, but people do not recognise that system as having more authority or relevance (neither in a moral sense, nor perhaps in practice). Therefore, examining the socially constructed understanding of everyday corruption practices requires a non-judgmental approach. Varese (2000:108) suggested that social norms are a type of norm regulating behaviours that are 'usually understood as socially acceptable behaviour', and in countries where corruption is pervasive

that norm can be co-existing with or divergent from formal norms. Along similar lines in terms of acceptability, Polese et al. (2018:222) explained that their research participants in Romanian and Hungarian contexts viewed practices that were, or had elements that were, contrary to the official norms regulating the given situation (e.g. healthcare) as morally acceptable (the right thing to do), and therefore 'socially legitimate'. Explaining this using Ehrlich's concept, these practices and the norms regulating them might diverge from one normative system but conform to another normative system (Anders and Nuijten, 2007:12). In Polese et al.'s (2018:222) interpretation, these practices could not all be labelled and examined as corruption - rather they belong under the umbrella, or wider category, of informality. This highlights two separate issues with making a distinction between informality and corruption. On the one hand, many scholars investigating informal practices (Ledeneva,2014b; 2018b and Polese, 2014) consider that informality may comprise practices that co-exist with and that diverge from formal norms. On the other hand, it is often difficult to separate simply informal (co-existing) elements of the practice from corrupt (divergent and contrary to the formal norms) elements, as they can be intertwined when carrying out an informal transaction. To solve the analytical problem of making a distinction, Ledeneva (2018a:425) suggested 'to figure out the blurred boundaries' between corruption according to the formal law, what people perceive as corruption in the local context and 'what is being routinely reproduced as a 'practical norm''. Blundo et.al, (2013) also suggested that when researching everyday corruption in the African context, demarcation between informality and corruption might not be possible, and cannot be used as an analytical tool when talking about corruption practices that locals perceive as acceptable and part of their everyday life. Rather, a definition of corruption should allow for considering the 'blurred boundaries', because carrying out an informal transaction contains norms that are divergent from and that are co-existing with formal norms and rules. This means that in the coming section I consider the blurred boundaries, ambivalence, and how the local context affects informal practices. In the last section I establish my working definition that allows for the investigation of everyday corruption for my research aims and purposes.

2.4.2. Informal practices situated in the local context

In this section I explain the importance of considering informal practices situated in the local context. This helps the non-judgmental exploration of the everyday corruption practices and their norms by highlighting wider issues. These are the external pressures and perceived harmfulness of the informal practices in terms of participants developing socially

constructed rationalisations when taking part in informal transactions. I will address these in Chapter 4 on the informal practices and their rationalisations supported by the empirical data.

2.4.2.1 Dysfunctional state institutions and external pressures

Area-studies in post-socialist transitional settings often set out to show the aspects of informality which are associated with dysfunctional state institutions. First, in the context of Russia (and more recently globally), Ledeneva (2009, 2018b) showed that in the case of dysfunctional state institutions there is a need to differentiate between 'subversive' and 'supportive' functions of the informal practices. Informal practices not only co-exist with, but diverge from, and exploit, formal institutions (Morris and Polese, 2016), which can be interpreted as a 'subversive' function. However, Ledeneva et al. (2017:12) pointed out that considering the impact of dysfunctional state institutions on people's everyday life can lead to another understanding of corruption - 'problem solving' – which may be the only means of satisfying basic needs and therefore represents a 'supportive' function. Morris and Polese (2016) proved that in the health care and education sectors in Ukraine, the dysfunctionality of the state means that it is incapable of being a social welfare guarantor, therefore citizens need to come up with a bottom-up redistribution of welfare (see also Polese et al., 2018:13). This, and similar dysfunctionalities of state institutions, can be identified as external pressure for people participating in everyday corruption practices, that I will explore in the empirical chapters. According to Ledeneva (2018b:12), the notion that people's perceptions of the practice can range between seeing them as 'subversive' or 'supportive', - i.e. diverging from formal processes, or helping to 'get thing done' that would not be possible formally - leads to a 'functional ambivalence'. This is relevant to my research because dysfunctional state institutions and connected external pressures might exist in my research contexts, especially in Budapest, therefore these functions and the ambivalence between them helps me to understand the data. It should be noted that just because many of these studies have been based in CEE countries, and the theorisations which arise from them have been associated with post-socialism, this does not necessarily mean they are only applicable to that area. 'Functional ambivalence' also means that the boundaries in people's perceptions between need and greed in personal consumption can be blurred (Ledeneva, 2018b:12). Considering blurred boundaries and ambivalence helps me understand people's varying perceptions regarding the perceived harmfulness of these informal practices.

The common features of practices connected to dysfunctional state institutions is that they typically take place through informal transactions between street-level bureaucrats[6] and local residents[7] in an environment which is characterised by the distrust of the state (such as in the post-socialist setting), and where there is a socially grounded negotiation of corrupt and non-corrupt behaviour on a needs-greed spectrum (Morris and Polese, 2016; Zaloznaya, 2015; Werner, 2000; Morris and Polese, 2013, and Polese, 2014). Bauhr (2017:563), using data from the Global Corruption Barometer 2013, differentiated between when citizens engage in informal practices either to receive fair treatment (need) or to receive special illicit advantages (greed), and argued in consequence that the nature of these forms of corruption differ. She explicitly argued that there is a difference between paying a bribe if it is the only way in which a service, such as health care or education, can be received, or whether corruption is used to receive a cheaper service (Bauhr, 2017:563). On the other hand, on the bribe receiver's side the need and greed distinction can be understood in relation to the dysfunctional state institutions and consequent external pressures. Taking a bribe can be seen as 'supportive' of people's everyday living when, for example, in the Hungarian context doctors and nurses take money on the side (i.e. as a 'donation'), if their official wages are so low that they cannot live on them. The same practice can be seen as 'subversive' and greed if they restrict access to needy patients in order to realise personal economic gain (Szende and Culyer, 2006; Gaal and McKee, 2005).

2.4.2.2. Dysfunctional state institutions as external pressures and the use of social relations

Corruption studies with a relational approach also address the problem of external pressures in the context (mostly due to dysfunctional state institutions) (Jancsics, 2014:364). This encompasses considering horizontal networks, for example the examination of 'blat' relationships, guanxi or the economy of favours. Ledeneva (2009:257) defined 'blat' as the use of personal networks for obtaining goods and services in short supply, and for circumventing formal procedures in the Russian context. Ledeneva's extensive work on 'blat' addressed different aspects of the phenomenon, such as its role in modernisation (2009), its description in terms of gift-commodity-reciprocity (1998) and its similarities and differences with horizontal networks in another context - 'guanxi' relationships in China

[6] Bureaucrats who might interact with the local residents on a daily basis.
[7] I use the term 'local residents' instead of 'citizens' because of my focus on migrants who might not be citizens.

(2008). Ledeneva (2009:257-258) argued that ‘blat’ practices enable people to solve problems on a daily basis, however ‘blat’ is often seen as both corrupt and necessary to ‘get things done’. Similarly, Blundo et al. (2013:4) also recognised the blurred boundaries, and the difficulties with distinctions, between informality and corruption, specifically in relation to use of personal networks, arguing that the informal norms contribute to corruption, but that they also exceed the scope of corruption in being social norms that regulate social transactions.

Jancsics (2014:363-364) argued that some aspects of these complex systems of favours and relationships that produce potentially corrupt transactions based on social exchange can be examined and understood along similar lines as gift-giving, as they do not always require immediate return. Morris and Polese (2016) advocated a ‘social function’ approach to gift-giving by examining transactions utilising Patico’s (2002:355) notion of what they reveal about parties’ evaluations of personhood, both of the giver and receiver. Polese (2014:2) argued that gift-giving cements social obligation, and that there is a blurred boundary between ‘gift’ and ‘bribe’. Polese (2008:46) proposed the recognition of a grey zone between corruption and informal practices: 'If I receive it, it is a gift; if I demand it, then it is a bribe'. According to the classical interpretation of Mauss (2002), the individual exchange of gifts strengthens social bonds, and reciprocity is created contributing to the reinforcement of social relations, and there is no violation of norms. Gifts and favours are typically regulated by a norm of reciprocity (Granovetter, 2007:3). Ledeneva (2018b:9) called this substantive ambivalence, which involves people thinking in dual ways about the nature of using relationships, such as being sociable or instrumental (i.e. based on interest). In line with this notion my research participants provided multiple explanations and categorisations of the practices, which are only possible to conceptualise by considering blurred boundaries from sociability to instrumentality (i.e. a means to an end) in social relationships (Ledeneva, 2018b:9). Considering the ambiguities, blurred boundaries, and ambivalences that surround these practices helped me to understand the rationalisations or justifications that my participants provided for taking part in similar informal practices, and ultimately contributes to uncovering people’s understandings of everyday corruption.

2.4.3. Blurred boundaries and ambivalence

Blurred boundaries between corruption and informality in people’s perceptions can be attributed to the context, and explicitly to the constraints situated in the context. Many

scholars in area-studies, such as Ledeneva (2008, 2014b) and Polese (2014), suggested their 'blurred' view of informal practices, because they take into consideration the economic and structural constraints that existed under socialism and that might still exist in the post-socialist context. Ledeneva (2006, 2008:119) defined 'informal practices' as people's 'regular strategies to manipulate or exploit formal rules by enforcing informal norms and personal obligations in formal contexts'. Even if the boundaries are blurred, Ledeneva (2008:199) suggested a possible demarcation between informality and corruption. In Ledeneva's (2008:119) conceptualisation when informal practices are a response to structural constraints in a context, they should be understood more as informality, however, when the function of informal practices moves away from compensating for the structural constraints toward active exploitation of weaknesses of the systems, then they should be viewed more as corruption.

I understand and operationalise blurred boundaries in terms of people's perceptions of corruption and informality, therefore people can perceive a co-existing and divergent practice as acceptable due to, for example, the external pressures or structural constraints in the local context. I recognise that there is ambivalence surrounding the explanations of acceptability. In this thesis I am focusing on ambivalence as it emerges from people's articulation of perceptions of informal practices. Unlike ambiguity, which is 'multi-polar', ambivalence is 'a situation of co-existing thesis and anti-thesis, without possibility and certainty of their synthesis, yet without uncertainty as to what co-existing views, attitudes and beliefs are' (Ledeneva 2014a:19). Ambivalence emerges from people attempting to take stances and positions (Kierans and Bell, 2017:25) when evaluating informal practices that they engage in or notice others engaging in. Considering the ambivalent explanations enables me to understand the distinction between procedural and moral acceptability, i.e. how obeying the norms of 'living law' when carrying out an informal practice is not the same as participants' perceiving an informal practice as 'the right thing to do', and therefore not as corruption at all.

2.4.4. The working definition of everyday corruption

To develop a comprehensive conceptual framework that enables data analysis - in line with the arguments that I have made above about the relationship between informality and corruption - I need to define everyday corruption as an analytical category in a non-

judgemental way. Shore and Haller (2005:4) suggested that approaches to corruption that define it in connection to the formal norms, or dominant normative system, can provide useful insights into the phenomenon. These are the structural approach, which sees corruption as a product of the moral basis of a certain society, and the interactional approach, which defines corruption as a behaviour that deviates from formal duties in particular public settings. However, these approaches are based on questionable assumptions about the content and boundaries of the formal law, such as that the boundary between illegal and legal, in the normative sense, can easily be changed. Therefore, Shore and Haller (2005:4) argue that normative approaches are not adequate for developing and understanding the complexity of relationships involved in everyday corruption practices. Apart from the fact that formal norms can be easily changed, the problem with these approaches is that they assume these variables (for example formal law, and the public and private spheres) and the boundaries between them to be fixed and unproblematic, whereas these categories are not clear-cut (Shore and Haller, 2005:5). This critique of normative approaches also supports considering the blurred boundaries surrounding people's perceptions between informality and corruption when devising a working definition of corruption for my thesis. The examination of the anti-corruption civil society organisation Transparency International's definition of petty corruption highlights some of the definitional difficulties that normative and policy-oriented definitions present. They define low-level corruption as the 'everyday abuse of entrusted power by public officials in their interaction with ordinary citizens, who often are trying to access basic goods or services in places like hospitals, schools, police departments and other agencies' (Transparency International, 2020). While this definition describes some important elements of everyday corruption, it reduces the practices and participants to dishonest individuals in the public sector, therefore it focuses on the individual manifestation of corruption, rather than the context and socially embedded practices (Shore and Haller, 2005:2).

As I discussed in the previous section on context and ambivalence, the working definition of corruption should accommodate for the blurred boundaries between informal practices and corruption. Blundo et al. (2013:4), facing the problem of defining clear distinctions between what constitutes corruption and what does not in the context of Africa, suggested an inclusive definition for everyday corruption practices. They defined everyday corruption practices between ordinary citizens and state officials as 'all practices involving the use of public office that are improper - in other words, illegal and/or illegitimate from the

perspective of the regulations in force or from that of users - and give rise to undue personal gain' (Blundo et al., 2013:4). With this definition, they adopted a broad view of the complexity of corruption, that is removed from legal and policy-oriented definitions. This definition is in line with Ehrlich's normative pluralist approach as it considers a broader and perhaps differing meaning of corruption than is defined by the state norms. Therefore, this definition can advise my working definition of corruption that accommodates for blurred boundaries between corrupt and non-corrupt behaviour, which is socially constructed within a specific cultural context. However, I am not only looking into interactions between public office and ordinary citizens, but also into practices that result in personal gain at the expense of an organisation or any other member of society.

Additionally, unlike Blundo et al. (2013), I am faced with a second challenge when examining everyday corruption practices in two differing contexts. My research is particularly productive in filling in the gap of finding a suitable single definition for examining local practices in differing contexts, because it takes place across contexts that have been discussed in some of the literature (e.g. post-socialist area-studies, and studies on democratic transition) as being very distinct, particularly in relation to informal practices and corruption. Zaloznaya (2013:717), similarly to Ledeneva et al. (2017:4), suggested defining illicit behaviours through their relationships to their actual environment, because of the multi-faceted and context-bound nature of corruption. Zaloznaya (2014:194) suggested that corruption should be defined in relation to its social context, such as collectively constructed social roles and shared meanings. Explicitly writing about comparative studies of corruption, Zaloznaya (2013:717) suggested that comparative research should focus on how the context of corrupt practices generates the need for such exchanges and affects their dynamics. My research seeks to gain an understanding of the informal practices in their context, and also makes a comparison to informal practices situated in another context. To carry out such an investigation successfully, Zaloznaya (2013:720) suggested that the definition of corruption should be flexible enough to accommodate contextual variation, and cannot imply any one type of motivation behind the behaviour of the people who are engaging in corruption (e.g. greed). The challenge is to create a definition of corruption that is flexible, yet precise, and practical (Sayed and Bruce, 1998:3), and that is suitable for the purposes of the research project.

To construct this working definition, and especially to address the element of acceptability, I took into consideration de Sardan's (1999, 2015) work on everyday informal practices in Africa, which contains some applicable concepts for my research, such as the notion of 'practical norms'. While providing the main characteristics of bureaucratic corruption in Africa, de Sardan (1999:34) suggested that the real borderline between what is corruption and what is not fluctuates and depends on the context, and on the position of the people involved. He goes on to explain that 'while practices [are] legally culpable and widely reproved, none the less [they are] considered by those that perpetrate them as being legitimate, and often as not being corruption at all'. De Sardan (1999:35) established this observation from a particular point of view, which is based on the difference between benefitting from, or being disadvantaged by, the transaction, by falling victim to it, or just being excluded from it. De Sardan (1999:35) argued that people who play a role themselves never condemn the practice, and that the border between legal and illegal practice is viewed and considered differently according to whether someone benefited from the practice or not. This can manifest in ambivalent perceptions towards informal practices, which means that participants can regard the same practice differently, depending on their involvement. My working definition contains a similar duality of perception of the practices that de Sardan (1999) described. For the purposes of my thesis, de Sardan's (1999:35) suggestion that people are more likely to perceive an informal practice as corruption if they are not benefitting from it, or are excluded, adds another layer to the examination of corruption, which is allowing the consideration that people's perceptions of informal practices are ambivalent and changing. This notion also motivates including informal practices, which some people might see as right or morally acceptable in the definition of everyday corruption, because the same practices can be easily seen as corruption by others.

The working definition allows me to examine informal practices, and the norms regulating them, that are also informal and might be co-existing or divergent and contrary to formal norms, but nevertheless regarded as acceptable by certain ordinary people under certain conditions and situations. The definition needs to accommodate for blurred boundaries between co-existing practices that are simply informal and divergent informal practices, which might be corrupt. While with my working definition I attempt to provide a clear and consistent way of defining what counts as everyday corruption and how I can identify it, the definition still relies on the participants' own references as to the acceptability (or not) of an informal practice. This definition accommodates that there might be differing degrees of

acceptability, and therefore differing degrees of corruption, based on the acceptability of the corrupt practice. My working definition of the thesis is the following:

> 'Everyday corruption comprises informal practices that are performed at the expense of the state, organisation or other members of the society; it is low-level - with the intention of 'getting things done', rather than to gain significant advantage (economic or social); it usually has a transactional aspect of co-operation between people ; it co-exists with, and might be divergent from (or have elements of divergence from), and is contrary to, the formal law, however it might be perceived as acceptable by those who take part in it, when acceptability means considering the informal practice as being legitimate based on informal norms (procedural acceptability) or as not being corruption at all (moral acceptability).'

2.5. Consideration of alternative socio-legal theories for underlying theoretical concept of the research

This thesis primarily employs a socio-legal perspective. In this section I explain why some other socio-legal theories that could potentially provide a valid and suitable base for this (or a similar investigation) were discounted and not used as the theoretical underpinning of the research, or to better balance the focus on Ehrlich's (2002) theory of 'living law'. These relevant literature and theories include three main and often interconnected fields of socio-legal studies which are: first, socio-legal studies focusing on informal rules and regulations in relation to the state regulations (Macaulay, 1963 and Ellickson, 1991), and semi-autonomous social fields (Moore, 1973); secondly, legal pluralism (Merry, 1988 and Griffith, 1986); and thirdly, legal consciousness (Ewick and Silbey, 1998 and Silbey, 2005).

Ellickson (1991) examined and drew theoretical and generalisable conclusions from observing the informal norms of a specific group of people or community, a method which showed similarities to those which Ehrlich (2002) employed in his social context. Ellickson (1994:97) argued that informal interactions can generate complex institutions and norms, which challenges the notion that only governments can produce rules to govern society. Brigham (1993:609-611) suggested that with his

work, Ellickson (1991) tried to bridge the gap between formal and cultural analysis in law, drawing on jurisprudential debates emerging from law and the economic scholarship (i.e. calling on the Coase Theorem related to cattle trespass). Ellickson's (1991) study showed that the observation of the existence of informal norms is possible and valid in a contemporary context, which in my interpretation strengthens the validity of using Ehrlich's 'living law' theory for examining other contemporary research problems. Ellickson (1991:1) proposed - based on his rich ethnographic fieldwork of interaction between ranchers in North California regarding cattle trespass - that people often resolve their disputes in a cooperative fashion without considering the laws that would apply to those disputes. More specifically Ellickson (1994:87-88) observed that a 'good neighbour' would not use the costly and politicised legal system to resolve minor problems with animal trespass, instead they believed that these should be resolved according to informal norms. Ellickson (1991:130) understood law as formal rules stemming from official institutions and, similarly to Ehrlich's (2002) conceptualisation, also stated and observed that ordinary people did not know much about this law and shared powers. Therefore, it can be concluded that the rural residents in this study knew little about the nuances of the law (Brigham, 1993:614). Ellickson (1991:230) distinguished between procedural and constitutive rules or norms. Procedural rules can be understood as norms govern duties to transmit information and they serve to minimise disputes between the cattle ranchers. Constitutive norms govern a member's obligation to sustain the group (Ellickson, 1991:230), which includes the reciprocity that leads cowboys to 'avoid law' as well as the symbolism of having hats, rifles, and pickup trucks. Distinguishing these two types of informal norm from the state law also show similarities to Ehrlich's (2002) conceptualisation, however Ellickson (1991), in contrast to Ehrlich, did not describe and regard the informal norms as law. According to Ellickson (1991:177-178), groups of people developing efficient norms for themselves, and through this keeping formal transactional cost low, works best in close-knit communities, in which favours and gifts can be traded in a reciprocal way. In my research, although I examine some close-knit communities, this is not my exclusive focus and I regard Ellickson's (1991) findings limited to these types of relationships.

Similarly to Ellickson's (1991:70) findings that problems often get settled without lawyers and state officials, and without regard to law, Macaulay (1963) described how similar practices are present in contractual relations between businesses. This study is relevant because it addresses not only close-knit, but also business relationships, which I also examine in my study among the wide range of informal practices and situations to 'get things done'. Macaulay's (1963) study is also an empirical investigation including 68 interviews with businessmen, which revealed some 'reasonable observations' about the creation and adjustment of exchange relationships, as well as settling disputes (Macaulay, 1963:55-57). The main finding was that businessmen seldom use legal sanctions to adjust these exchange relationships or settle disputes, moreover legal sanctions are often unnecessary and may have undesirable consequences (Macaulay, 1963:55), therefore they are only used when the gains were thought to outweigh the costs. Macaulay (1963:58) found that businessmen often prefer to rely on informal insurances, for example a 'man's word' in a brief letter, a handshake, or 'common honesty and decency', even when the transaction involves exposure to serious risk. Similarly, disputes involving determining whether the party has performed as agreed are frequently settled without reference to contracts or potential legal sanctions, i.e. the existence of lawsuits as a consequence of breaching a contract appeared to be rare (Macaulay, 1963:61). Macaulay (1963:63) found two norms that are widely accepted among the businessmen: first, that commitments are to be honoured in almost all situations; and secondly, one ought to produce a good product and stand behind it. Obeying these norms, the two business units will perform their commitments, and internal sanctions will induce this performance (Macaulay,1963:63). I recognise that this study reveals some aspects about the enforcement of informal norms connected to my research, as formal contracts and contract law are often thought of as being unnecessary by businessmen, because there are many effective non-legal sanctions. Similar enforcement mechanisms were also mentioned by North (1990:55).

Moore's (1973:726-743) description of the garment industry as an example of a semi-autonomous social field has many aspects in common not only with Ehrlich's idea of social associations, but also my specific research subject of informality and everyday corruption. Moore (1973:719-720) also advocated that law, and the social context in which it operates, need to be examined together, and moreover

enforceable rules should be also examined in ordinary social life. Similarly to Ehrlich's (2002:38) social associations, a semi-autonomous social field can generate rules, customs, and symbols internally, and therefore it has rule-making capacities, as well as the means to induce and coerce compliance, moreover these fields are defined by their processual characteristic (Moore, 1973:722). These semi-autonomous social fields are also set in a larger social matrix, and Moore (1973:720) conceptualised them as being 'vulnerable to rules and decisions' emanating from the formal law and decision making. The relationship between semi-autonomous social fields and the formal law is more prominent and penetrating compared with how Ehrlich (2002) envisaged it in the case of social associations. However, even if the laws of centralised, governmental decision-making can invade the social fields within their boundaries, internally generated rules within the social field can dictate the mode of compliance or non-compliance with state-made rules (Moore, 1973:721). This means that state-made regulations might fail to achieve their intended purpose, succeed partially, or have unplanned and unintended consequences (Moore, 1973:723). These discrepancies and unplanned consequences happen, because as Moore (1973:723) argued, already existing social arrangements are often effectively stronger than the new state law, which is similar to North's (1990:36) conceptualisation of the interaction between informal and formal institutions, where the informal institutions are more persistent and difficult to change.

Specifically, Moore (1973:726-743) showed (drawing on the example of the New York garment industry as a semi-autonomous social field) that between the key actors of the dress industry, scarce resources are allocated based on 'fictive friendships' which includes giving gifts and doing favours. Although these are not legally enforceable obligations, there are strong extra-legal sanctions available, such as the actors having to maintain these relationships or they will be out of business (Moore, 1973:726). Moore (1973:727) rather qualifies these extra-legal gifts and favours - that could be called bribery - as moral obligations. There are strong pressures within the social field to conform to this system of exchange if someone wants to 'stay in the game and wanting to do well in it' (Moore, 1973: 727-728), which is similar to my conceptualisation of informal enforcement mechanisms influencing compliance, and internal pressures within the social associations, that I

have devised based on Ehrlich's (2002) and North's (1990) work. These pressures are central to the question of autonomous aspects of the social field, and the relative place of state enforceable law, as opposed to binding rules and customs generated in this social field (Moore, 1973:728). Moore (1973:743) devised this concept to draw attention to the connection between the internal workings of the social field, and the larger social setting in terms of state enforceable law and social change.

Moore's (1973) study, as well as the other two works (Ellickson, 1991; Macaulay, 1963) mentioned above, are based on the view of law and norms that was conceived by Roscoe Pound (1910, 1965). First, they are interested in the function of the informal norms and their interaction with the formal law, where informal norms are seen as means to influence the formal law. Pound (1965:247- 252) argued that legal innovation can effect social change, and therefore he saw law as a tool of social engineering. Pound defined law in terms of its effectiveness, while Ehrlich's approach was different (Nelken, 1984:162). For Ehrlich (2002), law was more an outcome of social process and social change rather than a 'tool of intervention'. Secondly, these studies refer to informal rules as social norms, rather than 'law' as Ehrlich (2002) envisaged them, moreover they never challenge the centrality of the formal law to the extent that Ehrlich (2002) conceptualised it. For Pound, and similarly in Moore's discussion of semi-autonomous social fields, norms have to be instrumentally useful for groups, while Ehrlich understood norms on the level of their meaning to the group rather than based on their usefulness (Nelken, 1984:163). While for Ehrlich there is no ontological difference between state law and informal norms, they both can be legal, in Pound's interpretation legal norms are those backed by the state, therefore other norms do not count as law (Nelken, 1984:163). This view resonates in all three studies mentioned above. Although the most debated aspect of Ehrlich's work is that it is difficult to distinguish the norms of 'living law' and other norms, I have devised a 3-step framework to identify the norms of 'living law'. This leads to the argument regarding why I opted to use normative pluralism rather than legal pluralism.

The main idea of legal pluralism is that there is a presence of more than one legal order in a social field (Griffith, 1986:1,38). The notion of legal pluralism moves away from the ideology of legal centralism, which considers 'all legal ordering as

rooted in state law' (Merry, 1988:889). Griffith (1986:38) suggested using Moore's (1973) semi-autonomous social fields as a basis of defining legal pluralism, making the modification of identifying the self-regulations of these social field as being 'law'. Legal pluralism suggests focusing on other forms of ordering, and their interaction with the state law, which could be competing, contesting and sometimes contradictory (Merry, 1988:889). Griffith (1986:38-39) argued that the 'legal organisation of society is congruent with its social organisation' which means that social actions always take place in multiple and overlapping semi-autonomous social fields. In my research, taking Ehrlich's approach, I examine many situations in which more than one rule is applicable to the same situation. Griffith (1986:38) identified this as a situation in which the law is non-uniform, which does not mean a legally plural, but rather a normatively plural situation. While my research study could have been conceived in a way that it investigates the interaction and discrepancies between the formal law and informal norms (law) emerging from other sources, organisations, or the interaction between other groups of people, instead my focus was on what people do and experience as law, and how this is constructed and emerges from their interactions. Merry (1988:891) identified one of the limitations of employing a legal pluralist approach as the tendency that this type of analysis looks into changes that occur through interactions between social fields, and not those taking place within a social field. In my dissertation I aimed to examine the workings of the social association, and how they are shaped by power-relations and hierarchies both within and outside (Merry, 1988:891), i.e. I am not interested in the interactions between social fields, but in the workings of a social field, and its consequences on people's socially constructed understanding of corruption.

This focus of my research resonates with Ewick and Silbey's (1998:46) work on legal consciousness, who argued that 'legal consciousness is produced and revealed in what people do and as well as say'. Legal consciousness research seeks to understand people's experiences and perceptions of law in everyday life (Cowan, 2004:929), therefore using this approach potentially could be way to examine what people understand as corruption through addressing what people understand as law. Ewick and Silbey (1998) interpreted legal consciousness through a study of 430 interviews, concentrating on cultural practices which make up, transmit, and

perhaps alter legal consciousness over time. In their investigation they focused on how groups of people perceive legality, and analysed legal consciousness as people's participation in the process of constructing legality (Ewick and Silbey, 1998:35, Silbey, 2005:347). Silbey (2005:347) defined that the term legality refers to meanings, sources of authority, and cultural practices that are commonly recognised as legal regardless of who employs them and for what purposes. Ewick and Silbey (1998:23) suggested that legality operates, 'as both an interpretive framework and a set of resources with which, and through which, the social world (including that part known as law) is constituted'.

Ewick and Silbey (1998:23-28, 50) also distinguished three broad forms of legal consciousness- 'before the law', 'with the law', and 'against the law' – while recognising that there might be an interaction and overlap between them in each person's narrative. An individual's legal consciousness can be multifaceted and at times even contradictory (Fritsvold, 2009:810). People's narratives emerging from my empirical data could be interpreted and placed within the framework of these three forms of legal consciousness. In terms of my research, especially the 'against the law' consciousness is present, when the law is perceived as a commodity of power, 'unable to effectively resolve disputes, recognise truth, or respond to injustice' (Ewick and Silbey, 1998:196). Law is interpreted as slow-moving, inaccessible to everyday citizens, and failing to produce equitable outcomes for everyday people and the less powerful. This consciousness can manifest in various types and levels of defiant actions. Ewick and Silbey (1998:28) argued that, unwilling to stand before the law, and unable to obey the law, people act against the law, which in my interpretation can be seen as a perception of law that is supportive towards taking part in informal practices and corruption. When Silbey (2005:324) identified legal consciousness as a theoretical concept and a topic of empirical research, she stated that this concept is developed to address issues with legal hegemony, i.e. how the law sustains its institutional power, despite the gap between law in the books and law in action, the concept of which was devised by Pound (1910). In my investigation I did not focus on this gap of the effectiveness of law, but rather how groups of people in their interactions produce informal norms, therefore I chose Ehrlich's 'living law' theory as the underlying theoretical concept.

2.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided a comprehensive conceptual framework for my thesis. I have outlined how Ehrlich's (2002) theory of 'living law' serves as the basis of my conceptual framework, because using this concept can unify the different approaches, including context-specific explanations and more generalisable approaches towards a non-judgmental investigation of everyday corruption in the local context and beyond. I have addressed how I found Ehrlich's original concept especially useful, because it introduces a normatively plural approach to understanding what people experience as law. Ehrlich conceptualised that formal and informal norms co-exist, and that informal norms often have the same importance as formal norms in people's everyday life, and in determining their everyday conduct. From my research point of view, this notion captures how people would take part in co-existing and divergent informal practices that are contrary to the formal norms, and often perceive those as acceptable.

Ehrlich's understanding of society as being made up of social associations of numerous kinds also made this concept applicable for an empirical investigation of socially constructed norms emerging from people's interactions. I have explored how social associations are situated in the local context, therefore understanding the context (that can contain external pressures and power-relations that affect the formation of the social association, and also the way in which the social association operates) is important for my research. Additionally, in my research there is a heightened focus on the migrants' lived experiences towards informal practices situated in the local context. Ehrlich developed his theory in a differing context to mine and was less interested in challenging the workings of inequalities and hierarchies between people within those contexts and within the social associations, rather than simply observing the significance of the norms of 'living law'. Therefore, I needed to make modifications in order to strengthen my conceptual framework, and to make it applicable to a contemporary context, and for my investigation.

In this chapter, I have systematically addressed how I made those modifications. Anders and Nuijten's (2007) work on researching law and corruption advised my understanding of corruption as being socially constructed and embedded in society's power-relations. To gain

a nuanced understanding of people's perceptions of, and participation in, informal practices, they should be examined in the wider matrix of the power-relations of the local context, and within the social association. North's (1990) original work on institutions, and its development by Helmke and Levitsky (2004), greatly contributed to my conceptualisation of how to identify and demarcate the norms of 'living law' from other norms and behaviour patterns based on the component of informal enforcement. Helmke and Levitsky's (2004) conceptualisation of the interaction between formal and informal institutions helped me to explore the relationship between formal and informal norms (norms of 'living law'), establishing that informal norms can co-exist with, or compete and diverge from formal norms. Developing a comprehensive framework was not a straightforward process, it required many revisions as working with the data allowed me to consider the emerging themes and issues. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology and empirical strategies which I developed and employed in order to answer these central questions and elaborate on my inductive and deductive data analysis and approaches.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The aim of this chapter is to outline the research strategy for the thesis by explaining the methods that I used to collect, organise, and analyse my data. In the first section I describe the rationale of the research strategy and establish a connection between my research questions and the methodology of the thesis, i.e. I show how I used the most appropriate approach to answer the research questions and to address the research aims. In the second section I review the methods that I used to implement my research. I provide details of the recruitment process and the data collection procedures. In the same section I also provide a detailed description of the research participants and reflect on the challenges around the data collection process especially addressing the inclusion of four distinct groups of participants. In the third section, I address aspects of the research process that contributed to producing robust data, such as ethical considerations, my positionality as a researcher, and the use of language. In the fourth section, I cover the analysis of the data by explaining the development of the coding framework and providing reflection on the analysis process itself.

3.1. Justification of methodology and research design

To summarise the overarching purpose of the research, I am interested in the socio-legal aspects of everyday corruption, more precisely examining perceptions of informal practices, which may or may not be deemed to be corrupt. From my ontological position, the reality of the research subject (corruption) is socially constructed and subjective, with multiple meanings and explanations that may change, therefore I argue that examining perceptions requires an interpretivist approach. In this research I focus on the subjective meaning of a social phenomenon (Becker et al., 2012:274-278). The epistemological approach that underpins the empirical strategies of this research is in line with the interpretivist approach, therefore I view knowledge of the world as produced in and through our everyday experiences and interactions (Bryman, 2016:4). In line with this ontological and epistemological underpinning I chose qualitative research methods.

My overarching research aim is to gain a more nuanced and informed understanding of everyday corruption practices that people might find acceptable, and I am also interested in

the ways in which this perception of acceptability is constructed. Therefore, in my research questions I focus on interrogating and unpacking the perceptions, understandings, and socially constructed definitions of informal practices by taking into account the perspectives of both long-term local residents and migrants. This includes understanding the reasons for, and circumstances behind, people's participation in informal practices, and whether people's perceptions change or perhaps show continuity when living in a new social setting. Informed by the research questions and aims, I chose in-depth interviews and focus groups for my qualitative research methods.

One of the original aspects of my research lies in its focus upon the perspective of migrants (Hungarian migrants in Scotland and British migrants in Hungary, arriving in the last 10 years and having spent at least 1 year in the country) which is contrasted with that of long-term local residents in the Glasgow and Budapest areas. I have outlined the rationales and justification for conducting the research in these two locations in the introduction chapter (in section 1.3.). These rationales included my access to the locations, and more importantly I highlighted that Budapest and Glasgow, and the people's lived experiences in these cities, are comparable on many levels. For example, I presented the similarities between a post-socialist (Budapest) city and a post-industrialist (Glasgow) city, having a diverse local long-term resident and migrant population, although this consists of differing types of migrants (i.e. British 'lifestyle' and Hungarian 'economic' migrants). Migrants' experiences offer a particular lens to explore the differing practices, understandings, and definitions of corruption because they move between settings where seemingly the lived experience of, and attitudes towards, corruption differ. The lived experience can be defined as one's own experience, made sense of in various ways, depending on the context in which it is presented (Kozlowska, 2010:3).

By exploring the migrants' lived experiences, this research focuses upon, but also moves beyond, the local context. I regard migrants' perceptions as valuable for two main reasons. First, because the migrant participants have lived at least 1 year in the country, and therefore arguably they have been adequately exposed to the everyday life (formal and informal norms) of the new location, so their perceptions of informal practices and corruption can offer a somewhat fresh and differing insight into the local norms (i.e. what is acceptable or not acceptable practice). This is because migrants did not socialise into these norms (e.g.

when growing up), and therefore may be less likely to take them for granted. However, as a consequence of migration, they may encounter the same situations as long-term local residents, and therefore migrants are required to learn and develop an understanding of the formal and informal norms embedded and prevalent in the context. This experience highlights perceptions and issues of everyday corruption practices, such as how migrants' acceptance of the practice is constructed, and to what extent local long-term residents would perhaps perceive them differently. Secondly, as migrants travel, they might bring their own informal practices and norms, or at least their perceptions of what was regarded as acceptable and not acceptable in their old social setting, and these might change, adapt, or perhaps show continuity in the new social settings. Long-term local residents' experiences and perceptions are vital for the research because they serve as a basis for comparison. The focus on the migrants' perspectives affects the research design and methods as well as the data analysis.

I devised an innovative research design that consisted of two phases, which built on each other. The reason for employing two phases was to bring the two locations of the research and the experiences of long-term local residents and migrants together. My intention was to guarantee the best way for the participants to express their point of view, and to offer a balanced response to the research questions, therefore I selected in-depth interviews and focus groups as research methods. The in-depth interviews enabled me to capture the ways in which informal transactions are experienced, understood and perceived by the participants in line with an interpretivist approach. I used in-depth interviews in an unstructured way with the intention of giving participants the opportunity to address what was important for them, and let participants themselves identify situations, circumstances, and reasonings behind informal practices. This approach provided me with an in-depth insight into a social phenomenon (Bryman, 2008:458). My second method, the focus group research, provided a platform for participants to discuss and reflect on everyday practices and experiences of informality and corruption. I recognised the value of focus group participants challenging each other as part of the discussion by asking questions and commenting on others' experiences and views on the topic in question (Barbour and Kitzinger 1998:4).

As I discussed above, I conceived this research design to satisfy the aims of the thesis. One of these aims was to draw out some more generalisable ways or patterns of how my participants constructed their understanding and definitions of corruption - if there are any -

emerging from the data. Generalisability should be understood as recognising common patterns that could lead to an abstracted, theoretical understanding of what the four groups of participants in the two research locations told me. Examining and considering these patterns serves as a means to challenge the East-West divide. My research design, involving in-depth interviews enquiring about informal practices in the participants' local context, and focus groups, which allow the participants to reflect on informal practices in another social context, can enable me to explore both the specific and more general patterns. Even if there are social context-specific informal practices due to power-relations and external pressures, that could be labelled as 'cultural practices' (e.g. 'blat'-like relationships,' old-boys' networks, system of gratitude payments), it might be possible to generalise people's understanding and perceptions of these into more abstract categories that can enhance our understanding of how people in general construct their definitions of corruption. The elements that lead to this more abstract way of examining people's understanding of corruption could be tested by further empirical research - perhaps using survey-methods which could reach a wider-range of participants. However, this is a task for future research as I discuss in the Conclusion along with the limitations of this study and possible future research agendas. In the next section I will explore in more detail the data collection process.

3.2. The data collection process

My research design connects locations and nationalities, taking place in two locations with four different groups of participants: Scottish (British) long-term local residents; Hungarian long-term local residents; Hungarian migrants in Scotland (arriving in the last 10 years and having spent at least 1 year in the country); British migrants in Hungary (arriving in the last 10 years and having spent at least 1 year in the country). I collected the data between February 2017 and March 2019. The data collection included four shorter periods of fieldwork (7-10 days) in Hungary, while I was continually collecting data in Scotland. The study comprised two phases. In the first phase I conducted fifty-one in-depth interviews across the four groups of participants, and after an initial analysis and identification of key themes and informal practices, I conducted the second phase which comprised of five focus groups (two in Glasgow and three in Budapest).

3.2.1. Phase one: in-depth interviews

My original plan was to conduct fifty in-depth interviews with the aim of capturing individual perceptions of informal practices, as well as to identify where and when informal practices take place. I was able to meet my target, as by the end of phase one I had interviewed fifty-one participants, consisting of thirteen Hungarian migrants and twelve long-term local residents in the Glasgow area, and thirteen British migrants and thirteen long-term local residents in the Budapest area. I preliminarily identified potential areas for exploration that were informed by the relevant literature on informality and low-level corruption, and the findings of my Masters' thesis[8]. These areas included education, healthcare, and ordinary citizens' interactions with public offices or street level bureaucrats[9] in order to mitigate some negative consequences (e.g. paying a fine) or to gain access to services or information using informal channels.

I decided to start the investigation with the migrants' perspectives, which was motivated by the conceptual reasons that I have described above, regarding the added value of exploring perceptions through the migrants' lens. I started the process by interviewing Hungarian migrants living in the Glasgow area. I initially conducted five interviews which served as a pilot study in two ways. First, this allowed me to gain a better understanding of in-depth interviewing as a method, and secondly, I learnt some themes and informal practices that were important for Hungarian migrants in the Glasgow context. I used the pilot study to refine my later methods in numerous ways. For example, I modified my interview approach after I noticed difficulties when starting the interviews by immediately discussing informal practices, and participants' personal experiences of those. Rather than enquiring about informal practices immediately, I started by discussing the migration history of the participants, and I also shared my personal migration story if the participants asked about it. I noticed that this approach eased participants into the conversation and helped them to remember informal practices that they had experience of. The themes that were raised by the initial participants served to inform my interview questions during later interviews, such as, for example, participants having different ways to gain information on how to 'get things done' in the new context, or participants experiencing different reactions from long-term

[8] Gyurko, F. (2015). Exploring the reasons behind persistent low-level corruption in Hungary by looking into (the absence of) formally reported wrongdoings: "The less said, the better".
[9] Civil servants working in a position where they have direct contact with members of the general public.

local residents when they tried to initiate an informal practice that would work, or be expected, in certain situations in the Hungarian context. I also gained insight into some of the typical informal practices and areas where these practices existed, which meant that in later interviews I could query participants on these, and whether they had similar experiences. Finally, the pilot study informed my recruiting strategies and general interviewing approach with the other three groups of participants as well, which I will explore in the coming sections. Later in this chapter, in the section on ethical issues, I discuss how I presented the research to my participants, highlighting whether during the interview we used the term 'informal practice' or 'corruption'. My data analysis will also address this issue in subsequent empirical chapters.

3.2.1.1 Recruitment

I employed snow-ball sampling as the recruitment method. Biernacki and Waldorf (1981:145) argued that this chain referral sampling technique is widely used in studies of sensitive topics, including possibly stigmatised behaviours, such as corruption. In practice, recruiting participants through chain referral (through another person that they mutually know) granted a greater trust between me, as the researcher, and the interviewees. Initially, I started the snow-ball sampling by utilising my personal contacts for all four groups of participants, and I recruited all long-term residents in both locations using this method. In the case of migrant participants, by the end of the fieldwork I also posted a call for participants on social media sites in both locations in order to reach out to migrant participants when the possibilities of snow-ball sampling ran out. Additionally, there were some shortcomings of snow-ball sampling that I needed to mitigate such as a tendency for people to recommend others 'like themselves', and therefore limit the diversity of recruitment, for example English teacher migrants in Budapest would recommend other English teacher migrants of a similar age. I used specific social media sites such as ones for Hungarians in Glasgow and British expats in Budapest. I selected these groups in particular because they seemed to be moderated platforms for migrants to gain information on everyday life in Glasgow and Budapest. There were people in these groups who regularly provided advice to other users, and there were many interactions and reflections. This made these forums a particularly effective choice of platform to recruit participants. I asked permission from the group moderators to post the call. Recruiting this way enabled me to widen the pool and to be able to recruit a more diverse group of participants, which mirrored

the diverse migrant population. I will explain the breakdown of the participants later in this chapter (in section 3.3.). I noticed from the ways that participants responded to the call that the approval from a moderator in a social media group, and the fact that the call was posted by the moderator on my behalf, had a similar effect to chain referral or a recommendation in terms of initial trust. Therefore, I did not notice that people recruited through the social media calls would reply differently or were more difficult to arrange interviews with - about two thirds of them were recruited this way. Regardless of the method of recruitment, I always sent an official invitation and the Participant Information Sheet[10] to the potential participants, to ensure that they could make an informed decision regarding their participation in the research. At the end of the interviews, I obtained signed informed consent forms[11]. I arranged most of the interviews via e-mail with all groups of participants. In line with the overall aims and research design I planned to start the recruitment of migrants in both locations simultaneously. I planned to recruit long-term local residents after learning key experiences from the migrants. On reflection, my plans to recruit migrants worked better in the Scottish context, and it was more challenging to find participants and arrange interviews in the Hungarian context with British migrants. After encountering difficulties in arranging interviews while already in the field (in Hungary), as the field work progressed, I tried to arrange the interviews before travelling. The purpose of having shorter periods of fieldwork in Hungary whilst interviews were still ongoing in Glasgow, was to progress with the data collection simultaneously in both locations, because that granted me an opportunity of continuous reflection on the emerging themes and the general progress of the fieldwork.

3.2.1.2 Interview process

In all four groups of participants, I conducted most interviews in person, the exceptions being one by phone and one Skype interview. I both audio recorded the data and took notes - unless the participant requested note-taking only, which was about one third of the participants. I conducted the majority of the interviews in public places (e.g., cafés). However, I conducted five interviews in participants' homes for practical reasons, such as childcare. As a principle, I aimed to find a public café that was convenient for the participants, or to let them choose the location. This resulted in greater comfort and convenience for the participants, however on some occasions the location affected the quality of the audio recording, but I mitigated

[10] Available in the Appendix 1.
[11] Available in the Appendix 6.

this challenge by always taking notes by hand. Each interview lasted between forty-five minutes and two hours.

In general, before starting the interviews, I asked the participants whether they had familiarised themselves with the research topic and the details of the research process that I explained in the invitation and on the Participant Information Sheet. I took a printed copy of both documents with me, and I provided the possibility for the participants to ask for clarification regarding any aspects of the research. I asked open ended questions[12] referring back to the project description provided in the Participant Information Sheet. I also let participants talk about situations that they thought were relevant. As the interviews unfolded, I asked more direct questions regarding informal practices, prompting them to provide further details, and I encouraged them to describe their own personal experiences. I framed the questions in a neutral way, avoiding leading questions (Beamer, 2002:92). As the participants themselves mentioned themes (which I identified as being key themes), I took notes of these and I followed a strategy of follow-up questions or probing (Kvale, 1996:124-43). As the fieldwork progressed, I started to gain experience in interviewing, and I developed my own interviewing technique. During the interviews with migrant participants, additionally to the discussing whether they had any experience with informal practices, usually - as a conversation starter - I asked them about how and why they came to live in Scotland or Hungary. This resulted in triggering a narrative approach (as advocated by Anderson and Kirkpatrick, 2016), that proved to be useful for them in triggering memories of informal practices. It helped the participants to place the informal practices into a context, and to provide a narrative and detailed description of circumstances. This enabled me to learn more about how informal practices change, evolve, and disappear or show continuity. In all interviews, typical themes and areas of investigation emerging from the interviews advised and led the direction of the interview process. I continuously assessed what to ask in later interviews as the fieldwork progressed - such as what were the most important or common issues arising, for example asking participants about certain themes, raising new subjects, and requesting clarification on certain subjects.

When conducting the interviews in both research locations and with all four groups of participants, the same or similar themes and narratives kept emerging in terms of people describing the informal practices and their norms, as well as their explanations for taking

[12] Available in the Appendix 3.

part in them. These recurring themes and narratives on the one hand indicated that I might be able to draw general conclusion from the empirical findings according to and beyond my initial research aims. On the other hand, it reassured me that the number of interviews which I conducted was adequate for my research purposes. I will address in the coming empirical chapters how people's narratives on their participation in and perceptions of the informal practices can be understood in a more generalisable way, by focusing on the essence of the narratives and categorising people's explanations to more generalisable factors, but at the same time considering them in their social context. Additionally, since I am a Hungarian native speaker and a fluent non-native English speaker, I was able to conduct the research multilingually, and I allowed participants to choose whether the interview was conducted in Hungarian or English. I address the issue of language in more depth in the section below.

3.2.2. Preliminary data analysis

One of the outcomes of the in-depth interviews was that the participants identified cases and situations in which they, or according to their perception, other people, typically partake in informal practices. This meant that I could collect two types of data, the first type being the participants' first and second-hand knowledge of an informal practice and their perceptions of this, and the second type being when participants provided a more generalised description of the informal practices. Having these two types of data was congruent with Blundo's (2017:35) description of the methodological aspects of data collection on corruption with an interpretivist approach. Blundo (2017:35) suggested that the participants' descriptions of the corruption practice will most often combine direct accounts and second-degree observations. Furthermore, amongst research participants' descriptions of corruption, Blundo (2017:41) identified two postures that the research participants would take, which are narrator and consultant. He also noticed the participants' constant slide within an interview between these two postures. Narrator type accounts provided by the participants usually draw from personal experience, such as concrete situations which were lived or witnessed by the participant, as well as casual observation and quoting situations experienced by a member of their circle (Blundo, 2017:40). I identify the former as first-hand knowledge, and the latter, which was observed by, or told to, the participants as second-hand knowledge. While the narrator type accounts are generally richer in detail and information regarding the informal transaction, consultant descriptions would express more or less shared knowledge on the mechanism,

people involved in the transaction, places, and temporalities of corruption in an impersonal manner (Blundo, 2017:42). This is presented by the research participant more like a general statement aimed to describe the phenomenon globally, and it often portrays hypothetical situations (Blundo, 2017:41). The type of data that I collected was congruent with Blundo's (2017) experience and being able to identify narrator and consultant types of description of the informal practices helped the data analysis and I discuss this distinction when relevant throughout the empirical chapters.

When the participants mentioned an example of an informal practice during the interviews, I asked for detailed descriptions. The remarkable feature of the data is that, even if people did not have first-hand experience of an informal practice, they could often provide details on the means of participation. Focusing on and treating the second-hand knowledge of informal practices as being equally important as first-hand might raise some concerns in terms of these indirect perceptions not being accurate. However, I also found these second-hand descriptions valuable for two reasons. First, because considering or gaining an insight into people's perceptions is one of the focal points of my research, because I am less interested in whether a perception is objectively correct than in the fact that it exists and has implications (Thomas and Thomas, 1928). Secondly, because the description of informal practices that were provided by participants as first and second-hand experience often generically matched in describing the main elements of the given informal practice. I used first and second-hand descriptions of practices to construct a typology of the informal practices as part of the preliminary data analysis. The consultant type of material was also useful to gain an understanding of the wider perceptions and contexts that the practices are situated in.

Anders and Nuijten (2007:6) argued that because corruption is an elusive phenomenon, the differentiation of various types of practices sharpens the focus of the empirical study of corruption. The data that I collected through the interviews enabled me to construct a typology. I was aware of typologies of informal practices in the existing literature, such as Karklins' (2002) typology of post-communist corruption, Jancsics' (2015b) typology of corruption practices in the Hungarian context, and Scott and Murphy's (1972) typology that distinguishes between 'parochial corruption' (which mobilises symbolic resources like friendship and family bonds) and 'market corruption' (which is an immediate transaction

and concerns socially anonymous partners). However, I tried to construct my own typology for my research purposes, because these existing, context and corruption-type specific typologies were insufficient for my study which is situated in two differing research contexts. The typology had to be flexible enough to accommodate contextual variation, but at the same time allow for comparison. First, I used this typology to conduct the second phase of data collection, which was based on the reflections on these typical informal practices. Secondly, I used the typology to enhance the analysis of the data in the empirical chapters (especially chapter 4 on the practices and their rationalisations), taking into consideration the differences and commonalities between informal practices existing in the two differing research contexts (Budapest and Glasgow).

The formulation of my own typology was inspired by Zaloznaya's (2012) work. Zaloznaya (2012:315) constructed a typology of informal practices of bribery to explore the variation of bureaucratic bribery practices of ordinary citizens in the Ukrainian higher education environment. As a starting point, Zaloznaya (2012:315) listed the type of exchange, or what informal practices take place, describing it by a common name, for example 'price lists' or 'group bribing'. Secondly, she displayed the mechanism of the bribery practice - how the transaction takes place - for example, in the case of 'group bribing', a group of students designates a representative to deliver a collective bribe. Thirdly, Zaloznaya (2012:315) displayed the facilitating effect - why the bribery would take place, what the function of the practices is - for example, the function of 'group bribing' was to minimise the contact between the participants of the bribery exchange. While Zaloznaya (2012) only described the typology of bribery practices, my research covers a much wider range of informal practices. To some extent, congruently with Scott and Murphy (1972), I also find that the distinction of the mechanism (how) and the function (why) of the informal practice can demarcate two different broad categories of practices based on the descriptions that participants provided. These are, first, using a 'social type' of mechanism (which includes utilising social relations and personal connections, and also symbolic gift exchange to achieve a social type of gain, which mostly manifests in access to care) and secondly, using a more 'market type' mechanism, involving immediate monetary transaction to achieve an economic gain.

In practice, I constructed a table (for a sample see Figure 3-2. below) including the narrator type accounts of participants from every interview, which presented a new informal practice or a distinct variation of an informal practice which was already mentioned by some participants. I only included informal practices in the table which satisfied the working definition of everyday corruption. I also noted in the transcript whether the narrator type account was from the participants' first or second-hand knowledge. The typology table did not include this information, and I did not differentiate between first and second-hand descriptions and perceptions. In the table, first I organised the data by participant, which helped the data collection in the second phase, because it highlighted the typical or more widespread practices in the Glasgow or Budapest context and amongst the different groups of participants. Secondly, I displayed relevant information in the table about the informal practice which helped the further data analysis. These were (1) the description of the informal practice; (2) how the informal practice takes place (i.e., the mechanism); (3) why the informal practice takes place (i.e., the facilitating effect or function); and finally (4) the participants of the informal transaction. Thinking about, and trying to identify the possible participants of the informal transaction helped me to understand the formation of the social association from an empirical point of view. From the data collection perspective, this approach enabled me to identify the significant features and elements of the key practices in each location, and amongst each group of participants. This typology as a tool helped me to take the research further and bring the two locations and four groups of participants back together, by asking them to reflect on typical practices from the other location. In preparation for the next phase, I established typical cases based on the interview data which I wanted to gain reflections on during the focus groups.

Figure 3-2.: Example of the typology document

	Practice (what)	**Mechanism (how)**	**Function/ facilitating effect (why)**	**Participants in the informal transaction**
Katalin, long-term resident, Budapest	Informally organising quicker and better treatment or tests in the medical-care context.	Based on a personal contact pulling favours, ask doctor using personal connection - long-term reciprocity.	To gain social type advantage: better, faster treatment -access to care.	Doctors and doctors' relatives, friends, acquaintances (patients).
David, British migrant, Budapest	Paying cash-in-hand for rented accommodation, informal agreement (long-term).	Occupant pays cash-in-hand to the owner or to an agent, there isn't a formal rent-agreement, person is not registered at the address.	To gain economic advantage: cheaper for owner and the occupant, because owner doesn't pay tax.	Owner, agent, occupant (sometimes friends and relatives, often strangers).
Cameron, long-term resident, Glasgow	Paying cash-in-hand to tradesmen and in return receiving a cheaper price.	Choosing to pay cash-in-hand without invoice, or asking for a cheaper price without invoice.	To gain economic type advantage for both customer (lower price) and tradesman (tax evasion).	Tradesman and customer, often there is a recommendation or between strangers.
Erika, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow	Trying to negotiate access informally to a favoured primary school.	Visiting headmaster and trying to find ways to influence admission process by indirectly asking probing questions.	To gain social type of advantage: access to school.	Based on her home (Budapest) experience would be between headmaster and parent, but was told she cannot influence procedure, instead formal process was explained to her.

3.2.3. Phase two: focus groups

I chose focus groups as a data collection method to create discourse among the participants. It was a suitable method for the second phase, because the target was to find arguments and reasoning around the subject of informal practices, which can arise because of the controversial nature of the subject and the differences between individual perceptions. I used an innovative version of focus group research that Press and Cole (1999) describe as conversational focus groups. Press and Cole (1999) argued that this type of focus group is suitable when particular topics of enquiry (e.g. corruption, as it is happening covertly) do not provide ample opportunities for observation, because the interaction between participants is difficult to observe or rare in occurrence. Suter (2000:7) argued that integrating this modified version of focus group research into the research protocol can create a participant observation-like understanding of a discussion that would occur rarely between research participants, for example, linking to my research, discussing their perceptions of informal practices. According to the topic of discussion I made some changes to the traditional focus group methodology. Therefore, although the focus groups were created and managed by me, I minimised this management and, similarly to Suter's (2007:12) research, the focus groups were more like conversations co-constructed between me and the research participants than a structured discussion. The desired effect for this in terms of the data collection was that participants could feel that they could discuss informal practices in a non-judgemental environment, which is in line with the conceptual approach. Suter (2000:6) concluded that focus groups offer a unique occasion to both collectively interview participants as well as observe them interacting while discussing the research subject.

In the original proposal I planned to conduct two focus groups in each location, with five to six people in each group, and a mixture of participants with age, gender and social status evenly represented. I also proposed mixed focus groups, with a mixture of long-term residents and migrants in both locations. I revised the original research plan after getting familiar with the fieldwork, the participants, and the themes and discourse emerging - this still resulted in a minimum of two focus groups in each location, but with a different composition. The size of the focus groups varied from two to five participants, but the

method of conducting each focus group was the same however many participants were involved. One focus group involved only two people. This was a mixed focus group with a Hungarian long-term resident and a British migrant participant, because a third participant could not attend at the last minute. After this focus group I found it more productive and practical to conduct the focus groups with migrants separately from the long-term residents. First, I identified a practical problem around language. Although many Hungarian and British migrant participants were confident local language users, it seemed to be a challenging task to balance the discourse, because non-native speaker participants would not participate as fully as native speakers in a mixed group either in English or Hungarian. Secondly, this conversation provided an 'us' and 'them' discourse, that was manageable during that particular focus group, but that I recognised might generate conflict between different participants and might be harder to manage in a larger group. Despite this change, a primary purpose of the focus groups was still to bring the data from the two locations and four groups of participants together. Typical informal practices collected in phase one (which I established through the preliminary analysis) were discussed and reflected upon by asking the focus groups to reflect back on these findings. I will explain in the coming section in more detail how the focus groups worked, and how the use of cases allowed me to bring the locations and the two groups of participants together. Furthermore, regarding the number of participants in each group, I need to note that after conducting a focus group with five participants, I established the optimal number as being around three, since five participants proved to be too many as it was difficult to manage the group and have a meaningful, balanced conversation. This is somewhat congruent with Suter's (2000:7) suggestion that the optimal number of participants in this type of small group discussion (focus groups) is two to five participants. Overall, I conducted three focus groups containing three participants, one focus group with five and one with two participants.

3.2.3.1 Recruitment

In the research design I planned that the focus group participants would be re-recruited from amongst the participants of phase one. To draw attention to the possible re-recruitment I stated in the original interview invitation and Participant Information Sheet that there would be a second phase of focus groups. However, many participants explicitly stated that they did not wish to take part in the focus groups. Therefore, I started the recruitment from the participants who had been helpful during the interview phase or explicitly stated that they

were willing to participate further. I had enough willing participants, however it proved to be challenging to organise a meeting for available participants at the same time. Therefore, I asked willing participants to recruit additional members to the focus group, along similar lines to the snow-ball sampling. Congruently with Suter's (2000:11) experience, allowing individual interview participants to recruit their own friends for the focus groups increased the naturalistic feel of the interaction, because the emerging groups were not created simply for the focus groups, but rather incorporated pre-existing relationships. Using this method four additional participants were recruited. In one focus group the original participant brought one new participant, and in one focus group the original participant recruited three other participants. This had an effect on the nature of the discussion, because some participants could discuss informal practices that they all had in-depth knowledge of, but it also brought forward differing perceptions that participants were able to explain or challenge in a non-judgemental space. I sent out formal invitations[13] as well as the Participant Information Sheets to the new participants before the focus groups. The invitations contained four cases from the other locations than the participants' (i.e. cases from Glasgow for the Budapest participants) that I had prepared based on the preliminary analysis of the data (constructing the typology of informal practices) from phase one. This allowed the participants to become familiar with the task of reflection on the informal practices from the other location, which was my attempt to bring the two locations and four groups of participants and their perceptions together.

3.2.3.2 Conducting the focus groups

I organised the focus groups in public cafés in the Budapest and Glasgow areas. Each focus group lasted around one to one and a half hours. I ensured the data collection with note taking as well as audio-recording. There was a challenge regarding recording one of the focus groups (due to an unsuitable location), however I managed to reconstruct the discussion from my notes. Before starting the focus group sessions, I greeted the participants and explained the ground rules and how the conversation would take place. I started with a brief introduction of the subject, by providing a summary of phase one and my research objectives in simple language, avoiding any information which might influence the content of the focus group, for example labelling informal practices as corruption, just because it was referred to as such in the individual interviews. There was a possibility for the participants to ask

[13] Available in the Appendix 2.

questions and clarify certain issues and details regarding the research. In the beginning of the focus group as a conversation starter, I asked participants to define corruption, and I repeated the same question at the end after discussing the cases. I presented examples of informal transactions and perceptions collected during the interviews (the same examples as in the invitation) and asked the participants to reflect on those. I present an example below, which is one of the cases that I included in the invitation to provide a better insight into the data collection method. My aim with having these cases was to create a discussion that started in the same way as if someone (from the other location) would share a story, but rather than doing it in person it is shared through an example case. In response, I expected that participants might provide their own stories or reflections based on their personal experiences. This approach served the purpose of keeping and taking forward the narrative nature of the individual interviews (Suter, 2000:7). The following example was used during the focus groups with the Hungarian locals and British migrants in Budapest.

Example 1.

Paying 'cash-in-hand' to tradesmen is an accepted practice in Scotland. It makes the service cheaper for the customers and it allows the tradesmen the option of not declaring the 'cash-in-hand' payment, which results in tax evasion.

The practice is against the law, but it is widely practiced and accepted.

"It is quite common to get your house painted or windows cleaned and pay with cash without asking for an invoice. It is illegal, but it is worth it for both parties. It is cheaper for me, and he (the worker) doesn't need to declare the cash. Well… it's not my responsibility anyway - it is the painter's problem." (Scottish participant - working for a big private company)

I asked participants for general reflections, and to consider the case in an 'acceptable-not acceptable-corruption- not corruption framework' - I devised this framework as a visual tool printed on paper[14] to facilitate the discussion. Apart from explicit references (e.g. using the words 'accepted' or 'not accepted') regarding acceptability, participants also used different expressions to evaluate the practice, such as 'it is normal', 'everybody does it', and 'it is very common'. Participants showed differing levels of preparation, in terms of having read

[14] Available in the Appendix 5.

the invitation or the examples and having spent time thinking about the examples before the focus group discussions, but we went through the examples together and that facilitated an animated debate and discussion. The narrative presentation of the typical cases helped participants to phrase their answers in a way that included sharing their first and second-hand knowledge, rather than providing a one-sentence evaluation. The moderation of the focus groups was sometimes challenging and included balancing the power-relations in terms of providing space to all participants to express their opinions and trying to avoid one participant dominating the conversation in an unproductive manner, as well as trying to steer the conversation when it was deviating from the subject. It was an important aspect of the focus groups that the participants would ask each other questions. This was different coming from a peer than if it would come from me as the researcher. Congruently with Suter's (2000:11) experience, these questions were more direct in terms of tone and phrasing, which often implied that the participant had a strong opinion on the issue or was confident in their position.

The focus groups brought the generalisable aspects of the research forward, as the research participants reflected on informal practices collected in the other social context, by applying their point of view (which was constructed in their local context) to assess and understand informal practices. This first confirmed that people would assess informal practices as being corruption, not corruption, or acceptable corruption by using more generalisable factors, and clarified what these factors might be. Secondly, it showed that being able to refer to generalisable factors (i.e. harm, external pressures, and internal pressures) is not in contradiction with also examining and understanding these practices as a product of differing external pressures situated in the context, and internal pressures within the social association - some of them also with specific cultural meanings. Being able to identify more generalisable patterns does not mean that these particular aspects are not taken into account in my research, as they reveal the nuances about the norms and the workings of the social association. In the coming empirical chapters, while analysing the data, I will pay attention to both generalisable and particular aspects of the data.

3.3. The description of participants and data collection challenges

3.3.1 The migrant research participants

It is important to take into consideration that there is a contrast between the (in general) more privileged British 'lifestyle' migrants and the more vulnerable Hungarian 'economic' migrants, and that this might influence their perceptions and participation in informal practices. I found that British migrants in Hungary were generally in a good socio-economic position. This is congruent with literature on 'lifestyle migration' that seemed to match my collected data. Benson and O'Reilly (2009) argued that 'lifestyle migration' refers to people who take the decision to migrate based on their belief that there is a more fulfilling way of life available to them elsewhere. Torkington (2010) explained that 'lifestyle migration' is clearly not motivated by economic hardship, the search for work, or some form of financial security. Lardies (1999:489) showed that 'lifestyle' migrants' businesses are not driven by the need for employment or profit maximisation. Eaton (1995:260) explained British migrant business owners often utilise private funding sources, personal savings, or a lump sum from redundancy payments to initially finance their business ventures. By setting-up a business they do not improve their economic position in terms of becoming wealthier, rather their approach is generally consumption-oriented (enjoying a more fulfilling lifestyle) (Stone and Stubbs, 2007:489). Summarising, British migrants in Hungary might generally have relative security in economic terms, that might affect their need to participate in some informal practices, however their economic position does not ensure that they are able to 'get things done' effectively without participating in certain informal practices. In contrast, the Hungarian migrants can be described as 'economic migrants' in accordance with the scholarly work on migration movements from Eastern Europe to the UK. This research area is overwhelmingly focused on Polish migrants (Burrell, 2010), however I find this literature a valuable and relevant starting point for researching Hungarian migrants in Scotland. A common feature of economic migration is that the situation in the home country's labour market is perceived as difficult (Heath et al., 2011) by the migrants. However, besides the higher wage levels in the UK and opportunities for social mobility (Eade et al., 2006), there are difficulties around the migrants' integration into the UK labour market (Garapich, 2008). There are discrepancies between educational attainment and the nature of work undertaken in the UK (Pollard et al., 2008:37). These features also describe the Hungarian participants in my research. Having encountered these difficulties, migrants aspire to a 'normal life'.

‘Normal life’ is perceived by migrants as being in the future, as something to be strived for, an aspiration that is not yet achieved (Lopez Rodriguez, 2010:349). Lopez Rodrigues (2010:341) argued that migration means challenges, unfamiliar environment, and risk taking that is often paired with downward social mobility (Pollard et al., 2008:37; Eade, at al., 2006; Heath et al., 2011). This might encourage individuals to be active, take risks, and stretch their possibilities to the limits (Lopez Rodriguez, 2010: 341). This may also impact migrants’ needs to find alternative ways to ‘get things done’, and a relatively insecure economic position would impact their need and willingness to participate in local informal practices. Such differences notwithstanding, I need to point out that the British migrants might encounter some of the same or similar difficulties as Hungarian migrants. Benson and O’Reilly (2016:28-29) explained that as British migrants’ expectations meet with reality, they can be faced with the limits of their knowledge of the local setting and ways of life. Amongst other difficulties, Blackwood and Mowl (2000:62) found the most prominent are learning the local language or finding themselves rejected by members of the local community. In any social setting it is advantageous to have personal contacts, and to know the language in order to be able to ‘get things done’ that are often only available in an informal way.

Other potential differences between the two distinct groups of migrants include how the Hungarian and British migrants made comparisons between themselves and other compatriot migrants. I will consider these reflections in the empirical chapters as part of a discussion on how migrants identified themselves in terms of level of settlement, or integration in connection with long-term local residents, and in comparison, to other migrants. Another potential line of difference can be identified in the migrant participants’ relationship to their home country, more specifically to friends and families remaining in the home country - in terms of keeping and valuing those relationships, but also using them to ‘get certain things done’. This was much more prominent for the Hungarian migrants who would use these relationships and arrange, for example, informal health care by bringing family members or friends to Scotland for the duration of the care, or by arranging to receive prescription medication from their home country that they could not get by visiting their GP in Glasgow (cf. Guma, 2018). These migration-group specific informal arrangements are not directly connected to my research topic, therefore I do not explore them in detail in the empirical chapters, however, considering their existence helps me to understand the other informal practices in a wider context.

3.3.2 Challenges and a diverse group of participants

In this section I explore some of the characteristics of my participants and why these were significant to the study. This study is by no means intended to achieve a comprehensive representation of the entire Hungarian and Scottish local and migrant populations. My PhD project attempts to cover a wide range of informal practices and I wanted to ensure that the collected data would cover a similar range of practices in both research contexts (Budapest and Glasgow). This was only possible through learning about these practices from a wide (but also similar) range of participants in each research location. To facilitate this aim, as the fieldwork progressed, I worked on a classification system to try to ensure a balance between the different groups of participants in multiple ways - on the one hand between the four different groups, and on the other hand between the participants within the four groups. I did not attempt to achieve a representative mix by age, gender, education level, and social status, rather I categorised participants based on their occupations. This choice was due to the fact that participants' occupations (in terms of their possibility to meet with specific informal practices) was more important for my research aim than, for example, their gender or social status. The focus was on whether the participants could provide their own detailed experiences and perceptions of the informal practices that are typical and connected to their field of occupation. For example, for my research purposes it was more important to ask a teacher about their perceptions of informal practices regarding accessing school placement than what their age or gender was. However, I also collected this information and display it when presenting the data in the empirical chapters. First, I loosely devised the occupational categories for the data collection, such as health care worker, education, private employment, public employment, tradesman, student, unemployed or jobseeker, or working in low-skilled occupation (i.e. service sector, factory worker). I tried to find counterparts in the other locations and amongst different groups of participants. This idea emerged after having conducted the initial five interviews during the pilot research with Hungarian migrants in the Glasgow area. During the data collection it become apparent that many participants had personal experience with multiple fields of employment, especially migrant participants, and therefore I could collect additional data on these differing fields rather than just on the participants' current employment. I also asked participants about their interactions with areas where informal practices could be widespread, such as in health care or education, and this provided me with a wider perspective on these informal practices. My aim was to provide a

systematic way of collecting data, however I was aware of some of the limitations of this method in finding and recruiting participants. For example, while I did not encounter any difficulties recruiting Hungarian and Scottish long-term local residents with the same occupation, I could not recruit any low-skilled, manual workers amongst the British migrants living in Hungary. This leads me to elaborate on the differences between the recruitment of long-term residents and migrants and between the different types of migrants.

I have explored in the introduction chapter (in section 1.3.) that the similarities between these two cities mean that long-term local residents might have a similar lived experience in Glasgow and Budapest. This meant that I could recruit counterpart long-term local resident participants in both locations, which helped me to provide an insight into similar occupations. The occupational categories of these participants ranged between unemployed job seekers and larger business owners, factory workers, and doctors. About half of the long-term Hungarian residents had two jobs simultaneously, and the second occupation was usually a form of self-employment. Additionally, many participants reported contributing to the second economy in addition (or beside) their formal employment - this was more significant amongst the long-term residents living in Budapest than in Glasgow.

I argued in the previous section that the migrant participants' experiences can differ significantly, which I took into consideration. Even if I tried to keep the balance and recruit based on occupational categories, which was possible for the long-term local residents in Budapest and Glasgow, amongst the migrants there were some occupational categories which were more frequent due to the migration generated possibilities and inequalities specific to the two differing migrant groups. Many of the Hungarian migrant participants in Glasgow were (or had been) working in low-skilled jobs, predominantly in the service sector either permanently or temporarily. These participants often reported that whilst they took a low-skilled job, their aim was to make themselves employable either in their learnt profession (or previous profession in the home country) or a desired profession by improving their language skills or attaining a new qualification. These 'transitional' jobs were often social work, service sector work (e.g. B&B, waiters, shop assistant), factory work, or cleaning. In comparison, two thirds of the British migrants worked as language teachers during their migration period in addition to their current occupation, for example they began as language teachers, and then got other jobs or set up businesses (as well). It seemed that

being a language teacher provided them with similar possibilities as Hungarian migrants had working in low-skilled jobs. Additionally, other British migrants saw language teaching as flexible work to generate some income if needed to support their everyday life, but did not primarily rely on this income. Many of these British 'lifestyle' migrants would predominantly be self-employed, owning their own business. I will elaborate on these differences between the two migrant groups in terms of power-relations and the ability 'to get things done' in the empirical chapters. Another interesting aspect that might impact the migrant's perceptions and participation in informal practices in their new context was whether they had a native partner or spouse. It was much more common for the Hungarian migrants in Glasgow to have Hungarian partners, while it was rare for British migrants not to have a Hungarian partner or spouse. Also, the Hungarian migrant participants were on average younger than the British migrants (this is due to the types of migration that I explored in the section above). The detailed participants' information overview is situated in Appendix 7.

3.4. Reflection on the fieldwork process

3.4.1. Reflection on the positionality of the role as a researcher

In their exploration of the insider and outsider status of researchers, Dwyer and Buckle (2009:55) point out that a researcher's membership of the group of people or area being studied has a great relevance for qualitative methodology. This is because the researcher plays a direct and intimate role in both the data collection and analysis. In general, an insider researcher shares characteristics, role, or experience with the participants under study (Asselin, 2003), which can also mean a certain amount of legitimacy. This allows more rapid and more complete acceptance by the participants, who are more open with the researcher which can lead to greater depth of data gathered (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009:55). On the other hand, researchers can be outsiders to the commonality shared by the participants. Both insider and outsider positions have their relative advantages, but also challenges in terms of conducting the research that need to be mitigated.

Dwyer and Buckle (2009:61) proposed that our perspective is shaped by our own position as a researcher, and therefore rather than seeing these two positions (insider and outsider) as

exclusive, ‘the researcher can only ever occupy a space between, sometimes being closer to the insider or closer to the outsider position’. Similarly, Merriam et al., (2001:405) argued that the boundaries between these two positions are not at all clearly delineated and the complexity is inherent in the researcher’s status. Since I had been living in Scotland rather than Hungary for several years when the research started, I had an ‘insider’ but ‘outsider’ position in both locations and with each of the groups. Being in a position of ‘insider’ but ‘outsider’ presented some advantages as well as some challenges. Gawlewicz (2016:36) pointed out the different implications of participants making assumptions regarding the researcher being an ‘insider’. In the initial stages of the fieldwork it helped that I am Hungarian, and I speak Hungarian, because I was able to gain ‘insider’ access to Hungarian migrants in Scotland, and this made it easier to establish contacts. However, on many occasions, the research participants assumed that since I am a migrant living in Scotland, and a Hungarian, I would easily read between the lines and immediately understand their own experiences of migration, life in Hungary and life in Scotland. Making assumptions about my knowledge of context and culture specific issues meant that on occasions participants had a tendency not to provide explanations, because sometimes they assumed that I would know what they meant. This was manifested by participants saying something along the lines of ‘you know how it is’. To tackle this problem, I made a conscious effort to ask for clarification when some important information remained unsaid. Asselin (2003) suggested that it is best for the insider researcher to gather data with her or his ‘eyes open’, but assuming that she or he knows nothing about the phenomenon being studied. I applied this approach not only with the Hungarian migrant participants, but with all four groups, regardless of whether enquiring about the Glasgow or Budapest context.

The personhood of the researcher in relation to the research participants is an essential and ever-present aspect of the investigation (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009:55), therefore my positionality affected the interaction with participants, as the positionality is determined by where one stands in relation to the other, and these positions can shift based on the researcher’s relation to the different participants (Merriam et al., 2001:411). For example, differences in age, gender, education, and social class can make someone less of an insider in relation to some research participants, even if these are people from their own culture, which presumes an insider status, and moreover it might even create tension in the interview process (Merriam et al., 2001:412). I recognise my specific positionality as a relatively young, female, white, middle-class academic, Hungarian migrant living in Scotland with a

British spouse. Because of the scope of the study, I need to consider my positionality in relation to not one, but four different groups of participants. Significant parts of the study involved researching migration experiences from the position of a migrant researcher, and this was the most important feature of my positionality that I would like to reflect on.

In the Scottish context, Hungarian migrants perceived me as 'we are in the same boat', however, on occasion, I was seen as somewhat privileged because of my socio-economic positioning in UK society. In the Hungarian context I was also perceived as somewhat privileged, as a person living in the UK and pursuing further university qualifications, the perception of which gravitated towards me occupying a more 'outsider' position. This became apparent, because many long-term local Hungarian participants made remarks along the lines of saying that the situation, living conditions, and possibilities must be better in Scotland compared with what they have in Hungary, and often presumed that I had little recent personal experience in the Hungarian context. I noticed that the British migrants perceived me as their counterpart, as I lived in Scotland with a British spouse and therefore presumably had a similar life-situation and experiences to them, and also in a context that they were familiar with. I also noticed that they saw me as someone who would understand their feelings towards living in the Hungarian context, because I had experience living in both their old and new contexts. However, at the same time some of these participants saw me more as an outsider, even questioning why I would not move back to Hungary, speculating that I regard living in UK as superior to living in Hungary. Perhaps my positioning in relation to the Scottish participants was the most straight forward. Being a Hungarian migrant PhD researcher, making enquiries about and comparing informal practices in Hungary and Scotland was in line with the long-term local participants' perception of what it means to be a typical academic researcher, and they did not necessarily perceive me as a migrant, but rather as someone living in Scotland for the duration of pursuing a research project. They often indicated this by making remarks about if and when I would go back to live in Hungary. Therefore, they saw me as an outsider, someone rather different from them.

3.4.2. The use of language in the research

I conducted the interviews and focus groups in a multilingual way, and therefore I address the importance of the use of language during the data collection and transcribing. I conducted

the interviews and focus groups in English with the Scottish local and British migrant participants, and in Hungarian with the Hungarian locals and migrants. The choice of language was not always obvious as one of the Hungarian migrant participants chose to speak some sections of the interview in English, because she found it easier to speak about her life in Glasgow in English, while speaking about life in Hungary was easier in Hungarian. Both groups of migrant participants found it easier to say some words in Hungarian or English to describe some situations that had no counterpart in their new context, or they did not have such previous experience in their home countries. Many Hungarian migrants used English words - especially to describe specific institutions and situations, such as council, Home Office, and National Insurance Number. Similarly, many British migrants mixed Hungarian words or names into the conversation, such as 'tanító néni' [HUN: female primary school teacher], 'rendőr' [HUN: policeperson], 'BKK' (Budapest transport company), and 'APEH' (Hungarian tax office). These were mostly names of typical institutions that they had interacted with. Participants often used colloquial names for an institution, since this is the way they used them in their day-to-day life.

I transcribed and translated all the interviews into English because I needed to analyse the data together. Having the transcripts in the same language enhances the method and quality of the data analysis. However, I need to address the method of translation. I transcribed the English-language data verbatim, but when I transcribed from Hungarian to English, I had to think deeply and carefully about the meaning of the sentences. Gawlewicz (2016:32) highlighted that language-specific expressions might not have meaning if translated directly, and might contain emotional connotations, cultural refences and values that needs to be considered. Gawlewicz (2016:32) argued the importance of producing a translated transcription that is linguistically close in a nuanced way to the original language. With this intention in mind, I systematically added detailed clarifying notes (in brackets) to the translated transcripts, especially explaining and supplementing the original expressions. I also added some expressions in Hungarian. I marked in the transcript - not only in the translated, but also in the original English transcript - when the participants spoke at the same time or paused. I realised that it is meaningful to transcribe the data marking details (like pauses) that could have emotional connotations. For example, people spoke at the same time when the conversation was animated (in the focus groups). Pauses can also have differing roles, such as indicating hesitation, emotion, or just gathering thought (Silverman, 2013:61-84). I speak English as a second language, therefore when I encountered English-

language expressions, I usually asked for clarification during the interview itself and noted the meaning in the transcript. The detailed transcription helped me to understand and analyse the data in a more meaningful and nuanced way.

To provide the same level of explanations and clarification throughout the empirical chapters I have chosen to cite from the data with a heightened level of explanation. I have kept certain significant words and expressions in the original language (mostly Hungarian) and provide the exact meaning of the words in the footnotes. These are mostly instances when Hungarian participants used a word that has specific meaning, for example descriptive names for informal practices. I also followed this rule when British migrant participants used a Hungarian word, leaving the Hungarian version in the quote and providing an English translation. Specifically addressing corruption research, Blundo (2017:42) argued that there is a strength in leaving terms used by the participant in their original language. This is because the words related to corruption reveal some characteristics of the wider context that the practices are situated in, and the local terms of corruption practices can highlight the expressions, language codes, and gestures that designate different practices (Blundo, 2017:42). This type of presentation of the material was also important to provide a more in-depth data analysis.

3.4.3. Ethical issues

I secured permission from the Research Ethics Committee of the College of Social Sciences at the University of Glasgow before I started the data collection, and I followed the related guidance in terms of health and safety, anonymity, and data storage and data management. The presentation of the research subject to my participants was one of the issues that required ethical consideration, because of the subject of corruption. I considered this issue already when writing the invitation and the Participant Information Sheet. I qualified the subject of corruption using the words ‘low-level’ and ‘everyday’, and for further clarification I described the phenomenon by drawing on some typical examples that participants might be familiar with or could relate to. This is congruent with my non-judgmental approach that I tried to convey to the potential participants. When providing the examples, I tried to include a wide range of practices with the intention of embracing the complexity of everyday corruption practices. I also kept in mind that the research subject could include a multiplicity

of informal practices essential for the coordination and functioning of economies and societies (Ledeneva, 2018a:425). Another purpose of qualifying the research subject was to distinguish the subject from grand corruption and convey that it is rather something that would happen on an everyday basis with the participation of ordinary people (like the participants themselves). The Hungarian version of the invitation and Participant Information Sheet was a direct translation of the English version, except instead of 'low-level' corruption I used a word 'hétköznapi', which translates to 'everyday'. This is the term used in Hungarian literature, media, and by the Hungarian Chapter of Transparency International.

During the interviews, I did not want to label practices as corruption, because I was interested in people's perceptions of them, so I often used the phrase 'informal practices', which includes both informality and corruption. Many discussions in the interviews and focus groups were constructed around the question of distinction between what participants perceived as corruption (to differing degrees), or not as corruption at all. In the subsequent empirical chapters, the analysis of these perceptions, and the use of certain words for certain practices will be significant. Blundo (2017:29-30) raised the dilemma and risk that the researcher who gains knowledge of an informal practice has to take into careful consideration on which basis or criteria can he or she label specific practices as corruption. Therefore, I identified informal practices as corruption, acceptable corruption, or informality (not corruption at all) based on my research participants' perceptions. However, rather than trying to understand practices in terms of exclusive categories, I embraced the fact that participants' descriptions vary according to the many different points of view regarding the corruption practices, and that these perceptions can be strongly ambivalent. Congruently with Blundo's (2017:34-35) suggestion, I sought to reconstruct the various point of view of the different groups involved.

Additionally, I was aware that the subject matter of corruption might cause potential discomfort to participants. During the data collection, before I asked some more direct questions about corruption, I told the participants that they could choose not to answer. Conscious of the power-relations between researcher and participants I reminded them that I am not judging them, rather I am just making enquiries to be able to understand the situation and the informal practices, as well as their perceptions of these. I also reminded them that they could stop the conversation at any time if they chose not to take part in the research

further, however no participant opted out. I flagged up that if the subject matter caused emotional distress, then the participant could leave (especially during the focus group) at any time. I let the participants know that in the event of any information being received indicating any possible harm or wrongdoing to someone involved in the research, then that would be reported to an appropriate agency.

Utilising my ethical consideration in practice, linking to the discussion on positionality above, I had to be conscious of the question of power-relations (perhaps more pressingly) when someone researches their own culture (Merriam et al, 2001) (i.e. as a Hungarian researcher), but this issue is relevant for all groups of participants. In practice this was manifested in my interviewing technique, because I was conscious to not interpret anything that Hungarian participants told me through the lens of my own experience, rather I asked for clarification. Also, my awareness of power-relations between researchers and research participants was manifested in the translation of the collected material. Gawlewicz (2016:32) pointed out that the method of translating the collected data is an ethical decision in terms of representation.

I ensured confidentiality by anonymity and changing all information that made people recognisable by referring to participants using pseudonyms. The issue of anonymity was important for some participants, because although I explained in the Participation Information Sheet and at the beginning of the interview about anonymity, some participants at certain points (for example when sharing details on some informal practices) asked for clarification, and addressed concern regarding whether I could guarantee that neither they nor their organisation would be recognisable. I asked participants to sign an informed consent form and reminded them that they could contact me at any time to withdraw their informed consent. I also let the participants know that they could request to read the transcript of the interviews and focus group conversations. I have not received such a request or withdrawal.

3.5. Data analysis

The in-depth interviews and the focus groups provided me with rich qualitative data. As I noted previously, after the in-depth interviews I conducted a preliminary data analysis by

establishing the typologies of informal practices. This provided me with an overall understanding of the data, however the primary purpose of that analysis was to aid the second phase of data collection (the focus groups). I conducted a more systematic, in-depth analysis after I completed the overall data collection. This means that I analysed the material from phase one and phase two of the data collection together, and I coded them according to the same framework. Analysing the data which was produced by differing data collection methods presented some challenges as it mainly featured conversation between the participants, rather than between the participant and the interviewer, however it did not result in major obstacles or discrepancies. The focus groups were conducted as conversational groups with a low number of participants and had narrative features, therefore they were not dissimilar in nature from the interview conversations. After I completed the transcription of the data, I imported it into the NVivo software programme. I used NVivo data analysis software as a tool to digitally organise, analyse and code the data.

The coding framework was derived from first the conceptual framework (deductive), and secondly from the themes emerging organically from the data (inductive). Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) suggested that this method provides a clear and comprehensive way to identify themes connected to the research topic. This meant that I did not have a pre-determined coding framework, rather the coding was a process. I developed, re-visited, and refined the coding framework by considering the themes arising from the data, while keeping the conceptual framework in mind. Coding was not a linear process, but rather a learning curve. The inductive and deductive nature of the coding framework enhanced the quality of the data analysis (Morse and Mitcham, 2002). I will address the matter of having both deductive and inductive codes by drawing some examples from my research project in the coming sections and also discuss how these codes relate to each other.

3.5.1. Developing a coding framework: Re-reading the data in NVivo, thematic analysis

I started developing the coding framework by re-reading the data. My objective was to identify key arguments and themes, and to acquire a sense of scope of the overall data. The re-reading strategy shed light on the overarching themes and pointed to particularities in the data. I started the coding after having gained a general idea of the data. I used NVivo

software to support the coding process, because it enabled me to create a manageable and retrievable coding system. Moving forward, I established theory-driven and data-driven codes, both of which formed the foundation and initial structure of NVivo nodes (the name for codes in NVivo). Theory-driven codes were informed by ongoing reading of the literature and the conceptual framework. These codes were informed by, for example, considering the distinction between the role of informal practices as being supportive or subversive (Ledeneva, 2008, Polese, 2014), or seeing society as a sum of social associations (Ehrlich, 2002). The re-reading strategy allowed me to establish a holistic understanding of the whole data set, and I obtained a list of key themes that I used as codes (data-driven codes). I display the node-report in Appendix 8, which gives a holistic snapshot of the coding framework that I have developed. These were, for example, participants providing rationalisations for taking part in informal practices, or some migration-specific issues such as participants describing their own status, possibilities, and circumstances compared with other migrants and long-term local residents. Organising the data under data-driven codes resembled a thematic analysis described by (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The main codes were informed by the research aims and questions as well as by other emerging themes, and I thematically organised the data under them. In Braun and Clarke's (2006:82) interpretation, 'a theme is something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set'. To identify themes, I considered repetition of words and concepts that captured something relevant to my research question. I ensured that these themes were distinct from each other, although there was a degree of overlap (Braun and Clarke, 2006:82-86).

Using NVivo as a tool provided challenges and advantages. I learnt during my research training that NVivo is a good tool for indexing complex data, but it cannot replace the actual thinking process. Thinking about my own research questions helped me to organise the data in a way that was best suited for my project. I assigned passages of texts (e.g. words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs) to the nodes. When some existing node could not accommodate a potentially important quote, I created a new node with a short explanation. I provided explanations of each node, and I displayed a number of quotes coded under each head node which helped me to make sense of the data and see connections and challenge previous assumptions. For example, the nodes showed connections between issues that I had not considered as connected, or conversely, that the data did not reveal a strong connection where I had assumed there would be one. I thought about the nodes' relations to one another

in terms of being a subset, being contradictory to, or in conflict with others. Finally, apart from ensuring the analysis, the development of the coding framework helped me to think about and create the structure of the thesis as the higher-level codes eventually served as chapter headings, and as sections within chapters.

3.5.2. Reflection on coding the data

I kept a research journal during the coding procedure. I noted my reflections on the coding, and this method helped me to develop the coding framework. The coding procedure provided many challenges, but solving these challenges ultimately provided me with a coherent framework for analysis. I did not only establish theory-driven and data-driven codes, but I paid attention to their connections, i.e. I noted how the themes and issues which emerged from the data aligned with and challenged the key theories. For example, the notion that many informal practices are unique to the post-socialist context, or culture specific as being a consequence of local moral codes, was challenged by the emerging themes. My data showed that perhaps it is possible to establish a more generalisable understanding of everyday corruption practices, especially regarding how people think about them in terms of acceptability.

I addressed earlier how my research questions and aims informed the main codes. One of these main codes was ‘what kind of informal practices do people take part in’ (i.e. “What”). I coded common informal practices under this heading, i.e. bribery, cheating, kickbacks, influencing gaining access, providing perks, tax-evasion, theft, giving tips, giving presents, using resources that belong to a formal organisation, and informal working arrangements. The abundance of different types of informal practices obtained from the data required clarification with a conceptual underpinning. Not all practices that participants mentioned satisfied the working definition of everyday corruption. Some practices were seemingly related to the research subject, but their inclusion required careful examination. For example, a British migrant participant living in Budapest mentioned cheating as a form of corruption especially in the educational setting (i.e. cheating on examinations), cheating on public transport (i.e. not validating tickets and forging season tickets), and service providers trying to cheat them, thinking that they must be a foreign tourist. Although these practices describe an interesting local context and moral codes, and provide background information for

situating the other informal practices, I did not consider them as everyday corruption based on my working definition, because these practices do not have a transactional aspect of people co-operating in carrying them out.

Another way that the inductive and deductive coding worked together, and proved to be productive, was in seeking to understand who the members were (and how to think about the possible members) of the social associations. Although Ehrlich (2002) conceptualised a broad understanding of social associations ranging between a family unit or a whole nation, trying to identify and understand who the members of the social association might be surrounding an informal practice emerged empirically. I mentioned that when I constructed the typology document for the preliminary analysis, I noted down who might be involved directly and indirectly in the informal practice. These notes reinforced how the social association can be established as people come together to co-operating in carrying out an informal practice. Therefore, social associations, and the people in them, can be identified by the 'common norms' that they obey in terms of carrying out the transaction. Additionally, these social associations might or might not align with formal organisations (e.g. the workplace) or occupation (i.e. professions). I addressed in the conceptual framework that the norms of informal transactions emerge from the members' interactions within the social association, however in this research I can only examine these norms and the working of the social association through looking into the informal practice itself. The informal transaction provides a glimpse into the wider workings of the social association, and people's positions and interactions within it. Therefore, for my research purposes, I identify the possible members of the social association based on the participants' descriptions of the informal practices. In practice, when identifying social associations, if the participants described recognisable socially shared patterns and elements of the practice which I interpreted as a reference to a social association, I could determine that they belong to the same social association surrounding the informal practice. In other words, this means that the participant implied or explicitly said that the informal practice and its norms are not necessarily an individual act, but are socially learnt and emerged from the people's interactions to co-operating to carry out an informal practice. In Chapter 5 on the working of the social association, I will provide empirical examples of how I identify and understand the social association of informal practices.

Another thematic pattern also emerged from the data that greatly influenced the development of the coding framework. When participants elaborated on the informal practices, they often provided some type of rationalisation or justification for taking part in the informal transaction. Blundo (2017:32) argued that participants providing justifications can be explained by the nature of corruption research, because, when enquiring about corruption, participants 'never show themselves as neutral'. While, on the one hand, talking about corruption cannot be neutral, on the other hand, 'abstaining from any moral condemnation and normative judgment appears an essential imperative for the success of a study on corruption' (Blundo, 2017: 32). Providing justification is a methodological consequence of the qualitative research methods, which allows for stories on corruption that mix descriptions of procedures and value judgements, facts, and interpretations (Blundo, 2017:43). Especially, the participants' narrator type discussion of the practices is usually accompanied by the mechanism of auto-self-defence and justification (Blundo, 2017:42).

Therefore, I can summarise that rationalisation as a process emerged from the data in reflection of participants talking about the research subject of everyday corruption. I searched for additional literature to help understand what participants were telling me. I realised the importance of the differing rationalisations and I included them in the coding framework. This reflexive way of coding enabled me to link the theory and empirical data directly. Additionally, Blundo (2017:35) also suggested that during description of corruption practices, the participants often present contradictory and ambivalent discourses of the practices. My data also reflected this. The thematic analysis revealed that rationalisations and ambivalences were constructed mainly around reflection on external pressures or in evaluating the harm caused. The theme of rationalisation emerged in an empirical way, therefore I will introduce and explore its importance and analytical value in detail in the empirical chapter on informal practices and their rationalisations (Chapter 4).

3.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I showed that the theoretical and empirical aspects of the research are linked, starting from the aim of the research and the research question, because I am interested in people's understandings and perceptions of everyday corruption practices, as well as how

these socially constructed notions emerge from people's interactions. To answer these questions required on the one hand collecting rich and in-depth empirical data of participants' experiences and detailed descriptions of the practices they engaged in or were aware of, as well as describing their relationships to other members of society participating in these informal transactions. On the other hand, I needed to have a conceptual underpinning that allowed for the non-judgmental examination of everyday corruption, and also provided a conceptual tool to understand certain processes, such as obeying and enforcing informal norms. Ehrlich's 'living law' theory provides the basis of this conceptual framework, which I described in detail in the previous chapter. This approach motivated and influenced my data collection methods. I chose both in-depth interviews and conversational focus groups in order to enable this nuanced exploration of everyday corruption practices.

The conceptually driven decision to start the recruitment and the investigation with migrants and their experiences put many issues about understanding people's perceptions and participation in informal practices into a sharper relief, generating many empirically emerging themes. Some of these themes were migration specific, but many other themes highlighted issues applicable for long-term residents as well, for example the importance of pre-existing power-relations which affect whether people are able 'to get things done', or whether they can avoid taking part in informal practices. Having four different groups of participants also brought challenges, and in this chapter I explored how I mitigated these challenges in terms of recruitment and ethical considerations, such as positionality and the use of language (when conducting the interviews, during transcription/translation, when coding, and presenting the data). One particular ethical dilemma that I have addressed in this chapter was the presentation of the subject matter of corruption to the participants, and using or not using the word corruption during the data collection. I applied a non-judgmental approach towards the multitude of informal practices and people's diverse perceptions of those, not labelling informal practices as corruption, rather letting participants themselves identify them as such.

Through these data collection methods and the approaches that I employed, I have been able to gather rich empirical data that helped me to develop my coding framework by clarifying connections, as well as pointing to themes and issues that previously I thought not connected. I constructed my own typology of informal practices for my research purposes. The rationale

for this on the one hand was that identifying and presenting typical practices was used as a tool to help the data collection during the focus group phase. On the other hand, I wanted to understand what was important for these four groups of participants rather than trying to fit the collected practices into already established, and perhaps context-specific, categories advised by the previous literature. I explained that while developing the coding framework I considered many theoretically driven themes, however at the same time I also paid attention to new themes and emerging connections. One of the most significant themes was the rationalisation of the practices, driven by the subject matter of corruption.

My inductive and deductive approach enables an in-depth examination of the workings of the social association, which includes developing an understanding of how these norms emerged, are learnt, and routinised, as well as why people have a sense of informal enforcement. The empirical data also confirmed the significance of the context that the practices are situated in, and the importance of the participants' relationships to one another, pointing to the power-relations and inequalities within the social associations. In the empirical chapters which follow, I will address in more detail the interlinking deductive and inductive analysis that I outlined above using Ehrlich's 'living law' theory as a conceptual framework, but also addressing the themes that emerged empirically and contributed to understanding the perceptions of everyday corruption, and how the norms regulating people's participation in them develop and are obeyed and accepted to differing extents.

Chapter 4: Informal practices and their rationalisations

In this chapter I will explore some of the many informal practices which my participants explained to me and which fit within my working definition of everyday corruption. Ehrlich's theoretical framework, with its' non-judgemental consideration of norms which are divergent from, and often contrary to the formal law (Anders and Nuijten, 2007:12), facilitates us in gaining a nuanced understanding of everyday corruption practices and their norms. I will examine these practices based on participants' rationalisations for taking part in them, because these highlight why people regard taking part in these practices and their norms as acceptable to some extent. In line with Ehrlich's theory, I understand these rationalisations as being socially constructed and emerging from people's interactions in social associations (Banakar, 2012:18), supporting the members developing a procedural acceptance of the norms of 'living law'.

In the Methodology chapter (in section 3.2.2.) I have established an initial typology of the informal practices, which I will use to structure this chapter. I constructed my own typology for my research purposes, based on my research participants' narrator type accounts of the informal practices. I found that distinguishing between the differing mechanisms and the functions of the informal practices can demarcate two different broad categories. These are, first, the practices with the function of achieving a 'social' type of gain, which mostly manifest in gaining access to care, and are typically facilitated by connected mechanisms, such as utilising social relations and personal connections, and also symbolic gift exchange. Secondly, I distinguished practices with the function of achieving 'economic' gain, using more 'market type' mechanisms, for example immediate monetary transactions. My intention with this chapter is to show the variety and range of informal practices, and people's perceptions of those in both research contexts, embracing the fact that the meaning of some informal practices can be ambiguous. In this chapter I do not attempt to provide an encompassing typology of all informal practices in both Budapest and Glasgow, but rather to set the scene for the subsequent chapters, where I will engage more with how practices are learnt and routinised, and how people's overall understandings of everyday corruption practices are socially constructed through interaction in the social associations.

In the Methodology chapter (in section 3.5.2.) I have also addressed the importance of participants rationalising their participation in informal practices as a theme that emerged during coding the data. Invoking these varying rationalisations or justifications moves beyond simply describing the mechanism and function of the informal practices (i.e. how and with what aim they would take place). It became apparent during the coding process that people who are participating in the same (or similar) informal practices in their local context tend to refer to the same (or similar) types of justifications, which indicates that the rationalisations are socially constructed. I conceptualise the mechanism of referring to different types of rationalisations as part of the conduct of the social association surrounding an informal practice. At the same time, similar rationalisations were provided by the participants in both research contexts. Connected to the research aims and questions, considering participants' rationalisations reveals why (with what reasons), and under what circumstances, long-term local residents and migrants take part in informal practices, referring to external pressures embedded in the context, or to the perceived harmfulness of the informal practice (which were the two main types of rationalisations emerging from the data). I found Sykes and Matza's (1957), and Ashforth and Anand's (2003) categorisation of justifications for taking part in informal practices useful to understand the rationalisations that my research participants provided. Deriving the main categories of justifications from these two studies, the rationalisations of 'denial of responsibility' and 'appeal to higher loyalties' are based on the notion that the person taking part in the corruption had no other choice due to circumstances that can emerge either externally, or from the person's need to prioritise group loyalty. I conceptualise that both justifications can serve to mitigate external pressures, and using the justification of 'appeal to higher loyalties' can reduce people's perception of the harmfulness of the practice when they aim to achieve a social type of gain. The justifications of 'denial of injury', 'denial of victim', and 'social weighting' all evaluate the harm caused by using different perspectives. These perspectives consider the extent of harm caused to the person per se, and also in comparison with harm caused by others, which allows people to consider or evaluate the harm as not being that significant. The caused harms can be direct or indirect when people evaluate the harmfulness of the informal practice in relation to the harmed person, organisation, state, or society. Additionally, the rationalisation of 'condemnation of condemners' can be used by people both referring to external pressures and to the extent of the harm, either justifying people's participation in the informal practice (arguing that they had no other choice under the circumstances), or making a downward comparison to others who are perceived as even worse than them. These

categorisations were originally devised to understand people's behaviour in organisations, or to neutralise delinquent behaviour. Therefore, I needed to adapt my understanding of these self-serving ideologies (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:18-22), or 'techniques of neutralisation' (Sykes and Matza, 1957:667-669), to my research purposes. I employ these adaptations and modifications when presenting the empirical data during this chapter.

I have established in the conceptual framework that to gain a nuanced understanding of everyday corruption practices it is essential to consider them in their context. Ultimately the aim of this first empirical chapter is to establish what people do, or observe other people doing, and to discover what meaning they ascribe to it - i.e. what informal practices exist in Glasgow and Budapest. In line with my methodological choices and the scope of the research, in this empirical chapter there is an emphasis on the exploration between and within contexts. Therefore, during the data analysis I pay attention to how the context contributes to possible similarities and differences in people's perceptions, participation in, and rationalisation of informal practices in both research contexts. Overall, exploring the informal practices by considering their rationalisations enables me to make comparisons between the seemingly similar practices in Budapest and Glasgow, and also allows me to develop a perhaps more generalisable understanding of people's participation in them. I use both migrants' and long-term local residents' experiences in this chapter without differentiating between the particularities of their lived experiences. I will explore the significance and nuances of migrants' experiences in the subsequent chapters.

This chapter is divided into two main sections, in which I will show how participants rationalised taking part in the two main and distinct types of informal practices: those with an economic function and those focused primarily on social gain. I will demonstrate significant differences between these two types of informal practice, not only in the mechanisms that people use to conduct them, but also in people's rationalisations for taking part in them, referring to external pressures, and evaluating the perceived harmfulness of the practice.

4.1. Rationalising informal practices with the function of economic gain

4.1.1. Rationalisations based on external pressures

In the conceptual framework I have established the issue of dysfunctional state institutions, and connected discussions of differentiating between the 'supportive' and 'subversive' roles of the informal practices (Ledeneva, 2009, 2018). Considering these roles can contribute to gain a deeper understanding of participants' rationalisations and perceptions of informal practices. Some of my data collected in the post-socialist state education context in Budapest reinforced this notion. Hungarian primary school teacher Katalin, who teaches in a Budapest state school, shared her perceptions of the dysfunctional features of being a public sector worker during our interview. She expressed that apart from the fact that teachers' starting salaries are considered to be low in the public sector in general, there is another problem that she has identified, which is that teachers' salaries are calculated using a promotion system based on the length of their service. This means, as Katalin explained, that teachers have no financial motivation to work productively or to provide high quality teaching, because there is no difference in their salaries based on personal efficiency. Katalin also suggested that she and many of her other colleagues regarded taking part in development and training opportunities as an obstacle, something that distracts them from normal teaching hours. She explained that "*we might have to lose a week's teaching to complete the course, and it would only increase our salary by 2000 HUF (£5) a month".* Katalin implied that she did not regard this amount of money as a substantial contribution to their salaries. In Katalin's view the current system does not provide opportunities for teachers to formally supplement or increase their salaries within the workplace. Summarising her explanation of the perceived difficulties with the promotion system and salaries, Katalin expressed that "*we can only really increase our income by teaching privately for cash-in-hand."* (Katalin, age 50-60, female, Hungarian, Budapest). So far Katalin had given a consultant type (somewhat generalised) explanation of the perceived problem with this type of public employment. She indicated by using the pronoun 'we' that she does not only refer to her own personal experience, but those of teachers in general. Going further, elaborating on the subject, and providing a narrator type, first-hand experience of teaching privately for cash-in-hand, she said that this type of teaching takes place in the school after normal working hours, or sometimes even during working hours when she has a gap in her schedule. Cash-in-hand

work refers to monetary transactions that are hidden from the state for tax purposes, but that are legal in all other aspects (Williams, 2006). Additionally, she suggested that this informal practice also involves teachers referring students to other teachers, and pulling students out from their normal scheduled classes in order to teach them at more convenient times. Katalin also pointed out the controversies underlying this informal practice, by providing a second-hand insight based on observing others in her school. She noticed that some teachers would prioritise this informal teaching activity over their normal teaching hours in terms of engagement with their formal work. Moreover, some teachers would not shy away from practicing exam questions before formal tests with the paying students to demonstrate their progress (or at least the improvement of their grades) for the parents. She indicated that this takes place with the financial and moral support of the students' parents, by saying that "*this is what parents pay for*". However, Katalin also added that "*… I think this is too much and they [the other teachers] shouldn't do it".*

Katalin presented a clear argument of perceiving the dysfunctionality of the public salary system as an external pressure, and rationalised teachers' participation in these informal practices by referring to this aspect. Katalin particularly pointed out the disadvantages of the promotion system, which is based on the length of their service, as well as taking the development courses, which she perceived as not supportive towards improving the efficiency and quality of teaching. She expressed that the teachers felt that they are propelled into this situation by the dysfunctionality of the state salary system. Therefore, she and the other teachers can deny personal accountability for taking up informal teaching activities as a way to supplement their salaries (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:18). She shifted the focus on to the poor functioning of the state sector from her own (and the others teachers') informal practices, indicating that teaching cash-in-hand was the only suitable way to increase their income. On the one hand, according to Katalin's narrative, for some teachers, like her, the function of this informal practice is not to achieve substantial economic gain, but to 'make ends meet' in a situation where low salaries are common, as is the case in public employment in Hungary in general. This is congruent with the findings of other research studies, which are engaged with similar informal practices in education in post-socialist contexts (Zaloznaya, 2012; Morris and Polese, 2016). This also means that in this situation informal practices can be perceived as having a 'supportive' or 'problem solving' function (i.e. it might be the only means of satisfying basic needs) (Ledeneva, Bratu and Köker, 2017:12). On the other hand, Katalin also explained some (perhaps more controversial) informal teaching practices which she observed other teachers doing. The rationalisation of these

practices is perhaps still rooted in the same notion, which is justifying participation in order to supplement low salaries. However, according to Katalin, who is in the same (or at least similar) situation as the other teachers, in some instances these informal practices can be perceived negatively and as being 'subversive'. This happened - based on Katalin's insight above - for example, when the quality of teaching in normal working hours suffered due to the informal teaching practices, or when exam questions (which were not available for other students) were practiced in advance. Katalin's accounts showed that the practice of informal teaching, which functions to supplement and support salaries, would take place to differing extents and with differing motivations, and therefore is also perceived differently by the participants. Supplementing salaries as a way to make up for the difference between private and public sector salaries (i.e. by informal cash-in-hand teaching, teaching during formal school hours, or using the workplace's resources) can be regarded by the participants as 'supportive'. However, when it is diverting teachers' attention away from formal work, and moreover the quality of their work suffers, it can be perceived as more 'subversive' by some.

Scottish doctor Jamie, who works in a public hospital in the Glasgow-area, observed that some of his colleagues supplemented their salaries by working privately for insurance companies, conducting medical check-ups on private patients. He described how doctors often performed these medical check-ups during their working hours in the public hospital, and used the hospital's rooms and equipment to do so. Jamie also explained that these examinations could cost £50-100, which he considered a substantial amount of additional income for doctors who can conduct these tests regularly - clarifying that these informal practices happen on a regular basis. He also added, that *"I think that the hospital knows about this, and they say nothing. I think it is kind of accepted."*. Although some of the details of Jamie's observations of informal practices in the Glasgow public hospital echoed Katalin's description of informal teaching practices in Budapest (such as using the public workplace's resources), in Jamie's description there is no direct indication that the doctors would necessarily neglect their primary work. He also stated that he perceived doctors' salaries as adequate, therefore described the informal practice as being more similar to workplace pilferage, which includes doctors using the public hospitals' resources. In some ways this practice could also be qualified as a 'perk', because according to Jamie's perception the hospital is aware of these practices and does not actively prevent them (Ditton, 1977: 46-48). This acceptance from the hospital's perspective is perhaps motivated by exactly the fact that this is a way of letting public employees compensate for the difference

in salaries between the public and private sector. When I asked Jamie what he thought of their salaries and whether he would try to supplement his in some way, he replied: *"It is enough [pause], it is not great, but decent [pause], although not as good as in the private sector."* (Jamie, age 30-40, male, Scottish, Glasgow). While Jamie's description implies that the salaries in the public sector are lower than in the private sector, which I interpreted that some doctors might regard conducting medical check-ups as a form of compensation for the difference in salaries, the narrative of dysfunctional-state institution and connected external pressures, moreover, referring to these factors as rationalisation, was more dominant in the Budapest context.

While Katalin addressed the issue of low salaries in public education at primary and high school-level, my collected data showed that the practice of informal teaching was not restricted to this context in Budapest. British migrant university lecturer Rose, teaching at one of the most prestigious Budapest universities, explained that "*[informal teaching] is very normal and common at the university as well. PhD students, and even research fellows, have private students. They just can't survive without earning that extra money."* (Rose, age 40-50, female, British migrant, Budapest). This quote extends the notion of low salaries to other publicly funded institutions such as the universities[15] in Budapest. In this second-hand narrator type account Rose explained that mostly her Hungarian academic colleagues justified participating in informal teaching practices by referencing their economic needs, explicitly referring to working cash-in-hand without declaring it for tax purposes as a strategy for personal survival (Jancsics, 2015b:5). Supplementing their salaries in an informal way offers PhD students and academic staff a solution for the everyday problem of maintaining living standards. Although Katalin mentioned 'making ends meet', Rose's observation implied a stronger level of external pressure and a narrative of survival. Katalin in fact expressed some level of condemnation of colleagues who abused their position to teach informally, and used the contacts and resources of the workplace, if that diverted attention from their formal duties. Rose did not address such distinctions, and said that this informal practice is normal and common, implying that it is pervasive in the context of higher education. Her narrative implied compassion for her colleagues, even if Rose was not personally affected by strong economic needs. Hungarian academic Judit, who is currently a PhD researcher on one of the most prestigious programs at a Budapest university,

[15] Regulated in the Higher Education Act 1991: CCIV

confirmed Rose's observation providing a first-hand narrator type account. Judit demonstrated the stronger narrative of survival by making a link between the very badly paid formal teaching at the university and the consequent need to undertake better paid, but informal, teaching lessons. She explained that completing a certain number of teaching hours is a compulsory part of the program, and that it is a requirement to attain a PhD. Judit added that sometimes PhD researchers have to complete significantly more hours than the minimum, because this is a cheap way for the university to cover for staff shortages as the researchers receive only a symbolic financial reward for these teaching hours: "*It costs me more to get to the university [than I earn], and between ourselves we call this slavery, but what can you do?"* (Judit, age 30-40, female, Hungarian, Budapest). This highlights the need and motivation for these participants to rationalise informal teaching as almost being not a choice - but a necessity to survive - and have no negative feelings about working cash-in-hand without declaring any additional income for tax purposes.

While so far, I have presented data regarding the public sector, and the perceived dysfunctionality of the state salary system, my data showed that similar narratives, pressures, and therefore rationalisations were present in the private sector as well. British migrant language school manager, Andrew, living in Budapest, explained that he did not see any problem with teaching cash-in-hand, because "*the teachers earn so little at the [language] school, so it is totally understandable that they would want to earn additional money."* This is a reflection on the given language school, however he also extended the notion that this is a common practice in general across the whole industry saying that "*I understand that they should declare the work, and pay tax on this income, but it is kind of accepted that it doesn't work like that. Everybody does it."* (Andrew, 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). One of the specific rationalisations that supports this type of informal teaching that contributes to the second economy is referring to the practice as an existing precedent, something that 'everybody does' (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:18), and that therefore, in this instance, the language teachers are not personally accountable. British migrant English teacher in Budapest, Emily, explained that *"students don't need a receipt, so they don't ask for it, and really it is not expected at all when you go to a private tutor."* (Emily, age 40-50, female, British migrant, Budapest). This highlights how teachers, language school managers, and students can contribute to different aspects of the informal practice by conducting the teaching, allowing for the transactions by looking away, and not asking for receipts. Many of my research participants working as language teachers similarly implied that everybody

is involved, and they all play a small part, so therefore the personal responsibility is deflected. This means that they used the narrative of collective responsibility to rationalise their participation in these informal practices.

In comparison, Duncan, a long-term local resident tradesman in Glasgow, pointed out that he is in a position now - which he qualified as advantageous - where he can avoid cash-in-hand work, because he has a steady formal workflow. With this statement Duncan implied that although working without participating in the second economy is a desired state, circumstances can dictate different solutions. However, he suggested that there are many tradesmen who would occasionally work for cash-in-hand, and also several tradesmen who would only work that way. Duncan's description of a varied scene in terms of tradesmen's working arrangements is congruent with the experience of other participants who reported on dealing with tradesmen in the Glasgow context. Willams (2006) described that a quote given by a tradesman for work often involves offering a double price (i.e. one price cash-in-hand, and another 'with receipt'), which is the essence of this informal practice. This means that it is often the customer's decision whether or not to participate in the informal practice. Addressing this possibility of choice, Glaswegian Cameron reflected as follows: "*Honestly, when it is 20% cheaper, why wouldn't I go for it? It is not my responsibility [to declare it]. And I don't know what the tradesman does [pause] maybe he has a way to declare it.*" (Cameron, age 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow). The participant described the economic advantage of the informal practice not only for the tradesman but also for himself, and shifted the responsibility to the tradesman, describing his own involvement as more acted upon than acting. By using this rationalisation for participating in the informal practice, the link between the individual and the act is broken (Sykes and Matza, 1957:667). Cameron implied that it is not his responsibility to declare the tax, and therefore he is not accountable for the tradesman's actions. This type of rationalisation was a recurring theme amongst the customer participants, however some participants in Glasgow genuinely thought that paying cash-in-hand was the normal way to conduct a transaction with a tradesman, because that was their only experience. For example, long-term Glasgow resident Freya stated that cash-in-hand payments in this type of situation *"are so common that I wouldn't say that it is corruption at all*." (Freya, 30-40, female, Scottish, Glasgow). References to this informal practice as being extremely common and widespread point towards its pervasiveness in the Glasgow context. I can identify the narrative of collective responsibility as a rationalisation, because

seemingly both tradesmen and customers play a part in these repeated transactions, similar to that of the language teachers in the Hungarian context.

Similarly, in the Budapest context, cash-in-hand payments and informal agreements between property owners and occupants were perceived to be the norm by many long-term Hungarian local residents, as well as British migrant participants. The following conversation between a Hungarian migrant husband and wife, who are currently living in Glasgow, but let out their Budapest apartment, highlights not only the extent of this informal practice in Budapest, but also how the perceptions of having external pressures are formulated based on assumptions that are supported by the pervasiveness of the informal practice. The wife, Panna, explained that in Glasgow they have a formal renting agreement, but that they let out their Budapest apartment without having a formal contract, and without paying tax on the income from it. I enquired about the incongruity between how they choose to have a formal contract in Glasgow, but an informal agreement in Budapest. They explained that it was not their choice, rather that they could not even see the apartment in Glasgow through an agency without showing that they had enough money available ready to pay 3 months' rent in advance, and to make a formal deposit. With this statement they implied that things were simply done differently in Budapest and Glasgow. The husband, Aron, also explained that they needed to support their life in Glasgow from the income that they generated by letting out their Budapest property. Panna added that letting the apartment out informally seemed to be the norm in Budapest:

> *"I don't know the statistics, I just say this off the top of my head… but it is just something that I see and hear talking with other people… that like 85% of the rented properties are cash-in-hand agreements. But it would be too expensive to do it in a legal way, too much tax…"* (Panna, age 30-40, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow).

Aron interrupted her at this point by saying: "*But wait… do you even know how much is the tax? We never checked it."* (Aron, age 30-40, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). He continued to explain however, that he knew as fact that formally letting out an apartment would involve filling out complicated paperwork, because they would need to apply for permissions, and they did not want to go through that formal procedure. Aron's explanation highlights and identifies another type of external pressure that participants living or interacting in the Budapest context often referred to when participating in similar informal

practices - the perceived difficulties of complicated paperwork and legislation around 'getting certain things done' formally. This supports another type of rationalisation that Ashforth and Anand (2003:20-21) described - the participant characterising the disliked law as complex, vague, inconsistent, or rarely enforced, which may stem from a rejection of the legitimacy of the law.

This rationalisation - connected to the perceived difficulties with legislation - was also often paired with reflections on the perceived rampant political corruption in the Budapest context. In a focus group discussion with long-term local Hungarian residents in Budapest, where I had asked a question about cash-in-hand payments, the conversation quickly turned to governmental corruption. This focus group consisted of tradesmen, and other participants working in low-skilled occupations. The participants explained that the apparent different lines of thought of rationalisation of participation in everyday informal practices and political corruption were in fact connected. In the following conversation, the participants are referring to informal practices connected to cash-in-hand work without paying tax:

> Attila*: Corruption is [pause], the real corruption is what politicians do…*
>
> Imre*: Yeah, that's not the subject here [pause], but I would say it is connected, because they try to keep us poor, and they always make daft remarks and promises.*
>
> Interviewer*: Like what?*
>
> Imre*: Like that we have better living standards than before, and there isn't poverty, and you hear this on TV, on the radio and then you know that you couldn't make a decent living without 'ügyeskedés'*[16]*. And we are not poor, there are many people who can't buy food or pay for their heating on a daily basis.*
>
> Anita*: And what does the real statistical data say? Do you know? That the top 10% of society earns as much as the rest of the society in Hungary put together. Now, this is not a democracy, they have so much money that we can't even imagine, because we can't earn enough with honest work.* (Focus Group, long-term local residents, Budapest).

[16] Directly translated as being clever about something, but it means doing something 'dodgy'.

This conversation between the focus group participants reveals that there is a perceived distinction between 'real' corruption and everyday informal practices that people do in order to make a living. The participants expressed the notion that the political elite is responsible for keeping the rest of society poor. Therefore, the participants rationalised their participation in informal practices claiming that they did not have any other choice in order to keep up their desired living standards than by participating in the second economy. They denied their accountability for tax evasion, because similarly to previous arguments presented above, they felt that they do not have another alternative (Sykes and Matza, 1957:667), which mirrors some elements of the survival strategy narrative. The rationalisation provided by the participants highlights an incentive that can be described by the perceived unfairness, and restrictions of the formal taxation laws. This was addressed explicitly in the individual interview with the long-term Hungarian local resident Imre, who reflected on working cash-in-hand as the following: *"I don't see the problem with working cash-in-hand, because we are forced into this situation."* (Imre, age 20-30, male, Hungarian, Budapest). This strong narrative was not so prominent in the Glasgow context, even if similar practices existed and were widespread.

The focus group participants also employed a rationalisation of 'condemnation of the condemners' (Sykes and Matza, 1957:668), where the 'condemned condemners' are the political decision makers that 'keep the rest of society poor'. The participants, by pointing to the government (which makes the laws) as being fundamentally corrupt, also undermine the authority and validity of the laws themselves. The rules are wrong, because they are made by corrupt people, therefore they have the right to disobey them. The validity of this viewpoint is not important, the function of this rationalisation is turning back or deflecting sanctions attached to the violation by attacking others. In other words, participants are shifting focus and attention from their own behaviour to those who disapprove the violation. The wrongfulness of their own behaviour is easily repressed or lost on the participants (Sykes and Matza, 1957:668). Drawing this robust connection between political corruption and the rationalisation of everyday corruption practices was much more prominent in the Budapest context, both for long-term residents and British migrant participants, while amongst the participants situated in Glasgow there were only odd references to political corruption. The significant difference between the two contexts indicates that there are different external pressures existing in Budapest and Glasgow. Therefore, it is important to balance the context specific ways of understanding corruption and a more universal way,

which means that the relevance of the local context should be considered, however not as a factor that supports simplified cultural explanations of corrupt practices. The notion of making connections between political corruption and people's everyday practices is congruent with the literature describing people's attitudes in post-socialist contexts. People are convinced that corruption is widespread, and they all have stories to tell, either from their own experiences, or heard from others, including the media (Karklins, 2002:22). Győrffy (2009:147-177) argued that in post-socialist Hungary there is a persistent lack of trust in the system, and in policy makers in particular, as a result of endemic corruption, policy, and institutional failures.

Finally, there is a justification present that can be described as the 'appeal to higher loyalties' (Sykes and Matza, 1957:669), addressing and questioning whether Hungary is a democracy, when there are enormous differences in wealth. Although this statement could be true in most democracies (and also in the Glasgow context), it is worth considering that many Hungarian participants had experienced a somewhat more equal society during socialism. After 1989, with the democratic transition, the socio-economic conditions rapidly changed with privatisation, and the difference between poor and rich accelerated (Böröcz, 2000). Many Hungarian participants, similarly to Anita in the focus group conversation above, drew a connection between privatisation and political corruption. The notion of this connection is based on the fact that the use of formal and informal social network resources in both state and non-state sectors in late socialism, and during transition, were a positive contributor to income inequality (Böröcz and Southworth, 1998). Going back to the rationalisation, the focus group participants suggested that people have to take part in everyday corruption because they obey higher loyalties, such as ensuring their families' survival, i.e. to be able to put food on the table. This shows that people can rationalise taking part in informal practices that diverge from the formal law, not because they reject the formal laws, but because the other norms are held to be more pressing, or involving higher loyalties (Sykes and Matza, 1957:669).

4.1.2. Rationalisations based on harm

In each of the focus groups and individual interviews, the most common discussions related to the extent of harm emerged from participants' reflections on undeclared cash-in-hand

payments. I noted that predominantly referring to external pressure when rationalising participation in these types of informal practices was less common amongst the participants living in Glasgow than amongst those in Budapest. However, rationalising taking part in informal practices referring to the extent of harm was similar for all four groups of participants. The argument provided by Steve, long-term local resident in Glasgow, illustrates well the distinction based on the extent of harm: "*if it is just a small amount of money, then it is not corruption, that's acceptable."* He added that transactions involving a more substantial amount of undeclared cash-in-hand payment are "*clearly corruption"* (Steve, age 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow). Low-value informal transactions were perceived by Steve (and many other participants) as acceptable, and even not corruption at all, due to the small extent of the harm. In comparison, he perceived transactions with a substantial value of undeclared cash-in-hand as corruption, due to the larger extent of harm. This notion is part of the rationalisation technique of 'denial of the extent of the harm', because the participants argue that the small gain or bribe does not cause any great harm, despite being divergent from the formal norms and regulations (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:18-19). Other interviewed participants described cash-in-hand transactions somewhat dismissively, for example qualifying it as "*it is just nothing"* (Zoltan, male, 50-60, Hungarian, Budapest) or *"c'mon, there are much worse things to do"*" (Scott, male 40-50, Scottish, Glasgow).

Determining what constitutes a 'small extent of harm' for the participants was not straightforward. For example, following up a discussion on the extent of harm in the Budapest focus group with British migrants, I asked for clarification regarding whether the amount of money influenced their perception of corruption. British migrant Katie, in the Budapest focus group, said that "*I think for me it matters…I think that it has to reach a certain threshold… but I wouldn't be able to say how much that would be."* (Katie, age 30-40, female, British migrant, Budapest). But, for example, Charles, another British migrant living in Budapest, said that he accepted more substantial 'kickbacks' in his work, but that he thought that this was less harmful than regular cash-in-hand payments (e.g. for rent). He reasoned that: "*the kickback was a one-off, while other transactions are regular and on-going*." (Charles, age, 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). His reasoning can be interpreted that due to the regularity of the transaction, the value adds up over time, and also has an on-going aspect (rather than a one-off aspect), which makes the transaction more harmful and corrupt. This shows that the importance of the amount of money was considered

and discussed explicitly by the participants, but perhaps not in a consistent way. Thus there is no fixed threshold in determining what is 'low-level', and participants applied a 'common sense distinction' to separate acceptable everyday corruption from more grand acts of corruption.

Connected to the discussion on the extent of harm, some participants made a direct comparison to grand corruption. They raised the issue of these greater harms as a way of drawing attention away from, and putting into proportion, the lesser harms done by other practices and agents. For example, the above-mentioned Hungarian migrant participant Panna also provided a rationalisation that I interpret as a reference to the perceived harmfulness of the informal practice of letting out her apartment without a formal agreement. She suggested that "*I see this as a grey zone. I mean there are levels of what is corruption and what is just something else, and for me this is not at a high level."* (Panna, age 30-40, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). With this rationalisation she made a downward comparison to others who she perceived as even more corrupt - in this instance people participating in grand corruption (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:20-21). From the occupant's point of view, British migrant, David, explained that he also paid rent cash-in-hand. He first directed attention from his action to the owner's action, saying that the "*He [the owner] just said the price, and I paid."*, and with this deflected his own responsibility onto the landlord. Going further, David also provided his perception of the reasoning and attitude of many Hungarian landlords. Providing a consultant type account, David explained that he got the impression that in this case landlords, but in general Hungarian people participating in other cash-in-hand transactions, are not worried about getting caught, or whether the authorities would care about such a small sum of money, compared with all the large-scale corruption. And he added that his impression is that in many situations, Hungarian long-term local residents do not even think about these practices as a problem, therefore he explained "*If they don't care, neither do I."* Finally, elaborating further on this consultant narrative, he said that "*I hear and notice Hungarian people saying that if politicians can steal billions of HUF, what harm are they doing by just stealing thousands? No one will care about it, no one will look for it or judge them.*" (David, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). With this David pointed out that many Budapest participants' rationalisations are rooted in the justification of 'condemnation of condemners', but with a variation that makes the comparison in terms of the extent of harm. According to this rationalisation, paying cash-in-hand, and having undeclared income does not really cause any great harm, especially

compared with the perceived high-level political corruption. Perhaps it is more visible in David's example than in the quotes from the previous participants, that while he regarded paying cash-in-hand for rent as acceptable based on its perceived low harmfulness, that does not necessarily mean that he thought about it as a morally acceptable practice, i.e. David did not necessarily see the practice as the right thing to do. I can conclude that rationalising taking part in informal practices only means procedural acceptability (i.e. people might think that it is acceptable to take part in the practice for some justifiable reason), but that this has to be separated from people developing the moral acceptance, which means that they believe it is the right thing to do. I will address internalised (moral) acceptability in Chapters 6 and 7.

Continuing with the rationalisation based on the perception of the harmed person, organisation, or (in fact) state, participants differentiated between direct and indirect harm. For example, undeclared cash-in-hand payments could also be considered from the 'harmed party's' point of view. Some of my research participants suggested that tax-evasion is not considered to be directly harming another member of the society, rather it harms the state budget, and therefore participants might consider it as more acceptable (Williams et. al, 2016). Supporting this, Bela, Hungarian long-term local resident in Budapest, argued that working and paying cash-in-hand is "*good for everyone, no one gets harmed, just the state."* (Bela, age 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest). Bela's suggestion is congruent with Jancsics' (2015b:4) findings, that the so-called 'Robin Hood' attitude is widespread among many Hungarian people who support informal practices in the belief that cheating the state is acceptable. Jancsics (2015b:4) argued that this attitude is rooted in the post-socialist context as participants rationalise their participation in informal practices based on the belief that the target, in this case the Hungarian state, 'deserved it' because of previous unfair treatment of its own citizens. I can also interpret Bela's statement that because the harm concerns the state, an organisation that is physically absent or a vague abstraction from the participants point of view, Bela's awareness of the harmed organisation is weakened (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:19-20), and therefore he perceives the harm as more indirect. A closely related argument was presented by Polese et al. (2018) connecting acceptability of the informal practices with direct and indirect harm. Polese et al. (2018:212-215) explored the relationship between harm and acceptability based on Van Schendel and Abraham's (2005) work - they understood direct harm as 'affecting fellow citizens' and indirect harm as 'affecting society'. This is perhaps a simplified way of relating acceptability solely to direct

and indirect harm, therefore I see this as one of the rationalisations that can contribute to seeing something as more acceptable. However, this notion encompasses the rationalisation of the 'denial' of the harmed. If the harm concerns an organisation, society, or the state (rather than a known member of the society) it is perceived as less direct and less harmful. Moreover, my data also revealed that when the harm is indirect, and it is perceived to be at the expense of a distant and abstract state or an organisation, it can be seen as beneficial for all actors participating in the transaction. This narrative was also prevalent in the Glasgow context, for example Scott, Scottish long-term local participant said that "*If it is cheaper, then it is good for me, good for everyone. I mean - everybody wins; no harm is caused."* (Scott, age 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow). In summary, the data showed that rationalisation based on external pressures was much more common in the Budapest context, however rationalisation based on the extent and direct or indirect nature of harm revealed very similar (or the same) narratives in both contexts amongst all four groups of participants. This finding helps me to address the broader question of balancing the specificity of the context, while also recognising more generalisable explanations when understanding informal practices. Bela's example is situated in the post-socialist context, and I could analyse his case applying concepts emerging from post-socialist studies. However, the second example from Scott came from the Glasgow (Western) context, and despite this I found that when analysing his case explanations emerging from post-socialist studies are still relevant.

4.2. Rationalising informal practices with the function of social type of gain

4.2.1. Rationalisations based on external pressures

4.2.1.1. External pressures due to the dysfunctionality of state institutions

My research participants living in Budapest often found and reported that even public services (e.g. healthcare and education), that should be guaranteed for them to access in a formal way, needed to be accessed through friends and relatives, or through other acquaintances. Moreover, this negotiation of access that should be free for the participant was often supported by monetary payments or gifts. The data showed that many Hungarian

long-term local residents had a somewhat resigned attitude towards this matter and reflected on the existence and necessity of these informal practices in a manner that mirrored this attitude. For example, Hungarian long-term resident Bela pointed out that "*it is just the way it is."* (Bela, 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest). According to another Hungarian long-term resident, Zsolt, having connections are the most important assets in getting thing done informally in Hungary. He also added that he would not say that these practices are corruption: "*It is nothing [pause] - it is just how the country works, and I agree it is awful. It is negative but necessary*." (Zsolt, 50-60, male, Hungarian, Budapest). Although he perceived these informal practices as negative, he still pointed out the necessity of taking part in them, and therefore implied that he was forced into this situation by external pressures situated in the context. Polese et al., (2018:13) explored a similar situation in the health care and education sectors in Ukraine and explained that in this context the dysfunctionality of the state means that it is incapable of being a social welfare guarantor, and that therefore citizens need to come up alternative solutions for accessing care. This, and similar dysfunctionalities of state institutions, can be identified as a source of external pressure for participating in everyday corruption practices in a somewhat similar post-socialist Budapest context.

Interestingly, Bela, who was a child and young adult in the early transition period (1990s and early 2000s), and Zsolt, who lived during socialism as an adult and through the transition, had very similar experiences and attitudes toward the current situation described above. However, Zsolt implied that, for example, his struggles in finding work and negotiating access to health care got worse after the democratic transition:

> *"It was okay for a while, but when I was fired, I struggled to get a job, finally an old friend of mine offered me a job, and that saved me. Without a 'real' job you are not eligible for healthcare or pension."* (Zsolt, 50-60, male, Hungarian, Budapest).

Zsolt emphasised the importance of having a 'real' job - as opposed to working in the second economy - in terms of eligibility for access to publicly funded care. While Zsolt implied that he perceived a worsening situation after the transition, Bela suggested that many people's attitudes towards having, valuing, and using connections were rooted in the socialist past: *"I mean, this is something to do with the socialist system, although I didn't live during*

socialism, only 3 years of my life, so obviously I don't remember, but that is where this attitude comes from." (Bela, 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest). Both Bela's and Zsolt's descriptions of the situation provide valid insights. As Bela rightly pointed out, during socialism economic shortages contributed to using informal, individual security arrangements (Read and Thelen, 2007:8), and it was common to rely on a range of personal networks to gain goods and services in short supply (Ledeneva, 1998, Verdery, 1996). Read and Thelen (2007:9) explained that after the transition, the social uncertainties, which were the consequence of the market reforms, prompted governments to maintain some welfare entitlements - and therefore areas like health care and education were subjected to less radical reforms than other areas. Zsolt's struggle highlights the fact that under the socialist system the social security provisions were comprehensive and centralised, and that the entitlement to support was linked to employment (Read and Thelen, 2007:7-8). Therefore, while during socialism he had a secure position, losing his job after the transition he was faced with a more competitive job market, coupled with the diminishing role of the state in terms of social security or being a welfare guarantor. In terms of access to care, Thelen and Read (2007:9) argued that this meant that once again people had to rely on their own resources and personal networks to mitigate for the new social vulnerabilities. It is perhaps not an exaggeration that Zsolt's friend saved him, because giving him a formal job meant access to welfare and a pension.

4.2.1.2. Mitigating external pressures through informal payments and gifts

Somewhat in line with Bela's suggestion, both British migrants and Hungarian long-term residents living in Budapest mentioned that informal payments and gifts given for health care services were more widespread among the older generation. For example, British migrant Katie said that *"they [the older generation] can't imagine hospital treatment without having to give money to the hospital staff."* (Katie, age 30-40, female, British migrant, Budapest). Katie explained that when her Hungarian mother-in-law needed hospital treatment, she and her husband did not want to leave a substantial amount of money with the mother-in-law at the hospital. Katie reasoned that on the one hand that they thought that the money would be stolen[17], and on the other hand the mother-in-law could not leave the bed, and everything was provided for her, and that therefore it was not necessary to have money with her. However, Katie said that her mother-in-law insisted that she needed to have money

[17] The theft of money and personal belongings is common in public hospitals.

in the hospital to be able to pay 'hálapénz'[18] [HUN: 'thank-you-money'] to the hospital staff, for example after taking her back to the ward following treatment. Katie explained that it turned out that the mother-in-law had a separate purse in which she saved up money for occasions such as longer hospitalisation, and associated treatments. While Katie and her husband did not think that it was necessary to pay 'thank-you-money' during the time of hospitalisation, they complied with the mother-in-law's wishes to put her at ease. Katie explained that her mother-in-law was genuinely worried that it would be improper if she would not pay 'thank-you-money', because the hospital staff generally have very low salaries.

Another potential participant in these (or similar) transactions, Hungarian doctor Laura, working in a Budapest hospital department that functions on an in-patient basis, confirmed that patients and their relatives would often give small sums of money, or low value presents, to health care workers (mostly doctors and nurses). Laura explained that patients and their relatives tend to give her money when she does her daily check-ups or rounds in the patients' rooms. Some of the patients do this more openly, but others, for example, are trying to slip the money into the pocket of her white coat. She explained that normally the money that is given to her is low value. She added that when she started to work at this department as a resident doctor, she was surprised by this practice, because she was not the main doctor and she had not met the relatives beforehand - she just happened to be in the room when they were visiting. Laura implied that she was not surprised about the informal practices, but by the fact that money and gifts were given to her personally. Laura also said that when she started working in the department, she tried to refuse the payments, but often she felt more uncomfortable by refusing than accepting them. She elaborated on this as follows:

> "*I felt that if I didn't take it, it was just more confusing [pause] they kind of thought that something was wrong, maybe they didn't give enough, or that they didn't do it in the right way, or even that their relative was too sick to cure, and that I have given up on them [pause] what else can I do?"* (Laura, age 30-40, female, Hungarian, Budapest).

[18] Directly translated as money for expressing gratitude.

Laura's explanation points towards qualifying the informal practice as a voluntary donation, because it is arguable that the doctor's principal motivation for accepting it is that the refusal would adversely affect the patient-doctor relationship (Gaal and McKee, 2005:1452). Gaal and Mckee (2005:1451) argued that there is a difference between voluntary payments and compulsory payments. While the voluntary donations do not alter either resource allocation or the distribution of services, compulsory payments can restrict access to services and can also put a disproportional cost burden on the poor (Gaal and Mckee, 2005:1451). Additionally, Gaal and Mckee (2005:1452) defined voluntary informal payments as something that is given after treatment is completed, and can be regarded as a type of gratitude payment, which possesses the same characteristics as a donation. However, while 'thank-you-money' has some characteristics of showing gratitude, it is a donation given for a specific reason, i.e. supplementing salaries.

Laura's previous quote also reveals that the informal practice and norms are so pervasive in the context of her hospital (and perhaps in the health care sector in general) that refusing the practice is more difficult than to participate in it. This wide-spread existence of informal payments in the context of Budapest public hospitals points towards, and confirms, the aforementioned dysfunctionality of the healthcare system, which means that the state cannot provide equal opportunities of care for the patients, and adequate salaries for the health care workers. Informal payments in health care services are widely discussed in previous literature in the context of Hungary (Szende and Culyer, 2006; Gaal and McKee, 2005), in terms of system performance and efficiency which are explained by the dysfunctional institutional background. Therefore, research participants' rationalisations for taking part in these practices can be explained in general by the dysfunctionality of the health care sector as a perceived external pressure, however the key point that I try to convey here is that this informal practice is ambiguous, and it is understood and justified by patients and doctors in potentially different ways. Laura explained that once she tried to mitigate the situation by suggesting that if the patients are so adamant to give her something, she would rather receive some chocolate. This resulted in the patients' relatives bringing five different types of chocolate, because - they said - they did not know Laura's preference. From the patients' side there is a strong element of making sense of a situation, when perhaps they see other patients giving something to the doctors and nurses, because others, such as Katie's mother-in-law came prepared to be able to give something. Laura rationalised accepting the informal payment as making the relatives feel better about their loved one's situation. Laura did this

by denying accountability for her actions. Even if Laura is not motivated by these gifts and payments in terms of providing access, or different quality care, the patients' and relatives' motivations are still ambiguous.

When enquiring about what Laura thought personally about the meaning of these monetary transactions and gifts, she somewhat reluctantly explained that in her department the main reason for these transactions is that relatives want to keep the patients in the hospital's care, because they would have financial or physical difficulty to care for the patient at home. Therefore, in Laura's interpretation, patients' relatives perceived that by maintaining a good relationship with the medical staff, the patient's hospital stay could be prolonged. She said that she came to this conclusion from the discussions that she had with the patients' relatives. This meant that in Laura's department patients' relatives tried to influence the doctors to keep patients on the ward, i.e. the relatives' motivation is to ensure quality care and prolonged access, which would be a closer interpretation of informal payments as 'fee-for-services' (Gaal and McKee, 2005:1452), rather than a voluntary donation. However, I need to note that the intention of maintaining a good relationship in order to perhaps influence doctors' decisions, and the intention of showing gratitude by paying a donation, are not necessarily in opposition, or excluding one another. The Code of Ethics of the Hungarian Medical Chamber (at the time of conducting the research), congruently with Gaal and McKee (2005:1446), differentiates between payments made before and after services, regarding the former as corruption and the latter as a gift, indicating one's gratitude. However, my data reveals that research participants found it difficult to clearly differentiate between informal payments or presents given with the intention of showing gratitude, or with the expectation of perceived better treatment based on a distinction between payment 'before or after' the service.

In comparison, Scottish long-term resident and part-time nurse Angela, who works at a Glasgow hospital, said that patients would give chocolates or alcoholic drinks to the nurses when they came to the hospital to take their relatives home. I use this example to highlight the difference between 'thank-you-money' and other type of gratitude payments or gifts. She explained that she had also received these presents, because although she is just a part-time nurse, patients' relatives do not know that, and they often give these presents to the nurse who happens to be in the patient's room at the time. Angela explained that she takes these presents to the nurses' room, and she thinks that the nurses share them or consume them

together (for example at the Christmas party) rather than taking them home. However, Angela added that she got the impression that some nurses expected the patients to give something: "*If they don't get anything, they are making comments - not to the patients, but to the other nurses. Like 'this person was in here for several days, and we took care of them, and they didn't even say thank you."* (Angela, age 20-30, female, Scottish, Glasgow). There are several differences between the meanings of the voluntarily given presents in Budapest and Glasgow. Some Glaswegian nurses discussed the lack of presents after treatment, and my research suggested that these same expectations of 'showing gratitude' were present amongst Scottish teachers. Scottish long-term local resident Duncan explained that *"We normally give an alcoholic drink, or some good present [pause] - not like these home-made cards. We know that they prefer that because my wife is a teacher, and they talk about it to her at the school."* (Duncan, age 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow). The fact that the type of gratitude presents received were discussed amongst the teachers and the nurses might imply that receiving them is not secretive or shameful, and not expected with the intention of supplementing salaries. When I enquired into the meaning of these gratitude presents, Scottish teacher Freya highlighted the meaning as the following: "*We don't need any additional payment to do our job, but showing gratitude is different."* (Freya, age 30-40, female, Scottish, Glasgow). This explanation makes it clear that it is not a payment for services or a donation to compensate salaries, it is voluntary, and the meaning is to show appreciation.

One of the main arguments in this section is an examination of the differences between voluntary gratitude payments or donations, and somewhat 'demanded' payments to contribute to health care workers' salaries to make ends meet. Laura explained that she noticed that her boss, the head of department, was granting access to hospital beds based on pre-paid contributions. Gaal and McKee (2005:1455) argued that if the informal payment really is a gratitude payment, then it should not be a barrier to access to care. Another common area that all participants in the Budapest context reported on were the informal agreements and payments between mothers and doctors before childbirth. The mothers would choose a doctor (called 'választott orvos'[19]), and pay a pre-agreed fee for their attention and care during the pregnancy. Laura explained that because of the low public salaries, she estimates that her boss would earn more from these informal payments than from her salary provided by the state. Laura said that therefore she could not blame her boss

[19] Directly translated to 'chosen doctor'.

or other doctors, "*when we have so much responsibility and earn so little salary."* (Laura, age 30-40, female, Hungarian, Budapest). In my previous research (Gyurko, 2015), I explored how usually the more recently graduated doctors perceived the situation with healthcare salaries more positively, because the trainee doctors' union fought for the equalisation of starting wages between public and private sector employees. Trainee doctors can also receive a so-called scholarship or monthly contribution to their salaries if they do not accept informal payments[20]. However, Laura explained that she accepted 'thank-you-money' and received the scholarship as well, because as she put it, she *"has to live somehow"*. In response to my enquiry about what Laura thought about accepting the scholarship and the informal payments as well, she presented a more consultant type of account of the situation, because she referred to a common, shared experience between trainee doctors:

> "*We get this money as a compensation for not leaving the country, and not working in Germany or Norway, where we would earn 5 times more. I don't really feel bad about taking any extra money, especially from the state. All of my classmates did the same."* (Laura, 30-40, female, Hungarian, Budapest).

There is a strong narrative of 'condemnation of condemners' that mirrors the reasoning presented in the previous section regarding tradesmen. Laura rationalised accepting the scholarship with the fact that the state cannot provide a high enough salary, and therefore it knowingly provides this contribution as a compensation. The idea behind the scholarship, and the equalised starting salaries, is to rid the public health care system of these ambiguous payments. However, this intention was perceived by Laura as a façade, as policy makers would know that providing this contribution was not a sustainable alternative to the higher value informal payments. Laura and her classmates thought that the state providing this scholarship was politically motivated, but that it does not provide an adequate solution, and therefore accepting both informal payments and the scholarship is justified (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:20-21). The data revealed that informal payments might be an important part of making ends meet in many health care professionals' every-day life, and it could be said that on many occasions it is part of the doctors' everyday survival tactics (Jancsics, 2015b:4). Laura claimed that the need to accept and maintain the informal payments is out of necessity

[20] Markusovszky- award, regulated by the 162/2015(VI.30) Government decree.

not just for her, but for other doctors, especially the ones in more senior positions, due to forces outside of individual control.

4.2.1.3. Mitigating external pressures by utilising relationships and kinship ties

So far, I have addressed the ambiguous role and perceptions of informal payments in gaining access, however this was not the only method that my research participants used to tackle the dysfunctionality of the health care system. British migrant Charles, who has lived in Budapest for most of his adult life, having a Hungarian wife and children, suggested that he "*always tries to see a doctor friend, or someone who I know when I have a bigger problem, otherwise you won't be treated for a long time or properly."* (Charles, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). It is implied that access to better quality care requires having a certain type of relationship with the doctor. This practice is different from the informal payment, because even if it can involve gift-giving, the primary facilitator is the relationship between the participants involved in the transaction. For example, Hungarian migrant Klara, who is currently living in Glasgow, provided a good insight into the meaning of these informal practices. Klara's father is a GP on the outskirts of Budapest. Klara described how her father would do favours for friends and relatives such as writing prescriptions for medications or organising X-rays or other treatments in advance bypassing the waiting lists and therefore mitigating the dysfunctional health care system. She explained that in return her father would often receive a token gift, for example a book or an alcoholic drink, or another low value present (such as food items). However, these gifts tended to be more personal, and what mattered was not the value of the gift, but what it represented. This interview took place in the participant's home, so, to make her point clear, Klara suggested: *"I can show you exactly what I mean*". She opened her fridge and showed me a sausage wrapped in paper, with her name hand-written on the paper. She explained that this sausage was given to her father by a grateful friend who he helped by arranging some medical tests bypassing the waiting lists. The friend said that this sausage was for Klara, because he thought that Klara could not buy "*these good Hungarian sausages in Scotland."* (Klara, age 20--30, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). With this, Klara demonstrated that the gift had a more personal meaning, showing attention to detail and honouring some long-term relationship. Adler-Lomnitz and Sheinbaum (2011:408) explained that in Hungary under the socialist system, social networks acted as intermediary structures, which allowed individuals and groups to cope with the deficiencies resulting from the formal system, and that the use

of these networks and social relations is still prevalent in the post-socialist context to some extent. Congruently, my data showed the importance of 'blat'-like relationships, or networks that channel reciprocal exchanges based on personal connections (Ledeneva, 1998) in arranging access to care in the Budapest context.

While informal payments to secure access to public health care were absent in my data from the Glasgow context, access through utilising personal relations was something that participants living in Glasgow also mentioned. For example, Scottish doctor Jamie, who works in a Glasgow hospital, explained the importance of relationships, and circumstances for informally organising treatment at the public hospital. He described that he would grant this favourable treatment to family members and friends if they explicitly asked for it, and if he perceived that it was important for them. This could be because Jamie perceived that they had been through a lot, and that they had not been able to see a specialist. He explained that this can happen because the GPs have to refer people for certain treatments, and GPs often do not see the situation as pressing, therefore, they think people can wait for as long as half a year. He summarised that "*it depends on the situation. But it is accepted for family members… you could say that it is the doctor's privilege or perk."* (Jamie, age 30-40, male, Scottish, Glasgow). Jamie addressed the dysfunctionality of the healthcare system in terms of long waiting times, and the system being overstretched, as a rationalisation for arranging care in this informal way. He also explicitly mentioned that it is seen as acceptable, and somewhat a perk for the doctors' families, which is congruent with the rationalisation of appeal to higher loyalties. According to Ashforth and Anand (2003:21), this means that groups often view their own interests as more subjectively important than those of other groups of society. Jamie described the informally organised care as a favour, however it is worth considering that in using this relationship, the patients gain preferential access to medical resources (such as doctors' time, medicines and hospital beds), and this may mean that others have to wait longer, or may never be able to get treatment. Klara's and Jamie's narratives and descriptions of the informal practices have many similarities, and neither Jamie nor Klara make it clear as to what the return favour might be, apart from symbolic presents. To understand this mechanism, it is again useful to think about the literature on informal practices, and especially 'blat'-like relationships. This helps us to understand longer-term and indirect reciprocity, where 'favours' which are done through relationships, do not always have a clear or immediate return. It also needs to be highlighted that sympathy or affection can play a key role, as displayed in Jamie's reference to knowing someone more

intimately than the GP does, and therefore seeing the 'grimness' of their situation. The main point that has to be made here is the use of long-term ‘blat’-like relationships in both Klara’s and Jamie’s descriptions in order to arrange informal access to care, although perhaps to differing extents. Additionally, another difference is the extent of the situation, because while Jamie was talking about a limited favour, which perhaps only applies in quite specific circumstances in Glasgow, the informal practices addressed by Klara are prevalent and widespread in Budapest.

I continue by addressing the importance of ‘blat’-like relationships in navigating access to education through connections, which is another of the publicly funded areas in Budapest that might be regarded as dysfunctional, because it allows the formal procedures to be bypassed in ways that reinforce inequalities in gaining preferential school placements. Long-term Hungarian resident, Judit, who went to one of Budapest’s prestigious state schools, explained that a family friend asked her whether she could arrange a school placement, bypassing the two-stage entry system to her old school for the friend’s child. Judit said that she knew the current headteacher, because at the time when she was studying at the school, the headmaster taught her. Judit suggested that she had been a very good student and she believed that some of her good performances in student competitions helped this teacher to become the headteacher. She asserted that “*she [the headteacher] owes me this much [pause], so she would pick up the phone and listen*.” (Judit, age 30-40, female, Hungarian, Budapest). Judit implied that she had been in contact with the headteacher on previous occasions. She continued to explain the reasoning why she would be able to arrange this, and why this would be justified in her eyes. Judit said that she had many classmates who did not perform well at school, to the extent that it was hard to understand how they could pass the entry-exam. Judit explained that she found out that these low-performing students were either relatives of teachers or had brothers or sisters who already went to the school. The third option was that they knew someone, like she does now, and therefore she added that “*I won’t feel bad about this.”* Judit on the one hand rationalised her involvement with the narrative that she perceived that the formal entry system is not enforced and there are many informal (unequal) ways around it, and on the other hand that she was aware that others receive or received favourable treatment. This rationalisation also involves making comparisons to others who used their relationship to gain access, and therefore Judit is ‘not worse than them’ (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:20-21). If Judit would not use her influence and connections to help her friend’s child, someone else might easily do the same and take

their place. Judit denies accountability - she is not worse than others - it is simply her turn. This first and second-hand narrator type account provided by Judit also highlights the importance of the relationship between the family friend and Judit, as well as between Judit and the headmaster which has to be a certain type to be able to negotiate something like this. This also revealed that an important element in negotiating access was to have a mutual friend or relative within the school - this is commonly referred to as 'ismerős'[21] by my participants living in the Budapest context. Examining this from a parent's perspective, British migrant business owner, Chris, faced with making a decision regarding his child's education in Budapest, described his family's approach towards finding a school placement. Realising the importance of schooling, Chris and his Hungarian wife were looking for a 'good school' and it happened that one of their customers was a teacher in a school that they considered to be suitable. Chris explained that this customer offered to recommend them to the headteacher and made the arrangements. Chris, like many other participants describing the same situation, highlighted the importance of having an 'ismerős', but he also felt that it was important to add that they did not initiate the act. He explained that*: "I think this is corruption, but you would do anything for your kids. I didn't like doing it, but I would do it again."* (Chris, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). Chris added that in return for the recommendation, he offered the teacher who helped them, and her family, free services with his business if they ever wanted. This implies that Chris felt that he had to repay the favour somehow, that there was a reciprocal aspect to the arrangement. However, the offer might be just a gesture that the teacher will not take up. This is because the primary drive could be, for example, trying to get the child into the school because as many British migrant participants reported, Hungarian teachers perceived teaching an English (i.e. Western, foreign) child as prestigious. Chris rationalised taking part in this informal practice and mitigating the dysfunctionality of school entry system - which he explicitly perceived as corruption - by appealing to higher loyalties: he had gone against his beliefs or negative perceptions regarding informal entry processes, in order to meet the needs of his family members. Chris saw himself as being caught up in a dilemma that must be resolved, unfortunately at the cost of circumventing the formal procedure (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:21). The contrast between Judit's and Chris' approach might lie in the differences in the social distances of the relationships involved. Based on these two distinct examples of Judit and Chris, it is possible to conclude that favours for close friends and family seem to be more connected to longer-term reciprocity and emotional attachment, whereas favours

[21] Directly translated as a 'familiar person', meaning someone who they know.

with a more distant acquaintance are about more direct and immediate reciprocity, which describes the differing mechanisms of similar informal practices. I will explore more arguments connected to the social distance of relationships in the next section, including access to education in the Glasgow context.

4.2.2. Rationalisations based on harm

The main type of reflection on harm resembles the same (or similar) rationalisations that I found in the previous section, when the function of the informal practice was to gain economic advantage. However, when participants rationalised their participation in these practices, there was a difference based on who had 'the right connections' to get thing done (i.e. having or not having certain social relations that would help access) and who did not possess such connections. My data revealed that having connections, and being able to 'get things done' informally by using social contacts (or networks, connections), was perceived as privilege by some, and as corruption by others, and therefore participants' rationalisations also differed.

Starting with the type of harm, I found similar debates to those in the previous section when participants related the extent of harm to the amount of money involved in the transaction. When determining the extent of harm for obtaining social gain, participants differentiated between the perceived harmfulness of using closer and more distant connections in order to gain access. When conducting the Glasgow-based focus group with long-term Scottish residents, a focus group participant, Richard, explained that 'asking friends and relatives' to get thing done informally has many levels: "*I think it is less bad if you ask a close friend or relative, it is not corruption."* He continued to explain that he thought that as the distance increases, for example if it is a '*friend of a friend',* then the nature of the relationship becomes more questionable, because as he suggested "*you can assume that there is something in return, and it is not just a favour."* (Richard, age 50-60, male, Scottish, Glasgow). At this point Richard was reflecting on an example case from Budapest regarding gaining access to health care and education, and therefore he provided more of a consultant-type reflection. After saying this, he looked at another focus group participant, Jamie (who happened to be a doctor), for reassurance, and Jamie reacted to this by nodding (I recruited the participants individually, but it became clear to Richard after the introductions that Jamie

was a doctor.) 'Getting things done' informally by pulling favours from friends and relatives was seen by participants as less harmful, and, conversely, between more distant acquaintances as more harmful. Therefore, these participants could rationalise taking part in informal transactions that would involve favour between close friends and relatives by thinking about and appealing to higher loyalties (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:21) prioritising their interest over 'other' people's. Richard's explanation revealed that for him the difference lay in the reciprocity aspect of the informal request or favour. He implied that perhaps between close friends and relatives the reciprocation manifests differently, or could be vaguer and more distant - and perhaps not immediate or necessary at all - because of the close relationship. Therefore, according to Richard and Jamie, the informal practice of granting access between close friends and family could be classified as a favour, or even just an appropriate expression of care (Read and Thelen, 2007). Richard suggested that, in contrast, perhaps between acquaintances the favour needs to be reciprocated in a more transactional type of way, for example with a similar favour, gift or bribe.

During an individual interview with long-term Scottish resident, Derek, a similar issue was raised. He described an example that he considered to be a 'favour between friends and relatives', and therefore less harmful in his interpretation. Derek explained that he recently arranged a mock interview for his nephew with one of his old classmates at a prestigious UK university that he had also attended. He explained that the mock interview would be good practice for similar situations, but he added that it might easily happen that his old friend who gave the mock interview would be on the interview board and might remember that he had talked to the nephew. Derek added "*it is not corruption, it is just a one-off favour. If I would say something like 'you do this for me and I do that for you in return', it is different. I can't see the harm.*" (Derek, age 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow). In contrast, another Scottish participant, Scott, clearly stated that he regarded 'old-boys' networks, and explicitly influencing university admissions, as nepotism and corruption. This challenged Derek's rationalisation of the perceived lack of harm. Scott argued that this kind of informal interview and chat can exhibit significant influence on the university admissions process. He approached the question from a different point of view, concentrating on the harm caused by influencing the procedure (i.e. another student will suffer disadvantage). I challenged Derek on this seeming manifestation of 'old-boys' network use. This prompted Derek to clarify his argument, but he stood by his statement that he thought the practice that he described was not corruption. He reasoned that he thought it was not a problem to "*direct*

attention to someone" when there were potentially many similar candidates, but he admits that "*if they favour someone who is clearly worse, just because they had some kind of informal influence then it is wrong."* (Derek, age 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow). The contrast between Scott's and Derek's viewpoints might lie in the difference between having or not having the 'right relationships' to negotiate access this way, because Scott previously implied that since he was a manual worker, he lacked these types of connections. From Derek's answer it became clear that he had a different perception of the caused harm (and qualifying this practice as corruption), than Scott, because according to him, choosing between equal candidates based on influence was not as harmful as choosing someone without the necessary merits. With this he maintained that using influence in 'his way' was not corruption.

In comparison, in the focus groups conducted in Budapest, some participants explicitly referred to having connections, or being able to 'get things done' informally, as their privilege. For example, British migrant focus group participant Charles expressed that gaining access to employment, education, and healthcare was not corruption because: "*it is just a 'social advantage', I mean some people have more connections than others, so using them is not a problem."* (Charles, age 40-50 male, British migrant, Budapest). This notion was challenged by other participants, for example David argued that according to him, the use of relationships can also be corruption if someone does it to gain undue advantage (David, age 50-60, British migrant, Budapest). I interpret this that David (similarly to Scott in the Scottish focus group) tried to rationalise people's participation in these kind of practices from the perspective of the caused harm. Charles did not take David's point about the caused harm and replied that "*I think that people are just not equal, I mean some just have more connections, this is something that people build up."* (Charles, age, 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). This suggests that in Charles' interpretation, people are not equal and that having the 'right relationships' in order to get thing done is something that people cultivate, and having those networks and relationships is his right and privilege due to him because of his social position, and therefore using them is not corruption. Charles' argument also shows that those with privilege tend to negate harm in order to justify and maintain their privilege. Those without the privilege are more likely to be on the receiving end of the harm, and therefore be less accepting of this argument.

It was not only Charles who considered the use of networks this way as acceptable. This view was also reflected in Hungarian long-term local residents' responses. Charles' statement that people are not equal was echoed, for example, by Bela, who argued that gaining undue access to health care through friends and relatives was not corruption, and he added that he could not see the problem with that practice: "*I mean, it is just the way it is… people are not equal; some people are more connected. Why wouldn't you do it? No one gets harmed*." (Bela, age 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest). Apart from building his argument around how people are not equal, he also addressed the indirect aspects of harm, perceiving these practices as less harmful. He rationalised his participation in these practices, because on the one hand having these relations is his privilege, and on the other hand the harm is indirect. When he stated that 'no one gets harmed', he rationalised the informal practice by denying the importance of the harmed person, who he regards as an interchangeable member of a certain social category, i.e. by not thinking about them as certain, identifiable individual (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:19-20), and therefore not his concern. Another Hungarian long-term local resident, Anett, explained this by describing the following example of gaining access to health care through personal contacts: *"I can't see what harm it does when the other people will get treated, they just have to wait a bit longer, but it is not like if I get the service someone else won't get it."* (Anett age 40-50, female, Hungarian, Budapest). She acknowledged that someone actually will be harmed, and that she is causing a disadvantage to someone. She does, however, use a rationalisation that refers to extent of the harm - the other patients will also be treated later, so therefore the extent of harm is low or none. The notion of having or not having the 'right relationship' in terms of rationalisation can be related to de Sardan's findings (1999:35) that people can easily rationalise those practices that they themselves are involved in and can benefit from, and at the same time they are less willing to accept those which they are not able to participate in, or which are not beneficial for them.

4.3. Conclusion

In this first empirical chapter I used participants' rationalisations for taking part in the informal practices to analyse the data, while exploring the wide range of informal practices in both contexts. Considering rationalisations allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the informal practices in a number of ways. This method of presenting and analysing the data enabled me to discuss the informal practices existing in the two differing research

contexts (Budapest and Glasgow) alongside each other, which allowed me to compare and contrast the differing practices. My data showed that in both contexts there are seemingly similar practices, with similar functions and even mechanisms, but that have different meanings and are sometimes perceived differently by the participants. On the one hand, it became clear that these differences do not necessarily fall along clear-cut and perhaps expected lines of, for example, research locations (i.e. Budapest or Glasgow), or status (i.e. migrant or long-term resident. Rather, they might also be based, for example, on a person's social positioning related to the transaction in question, or people's perception of an informal practice as something that might benefit or harm someone 'like them'. On the other hand, the differences are manifested partly due to the fact that the practices are situated in two distinctly different local contexts, where the external pressures also differed considerably. I have explored in detail how the post-socialist Budapest context contained perhaps more external pressures than the Glasgow context. For example, long-term local residents and British migrant participants in Budapest identified the dysfunctional state institutions, low salaries in public employment, high taxation, and even political corruption as external factors, which helped rationalise their participation in informal practices. Glasgow participants also refer to these kinds of pressures but to a lesser extent. I have also explored how reflection on the perceived harm caused by the informal practices was a more universal rationalisation, and prevalent in both contexts, and across all four groups of participants. The data presented here already indicates that that the perceived acceptability of the informal practices greatly varied between the participants between corruption, acceptable corruption, or not corruption at all. Therefore, I can establish based on the findings of this chapter that external pressures, and the perceived harm, contributed in some way to participants' understandings of corruption, which I will address in detail in Chapter 7.

In this chapter I focused on the external pressures and the perceived harm, but already there were many indications that there are other pressures influencing people's participation in informal practices. I did not cover, for example, how the relationships between the trainee doctors and the department leaders impacted their participation in informal practices, and similarly the relationships between the teachers who conducted informal teaching during their formal working hours (and possibly the headteacher), and the parents who paid for this informal teaching. I will elaborate on these in the coming chapter addressing the importance of power-relations and internal pressures within the social associations.

During this chapter I tried to show participants' differing approaches toward seemingly similar informal practices, and therefore I included perceptions from a range of actors who could be part of the same or similar transactions. This approach is to build an understanding that I will enhance when I analyse the informal practices and their norms as socially constructed by the members of the social associations in the coming empirical chapters. For example, when trying to understand informal practices in the health care context, I presented the viewpoints of the trainee doctor, department leader, patients, and even the patient's relatives. Similarly, with regards to informal renting agreements, I presented the landlord's, as well as the occupant's, point of view, and with regards to informal cash-in-hand work, I presented the tradesmen's and customer's considerations. Using this new approach of examining informal practice, by showing the differing sides of the transactions and opinions together, revealed that there were some commonly accepted rules, and certain ways of negotiating informal practices. The pervasiveness of some informal practices implied a certain degree of embeddedness, and some routinised aspects of conducting these transactions. I will address these aspects in more detail when discussing the workings of the social association in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: The workings of the social association

In the previous chapter I examined the range of informal practices that emerged from the interviews and focus groups conducted in Budapest and Glasgow, as well as people's rationalisations for taking part in these practices. In this chapter I focus on the norms of carrying out the informal transactions, and the processes of learning and routinising these norms. This examination means delving deeper into the workings of the social associations, because as I explained in the conceptual framework, the norms of carrying out the informal practices are part of the rules of conduct of the social association (Ehrlich, 2002:27), and moreover the norms of 'living law' emerge from the members' interactions within the social associations. Therefore, the norms regulating carrying out the informal practices are socially constructed, and conceptually can be discussed as 'the law which dominates life itself even though it has not been posited in legal propositions' (Ehrlich, 2002:27). In this section I will also explain how I identify these informal norms in the way which I outlined in the conceptual framework (in section 2.3.3.). I have also explored in the conceptual framework how pre-existing power-relations affect the formation of the social association, and that obeying the norms of 'living law' can be contested by some members of the social associations. Moreover, power-relations and inequalities within the social association drive many interactions between the people involved in carrying out an informal transaction, and this produces a more complex picture of moral conflict, enforcement, and compliance with the informal norms. Therefore, when analysing the data, I pay particular attention to the power-relations and hierarchies within the social associations.

Identifying the norms of carrying out informal practices within a social association contributes to answering my main research question regarding how the participants' understandings and definitions differ in relation to informal practices in both of my research contexts. This chapter also provides some insight into the sub-research question of how long-term local residents and migrants know, and learn when and how, to carry out everyday corruption practices. This includes exploring the norms that regulate both the transactions themselves, and forms of communication during carrying out the informal practices, through the lived experiences of the research participants. One of the themes emerging from the data was the importance of learning and routinising the norms of informal practices, which can be situated within Ehrlich's original concept, and contributes to gaining a better

understanding of the workings of the social association. In this chapter I also engage with these processes, especially with their impact on people developing a sense of procedural acceptance of everyday corruption practices. Throughout the thesis I emphasise the importance of migrants' perceptions of informal practices, because they can offer a new insight into the local norms as they come into interaction with the local social associations. However, in this chapter the aim is to highlight and provide a detailed account of the workings of the social associations (based on participants' first and second-hand narrative accounts), therefore I mainly draw on examples which clearly highlight these mechanisms and processes. Migrants' interactions with new or unfamiliar social associations, in terms of the challenges they face when carrying out an informal transaction, as well as when learning and routinising the norms of informal transactions, are addressed in detail in the next chapter.

To summarise, this chapter is about the workings of the social association, and the practices and norms which constitute those. In the first section of this chapter, I will present a detailed analysis of some interactions within a particular social association from my collected data. In this way I demonstrate both how social associations are defined by shared practices and knowledge of the norms surrounding those practices, and how power-relations within the social association impact on the regulation and transmission of these norms and practices. In the second section I explore the modes of carrying out informal practices, and the norms that regulate them. First, I consider the diverse formation of social associations and establish a connection between the formation - especially the effects of pre-existing power-relations in the broader social context - and the norms of the social associations. I pay particular attention to the impact of hierarchies and power-relations within the social associations on the enforcement of the norms, and on people's compliance with the norms of the informal transactions. Secondly, I explore the differing communication strategies that participants used when navigating a social association, and when carrying out an informal practice. In the third and final section I address the two processes of the social associations that contribute to reinforcing and reproducing the norms of 'living law', first the learning of the norms of the informal transaction, and secondly routinising these norms.

5.1. Power-relations within the social association

In the previous chapter I focused on the research participants' rationalisations for taking part in informal practices, however, I did not explore the relationship between the actors directly involved in these transactions. In the example below, situated in the Budapest health care context, I address how participants who reported on similar informal transactions can be viewed as belonging to the same social association, even if they are not in any way directly acquainted, or interacting with each other. In other words, social associations in my research can be identified based on informal practices, and the knowledge of the norms surrounding these practices, rather than by any kind of direct 'relationship' between participants. I also address how to identify these social associations practically, and most importantly I explore the importance of power-relations within the social associations. Therefore, one of the key points which I am making in this chapter is that social associations can be identified based on the norms and practices which constitutes them.

I have discussed in the previous chapter how being asked for additional payment when accessing health care services (that people are entitled to and should be free for patients) is a typical informal practice in the Hungarian health care sector (Gaal and McKee, 2005; Szende and Culyer, 2006). Hungarian long-term resident Laura, the junior doctor, who I already quoted in the previous chapter (in section 4.2.1.2.), works in a busy Budapest hospital. In her interview she described how shortly after she started to work at a department (that mostly operates on an in-patient basis) she noticed a number of informal practices. Patients were often required to pay to access bedspaces, and the department head 'kept beds empty' for her private patients. During the interview I inquired about the informal payments in terms of common patterns of carrying them out (e.g. methods of negotiation, or the amount of money paid by the patients). Laura said that she learnt from the nurses that the department head has pre-arranged agreements and set prices with these patients, and they pay the doctor in advance for accessing a bed. These patients do not go through the normal admission system, rather they would call the doctor on her private phone to make arrangements. Laura also explained that according to her knowledge, a bed (i.e. admission to the department) could cost a substantial amount of money - to put it into context, ranging up to as much as the monthly Hungarian minimum wage (or 2/3 of an average monthly pension). Laura said that she had no insight into what is exactly required, or how the negotiation usually happens

(in terms of the actual negotiation on the phone), because that takes place somewhat covertly. She added that she would not interfere or challenge the department head's practice: "*I can't complain about it, because then I would have a bad relationship with the senior doctors, and the system is very hierarchical."* (Laura, age 30-40, female, Hungarian, Budapest). This highlights that Laura could not challenge the senior doctor's conduct because of the power-relation between them, even if the informal practice is divergent from (and contrary to) the formal admission procedures. During my fieldwork in Budapest, many other participants offered insights into conducting informal practices in the Hungarian health care system. Similar practices were described, but from a patient's perspective, by another participant, Katalin, as quoted above (in section 4.1.). She discussed the ordeal that she and her family went through to 'find a bed' (i.e. gain admission to the hospital by bypassing the formal admission procedure) for her sister in the equivalent department of a different Budapest hospital. This information shows that my research participants took part in, and reported on, the same or very similar practices in the Budapest healthcare context, which implies the embeddedness of theses informal practices. This also highlights a widespread existence of norms and expectations surrounding these informal practices, rather than these being isolated incidents.

Katalin explained that recently her sister needed to be hospitalised, but the hospital kept sending her home claiming that there was not enough space for the patients. To tackle this problem, her sister's family arranged to see a doctor who they had access to through informal channels, that included utilising long-term reciprocal relationships.

> *"The doctor is a neighbour of our childhood friend - or rather our mothers have been friends - but I am talking about 40 years ago… My other sister went with her to assist, and I was on the phone if they needed my help. The doctor said that they will hospitalise her but not now, because they don't have enough space, maybe in 2-3 days. That might have been too late for my sick sister. So, my other sister who was assisting called me crying. I asked whether they paid hálapénz' [HUN: 'thank-you-money']. She said yes, they paid 20,000 HUF. I said, okay, it clearly wasn't enough. But it was too late now, they closed the door*[22]*. My*

[22] In the Hungarian hospitals, patients sit right outside the examination rooms, waiting to get called by nurses if they got an appointment, however often patients without appointments try to approach nurses and doctors with requests when they leave the examination room or by knocking on the door.

> *helping sister decided to call this childhood friend again, who knew about my sick sister's condition and offered to help. The friend called her husband, her husband called the doctor. The doctor sent out the nurse to tell them that there is no space, but my sister gave them 40,000 HUF this time. I don't know what happened exactly in the end, but it turned out that there was space, and she could stay. In fact, my sick sister was in a 4-bed hospital room on her own… The worst thing is that we felt happy and relieved that they let her stay even if we paid. We thought about it like the doctor did us a favour and I am sure that the doctor definitely thought about it that way."* (Katalin, age 50-60, female, Hungarian, Budapest)

In my interpretation the participants who encountered similar informal transactions in different hospitals belong to the same social association, because the social associations constitute people who follow the norms surrounding the informal transactions. In other words, the similarity of the norms of negotiating access to the equivalent department in different hospitals indicates that the participants belong to the same social association, as Laura and Katalin mentioned similar norms and patterns of carrying out the informal practices. The methods of negotiation that were needed to gain access to care appear to be very similar, because both Laura and Katalin described the private phone calls as an essential element of communication. For example, even if Katalin's sister was sat right outside the doctor's room, there was no direct communication with the sister, rather it was through the phone call with someone else. The presented data shows that the patients and health care workers recognise asking and paying informally (as well as utilising long-term social relations) as being part of the binding rules for gaining access, and they regulate their conduct according to that, which is in line with Ehrlich's (2002:83) definition of the social association. The norms regulating the practice and what was expected by the members from the other members (perhaps ones with more power) emerged from the social interaction of these research participants as an empirical reality, rather than as a formal relationship between patient and doctors.

However, the presented example also highlights that not everyone in the social association of health care workers and patients shares the same views on the acceptability of the set ways

of acting. Laura did not agree, and even disapproved of the practice, but could not express that to her boss, or to the other members of the social association, because of the power-relations and hierarchies within the social association. The example also reveals the differing levels of competence in negotiating the process of gaining access. Katalin's family tried to utilise their social relations to arrange access to care, but this proved to be ineffective on its own in this situation, and therefore they felt helpless. Katalin's sister got the norms of negotiation wrong to begin with, as Katalin described how the nurses and doctors 'closed the door' the first time. This also meant that by offering the wrong amount of money, the sisters potentially burned their bridges, and made it harder to get the bed. They needed to use their contacts to intervene once again, before they could offer a higher amount. This manifested in making calls to Katalin, and then to the family friend, because they did not know how to play by the rules. This shows that research participants did not necessarily know how to navigate the rules, even in their native context, and probably despite having had experiences with similar transactions. They needed to be told what to do, and although they complied in order to save their sister, they did not approve of it morally, or rather they had conflicting feelings between being grateful, and at the same time also thinking that it should not be the way to access care. Katalin's final statements show a clear moral dilemma about whether this practice is acceptable. They were relieved, but at the same time they felt that this was 'the worst thing' that they should be grateful for - being able to arrange something informally which should be available to them through paying their standard healthcare contributions. Katalin's family members were not in a position to make demands, which highlights how the hierarchies and power-relations facilitate compliance with the norms that diverge from the formal norms and policies in the health care sector.

Based on these arguments it is necessary to separate simply complying with the rules of the social association and viewing those rules as being morally acceptable. Even if the rules emerge from the members' interactions, due to the power-relations and hierarchies within the social association, these rules work to the advantage of those with more power and resources. I identify these as internal pressures within the social associations. Laura and Katalin's family occupy very different positions in terms of power-relations and hierarchies within this social association. Laura, although she does not agree with the informal practices, is aware that 'playing the game' and complying with them is important to maintaining her position at the hospital. Katalin is willing to use whatever assets her family has (i.e. contacts who can intervene, sufficient financial resources to pay for the bed) and in doing so to gain

an advantage over patients without those assets (although she points out that her sister got a 4-bed room on her own, therefore they did not necessarily deny someone else a place by their actions, because there were sufficient beds despite what they were told). It seems that Katalin's family did not gain any advantage apart from eventually accessing the bed that they should have been allocated immediately, and without payment. Although Katalin's family was prepared to pay for the access after learning about the necessity, it was not because they thought about the practice as morally acceptable or appropriate, but because of the power-relations in the social association they had little option but to comply, even if they felt uncomfortable with it. This shows that although the norms originally emerge from the member's interactions as people trying to co-operate to negotiate access to care, the interactions do not take place on a level playing field, which confirms that there are significant inequalities and dependencies within this social association.

Similarly, it is the hierarchy, and the power of senior doctors, which forces Laura to keep quiet about the practice, which she suggested that she perceives as morally wrong. This leads us to a discussion of the enforcement element of identifying the norms as 'living law'. The group of people, in this instance the doctors and patients, experienced and believed that a set of ways of acting had a regulatory effect between them, but there was not a formal or institutional enforcement mechanism providing certainty that if the sisters paid, they would be granted access to care. They could be refused - as they were the previous time when they did not provide the right amount of money. When using an informal agreement based on the norms of 'living law', formal enforcement - according to the formal norms of the institution (hospital) - is not available. However, as I addressed in the conceptual framework, informal agreements can be self-enforcing or informally enforced (North, 1990:55). While Katalin and Laura expressed considerable negative feelings towards the informal practice, the method of providing and gaining informal access was not challenged as the participants followed the norms that were expected from them. Therefore, the hierarchies and power-relations within the social association contributed to a less-voluntary compliance, because Katlin and Laura complied with norms that they did not regard as morally acceptable, although necessary in the negotiation of accessing care informally. Therefore, the norms of carrying out the informal practices were enforced informally, in which internal pressures played a significant role.

Finally, the example highlights that the knowledge of the norms is not equally shared, even where all participants in the interaction were long-term local residents. This is also interesting and relevant in relation to the challenges that migrants can face in understanding and navigating social associations and their norms, something which I address in the next empirical chapter. For example, Katalin was worried that her sister might not have understood (or had knowledge of) the norm that payment was required during these types of informal transaction, and she did not know how much they should have paid either. They knew part of the picture, for example that they could turn to use their social relations to help access the care. Although Katalin's family initiated the informal transaction through utilising long-term reciprocal relationships, they were not aware of the exact amount that they needed to pay to gain access, therefore they needed to learn the detailed and specific norms through back-and-forth negotiation. This also highlights the importance of communication strategies in initiating and negotiating an informal transaction. The sisters needed to understand that the nurse claiming 'there is no space' meant that they had not offered enough money. Moreover, apart from knowing the norms of 'living law' (i.e. knowing what to say, and how much to give), carrying out the practice also required communication strategies and performative competence (i.e. knowing how and when to say it) (Anders and Nuijten, 2007:17). In the coming section I address these two distinct categories of norms which regulate how to carry out an informal practice.

5.2. Exploring the norms of how to carry out an informal transaction

5.2.1. Formation of the social associations, power-relations, and the norms of the transaction

In this section I examine how social associations form, crisscross, and overlap with more formal and informal organisations and networks in different ways, and I will provide details about the different ways in which social associations can be established as their members come together in an attempt to co-operate to carry out informal practices. One of the key points that I am making in this section is that I explore how social associations overlap (partially) with more formal (professional) associations, and how the norms of the social association can challenge and oppose, and sometimes (but not always) override more formalised rules governing professional behaviour. The following example, when a council

employee tried to abuse his position in order to achieve personal gain, highlights a situation when the social association formed around an informal practice overlaps with a formal professional association.

Scottish long-term local participant Liam is a civil servant who works for the local council in the greater Glasgow area, in a role dealing with granting certain types of permissions. He explained that on one occasion he received a request to cut out trees on a roadside which was on council property. He refused this request, because as he explained there was not a justifiable reason, such as a situation when the trees would represent a danger, and the council policy is to preserve green areas. He thought his decision was well-founded, however he received a call from his boss enquiring about not granting the request. He was surprised about the call and asked the boss why these trees were particularly important to him. Liam said that his boss tried to reason with him that the trees were next to one of the council employee's houses, and they were obscuring their views and sunshine. Liam answered that he still could not see a reason to grant the request, pointing out that it is against the council policy, and this closed the discussion. However, he expressed that he was nervous about the situation and felt uncomfortable, saying that *"luckily that was it, I don't know what I could have said next if he had pushed me to agree [pause] - he is my boss after all."* (Liam, age 50-60, male, Scottish, Glasgow). Moreover, after this call, Liam suggested that he felt that there was an expectation that he would grant this informal request on the basis that it was benefitting a council employee, even if it was against their policy - and that his boss would be well aware of this policy. He did not feel that the boss especially used his formal, institutional power, because he did not 'push' Liam, but the interaction suggested that the boss thought that pointing out the fact that the person was a council employee would be enough for Liam to diverge from the council policy. This implies that showing preferential treatment to council employees might be experienced as a set of ways of acting, and an informally binding norm, at least by some council employees who had been co-operating to carry out this type of informal transaction. This social association of council employees overlaps with the social association of the professionals (i.e. those working for the formal organisation). However, just because Liam also worked for the council, he did not recognise granting preferential treatment for council employees as a binding norm and did not co-operate in helping to carry out the informal request. While the formal hierarchical relationship between Liam and the boss cannot be ignored, I argue that it is less important than it would be in a formally enforceable situation in terms of compliance and enforcement

of the informal request. The pre-existing power-relations still had some effect on Liam, because he was hesitating and nervous about whether he should participate in the transaction, but he had room to manoeuvre in this situation. This example demonstrated the formation of a social association - of which Liam was not a member - where members belong to the same formal organisation, however this did not mean that all the formal members of the organisation are part of the informal social association. Considering Liam, it was an unsuccessful attempt to get him to co-operate in this informal transaction and include him in the social association, since Liam did not comply with the norms that the boss tried to impose. My data also showed that the informal request might come from outside the organisation (i.e. from a third person), which I will illustrate in the following example from the Hungarian context.

Hungarian long-term resident, Maria, who is an academic lecturer at a Budapest university, described how there were informal expectations in the formal setting of her institution, when it was expected that the examination board would let certain people with connections have preferential treatment. Maria explained that before she started this job, she was a research fellow at a German university, which was a very different environment. Therefore, she felt distressed about these informal requests at the Budapest university. However, she also put these practices into context by explaining that there were worse things happing at the university, for example professors writing students' dissertations for money in order to supplement their salaries. She did not challenge those practices, unlike the preferential treatment at the examination, saying: *"I thought that they have to deal with their own conscience, and also you can't do much about it, if this is the norm".* Providing details on the informal practices at the examinations, Maria explained that members of the department got told occasionally by the department head that they "*should let 'connected'* [HUN: csókos][23] *PhD candidates pass, or go easy on them on when defending their theses*." (Maria, age 40-50, female, Hungarian, Budapest). She suggested that she was relatively new to this situation, and she held different values regarding university education having been a research fellow in Germany. Maria continued to explain that she was often on the examination board because of her expertise, and she felt that they wanted her there, because her presence would

[23] It was explained by the participant that 'csókos' refers to people who are closely connected to the leading political party, meaning 'the one who is kissed' - referring to the kiss between Brezhnev and Kadar (General Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (1956-1988)), that was a sign of political alliance and friendship. Also in everyday use, it is a person who gets different, more favourable treatment than others in the same situation.

improve the standard of the examination in appearance. On one occasion, when she got told that they needed to let the candidate pass, she refused to comply, because the quality of the research was so low. However, she explained how on a following occasion the department head mitigated against this:

> *"The rule is that two thirds of the examination board have to agree, so I was causing problems. On further occasions when I had to be on an examination board, they increased the number of people [sitting on the board], so there wouldn't be a problem if I would say no."* (Maria, age 40-50, female, Hungarian, Budapest)

The informal practice took place in a formal setting, and the social association of the informal practice of awarding undue advantage partly overlapped with the profession, however it also included another (at least one) person (i.e. the student and perhaps the student's relatives), who did not belong to the profession. Similarly to the example from the health care sector that I provided in the first section, this social association that formed around the informal transaction was not the same as the professional organisation or body. This has implications for the hierarchies and power-relations within the social association, which are capable of confronting and overriding the formal, professional hierarchies and norms. Maria got the impression that her actions caused a problem, so she concluded that other academics usually complied with the requests coming from the department head. With this statement Maria also implied that she was going against the power-relations situated in the overlapping, informal social association, which were not necessarily the same as the professional hierarchies. However, Maria was not punished or forced to comply, but they got around her non-compliance by utilising formal norms and procedures (i.e. using a formal, institutional enforcement mechanism) to ensure something informal. Although they could not force Maria to agree with the other members of the examination board, the increased number of (more compliant) people granted enforcement of the preferential treatment, mitigating for her non-compliance. The fact that the power-relations in the informal social association are overlapping with the workplace social association can explain the compliance of other people, especially how, as Maria explained, there were other informal practices happening at the university that the department head chose to not address, and therefore seemingly allowed. In the Glasgow example, it was not so easy for the boss to 'get around' Liam's non-compliance, partly because he was the decision maker, so there was no mechanism to replace him, or to mitigate for his non-compliance. Perhaps more importantly, in the social

association formed with academics at the Budapest university, seemingly there were many members who were compliant, and the practices were more pervasive on many levels.

In Liam's example the informal practice would benefit another council employee, while in Maria's example the request came from the head of department, who was acting in order to favour a relationship that goes beyond the formal workplace, i.e. with a well-connected student. This aspect is apparent, because Maria explicitly described the informal practices as providing preferential treatment to connected students or relatives, who are 'protekciós' [HUN], meaning a person who enjoys favourable treatment, due to someone vouching and making an informal request on the persons' behalf. I recognise the similarities between this latter type of formulation of social associations and one of Jancsics' (2015a) categorisations of corrupt exchanges in the Hungarian context. Jancsics (2015a:2) identified a special type of informal transaction that he called 'brokered corrupt exchanges', when a third-party acts as a middle-man to set up and carry out the corrupt exchange. The head of department had multiple group affiliations: a formal organisational or professional membership shared with many other academic members of the formal organisation (including academics on the examination board), and a personal relationship and membership in another social association outside the organisation with the student or students' family, shared with the person who made the request on behalf of the PhD candidate. Jancsics (2015a:2) identified the existence of practices where a third person mediates the transaction in Hungary in the post-socialist context, arguing that these types of exchanges were rooted in informal networks, 'blat'-like relationships, and the 'second economy' that survived the democratic transition and became even more widespread due to the emerging inequality, unemployment, and other uncertainties brought by the capitalist system (Sik, 1999). Clarifying, I illustrated with the previous examples that there are social associations which overlap (partially) with both professional associations and relationships, and with other kinds of relationships, such as friendships, not only in the post-socialist context, but even in Liam's example in the Scottish context. The work that the social association does is to bring these two kinds of relationships (and the power-relations within them) together, and in doing so establishes a set of norms of interaction which challenge formal regulations and professional standards. Another key point that these examples illustrated is that the pre-existing power-relations influenced the power-relations within the social association to different extents, which resulted in different manifestations of informal enforcement mechanisms. In the next

example I will show a social association where, in contrast to these examples, the participants had no previous knowledge of, and relationship with, each other.

Hungarian migrant Erika, living in the outskirts of Glasgow, explained that she and her husband wanted to build a new fence, but they received a quote of £2,000 from a tradesman. Erika and her husband, finding that to be too expensive, discussed the situation with their neighbour as part of a casual conversation:

> *"He [the neighbour] said a guy who lives on our street would do it. I talked to this person, and he said he would do it for £300. This was cash-in-hand. We had to buy the wood, but he told us where to buy and what. We got a discount with his discount card because he worked for the place*." (Erika, age 40-50, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow)

Erika's description gives an insight into the formation of a social association between people who do not have previous knowledge of each other. Confirming Erika's account, Glaswegian long-term resident hardware-store owner, Lewis, explained that he noticed employees abusing the employee discount, which was 20-30% off on all products: "*It was obvious that some employees did weekend, cash-in-hand work, and that they were buying the necessary items with their discount*." (Lewis, age 50-60, male, Scottish, Glasgow). This example highlights how in a social association formed around some informal practices (e.g. working cash-in-hand), the power-relations and inequalities are less obvious. Those in the social association are on a relatively even footing, and the transaction is similar to one which would be expected in a commercial relationship, only it is shifted from formal to informal. The quote suggests that two members of the social association, Erika and the person who built the fence, had no previous relationship, and that the informal practice involved a third person who mediated the transaction. Borrowing, and also diverging from Jancsics (2015a:8) – who considered the interactions between individuals, some of whom might be affiliated with an organisation - I conceptualise that the third person functions as a gatekeeper for the social association. The third party introduced Erika to the set of ways of acting (of paying cash-in-hand and using the person's discount) which was experienced by her as binding, because she obeyed and did not question the appropriateness of the norms in this type of situation. In practice, although Erika might have been aware of the general norms that regulate the cash-in-hand payment, she was not aware of the particular norms usually required in this specific informal transaction, because this was the first time that she took part in such a transaction,

which she was introduced to by the neighbour (who functioned as a gatekeeper). There is no formal contract, and therefore there is no formal enforcement, but there is an expectation and belief that both sides will honour the deal. Since in this instance people came together to co-operate in an informal practice that is equally beneficial for them, the power-relations and inequalities were less important in the formation of this social association and ultimately in its operation. The participants obeyed the informal norms voluntarily, and their mutual agreement enforced the completion of the transaction, therefore this transaction was self-enforcing. This is in contrast to the previous examples in healthcare, education, and council settings, where the participant felt that their compliance was affected by the power-relations within the social association to differing extents and therefore their less voluntary compliance was assured by informal enforcement mechanisms stemming from internal pressures.

In the previous examples we could see that some participants had room to manoeuvre (like Liam), and that Maria's objection was bypassed, but in the health care example Laura and Katalin needed to comply with the norms. Therefore, in these latter examples the degree of need experienced by the participants of the transactions led to a more coercive nature of the practices, which also manifested in the ways in which participants engaged in the transactions. In these examples the inequalities between the people who were co-operating to carry out an informal transaction were more pressing, as for example the doctors and nurses were in a position to grant access to care due to their professional, formal position, which generates internal pressure within the social association. From the side of the people who are trying to negotiate access to care, it is possible to say that their need for the informal arrangement (e.g. to access medical care, better education, or employment opportunities) is greater than in the other examples, who are simply getting a service or product cheaper, and which is also mutually beneficial for the participants. In this social association (between people who had no pre-existing hierarchical relationship), like Erika's, there were fewer internal pressures. Therefore, the distinction between the experienced internal pressures can be attributed to the inequality or equality between the members of the social association of the informal practice, and the degree of need to participate in them. My data also revealed that social associations in which people come together to co-operate with mutual benefit can also form based on pre-existing formal relationships (and therefore overlap with these), as I will illustrate it in the next section.

Hungarian small business owner, Zoltan, described how employees working for his Budapest company tried to supplement their salary by accepting and cultivating relationships with customers in order to receive 'jatt', which Jancsics (2013:328) described in the Hungarian context as a small amount of money that is not just a tip, but a small bribe:

> *"They wanted to deliver goods to the same people, who they obviously had some kind of relationship with. They knew the expectations, like bringing the goods into the flat or up the stairs. The people who worked for me longer wanted to have the 'best addresses', so they told to the others that only they could deliver there. I had to put an end to it*." (Zoltan, age 40-50, male, Hungarian, Budapest)

Zoltan also elaborated that the delivery peoples' practices of carrying goods to the desired location went beyond what was required, and more importantly what was allowed according to the company's insurance and liability policies. Additionally, he felt that the behaviour of the delivery people - expecting and making efforts to receive the 'jatt' - could move towards exploitation of the company policies, as he heard them discussing their conduct, and the customers' typical requests, with each other. The possibilities of receiving the 'jatt' provided a reason to establish an internal hierarchy between new delivery people and the long-term crew in order to continue to cultivate their informally developed relationships with the customers, and to protect their source of additional income - until Zoltan intervened. When Zoltan tried to put an end to this situation, the delivery people were resistant, and expressed that having personal relationships with some customers were important for them and how this would result in them losing extra income.

In this example the social association that constitutes the delivery employees and some of the customers contained rules which went beyond the formal relationship between them. This relationship and the accompanying norms were developed through the formal setting, and evolved into something informal. In the social association the members' positions and expectations differ from in the formal relationship. I can identify these as norms of 'living law' because beyond customary tipping, the delivery people and the customers developed a set of ways of acting, and specific expectations in terms of the delivery and the extra payment. The practice was enforced informally as both customers and the delivery people believed that this set of ways of acting had a regulatory effect. The self-imposed norms of the members of the social association included the expectation that if they delivered in an agreed manner (e.g. if the customer would not have to take their own delivery upstairs, or

could get it delivered straight to the kitchen), then the delivery people would receive the 'jatt' in return. In this example, similarly to the previous one from Glasgow, the power-relations between the delivery people and the customers were more equal, and both benefitted from the informal practice, so therefore compliance with the norms that emerged from their interaction was voluntary and self-enforcing. Although this practice resulted in additional income for the delivery people, the degree of need to participate in the informal transaction was lower than in the example of restricted access to healthcare.

5.2.2. Communication strategies when conducting an informal practice

In this section I examine what my research participants told me about ways of initiating and negotiating informal practices, and I specifically investigate the communication strategies that participants described. As I addressed in the conceptual framework, the norms that prescribe the ways of performing informal transactions and the communication strategies surrounding these are part of the norms of how to carry out an informal transaction, and I conceptualise them as part of the norms of 'living law', and the rules of conduct of the social association. This section aims to explore what aspects of the social association (e.g. formation, size, and power-relations within it) might influence participants' communication strategies, and I also consider the nature of the informal practice as a factor. Knowing and recognising the signs, gestures, and words that should be used in an informal transaction are part of the norms of conducting the informal practice, however I take into consideration that social and language skills can enhance the communication. In this section I will point to some important concerns around communication strategies and competences, which also raise questions regarding how migrant participants would potentially have difficulties conducting themselves in a culturally and linguistically less familiar setting compared with the long-term residents. In this section my aim is to examine the communication strategies in general, and I will focus on the issue of operating in a non-native language and different context in the next empirical chapter.

Scottish long-term resident James in Glasgow explained that in order to decide whether he should apply for a formally advertised job at a publicly funded organisation (which he had worked for previously), he made some informal enquiries. He explained that when he worked for this organisation, he noticed that the application process was influenced by

informal practices utilising personal relationships that were not part of the formal application procedure. He had previously been in a similar situation with a different publicly funded organisation, when someone had asked him personally to apply for a job, and in consequence the job advertisement (that was required to be formally advertised) was written in such a way that he was the ideal candidate. James explained that this previous job advertisement contained a specific essential criterion which only he was likely to meet, but he still had to go through the formal interview process alongside other applicants. He admitted that on this previous occasion, based on the initial personal conversation, and on the way the job was advertised: *"I was 99% sure that I would get the job".* James also explained that now when he wanted to apply to this other organisation, he noticed that most of the advertisements that he looked at were very specifically written for someone, and that he was actually able to tell who they wrote each advertisement for based on specifying some essential criteria in a way that it was only applicable to a certain person. Therefore, James would not even consider applying for those jobs, even if he found them interesting, and they matched his skills. He added that there was one advertisement which was written in a way that it was not obvious to him whether the job had already been allocated informally, and therefore he might have a chance. However, he could not be sure and therefore explained that:

> *"I still wouldn't want to go through the application procedure if it was a waste of time. So, I phoned in and asked someone who I was working with previously in this organisation. She told me that the post was taken, and they just had to advertise it."* (James, 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow)

James was aware that the formal recruitment procedures can be informally influenced at this organisation, because based on his experience with this and other publicly funded organisations, this was the norm. James did not see the problem with the informal allocation of jobs, and he experienced it as a normal way of doing things. The norms of 'living law' contain the expectation that jobs might be allocated on an informal basis, however, the organisation needed to comply with the formal procedure of advertising the post. James said he understood this from the advertisement, because he had been in similar situation before.

James was aware of the norms of 'living law' of the organisation in terms of recruitment procedures, which allowed him to make an informal enquiry. Although he was no longer affiliated with the workplace, he could capitalise on his informal relationship with his former colleague. Navigating this social association that both he and his former colleague were part

of, which was based on their previous relationship, allowed for direct communication between James and the former colleague when initiating the informal request. Direct communication was possible, because the power-relation between James and the friendly colleague seemed to be fairly equal, and James only requested information, rather than a more substantial personal favour, such as access to care or undue preferential treatment, as described in the earlier sections of this chapter. They were both familiar with the expectations in the social association that facilitated the informal practice of jobs being pre-arranged and allocated before going to formal advertisement, therefore when enquiring regarding these practices the communication was also direct. The relationship between James and the former colleague can be described in Jancsics' (2013:330) conceptualisation as a bond-based case, where the participants have an on-going relationship and they trust each other, therefore, according to Jancsics (2013:330), the mode of communication between the participants has less significance. Jancsics (2013:325-330), examining the role of clients in petty corruption in the Hungarian context, addressed the importance of communication strategies. He distinguished between bond-based (on-going relationship) and on-the-spot (participants who did not know each other) corruption and emphasised the particular importance of communication when participants did not have a prior relationship. My findings partly confirm this notion. However, rather than saying that the communication mode has less significance, I argue that being able to communicate intention, and to negotiate the informal request directly, is the communication strategy that is required in a social association between members who have a bond-based relationship, for example long-term relationship or friendship. In this example I explored a situation when the informal enquiry was facilitated by a long-term relationship between the participants, however, my data also revealed that in many cases the hierarchies and power-relations within the social association were more significant, and the nature of the informal practice was also different, which required other specific communication strategies.

Hungarian long-term resident participant Pal, who lives in the outskirts of Budapest, wished to obtain a type of building permission concerning his property without complying with the formal requirements. He had built a small building on his property that at the time was legal, but he did not ask for a permission, and now when he wanted to sell his property, he found out that in the meantime the legislation had changed, and he now had to obtain the permission to be able to sell the property. He claimed that he was unable to comply with the requirements now that the building was already built, and he could not have foreseen the changes in the

legislation. Pal explained that he called the inspectors' office to arrange a viewing for his property that would decide whether he would be granted permission. He said that the inspector asked him when a suitable time for Pal would be. He interpreted this, as he put it, as '*an invitation for corruption'*, because officially he did not have to be present for the inspection, and inspectors could just come at any time without any notification. Pal said that once he was aware of the appointment, and he perceived it as a possibility to diverge from the formal procedures (i.e. that he could essentially bribe the inspectors), he started to make plans for how to negotiate the informal transaction. He said that he used the fact that because the law was inadequate - it established an obligation for him retrospectively - he would present himself to the inspector as an unknowing 'victim' rather than trying to argue about the legal matters. He explained that this strategy had worked for him on other occasions in similar situations, or when dealing with the traffic police in order to avoid paying a fine for committing smaller traffic offences.

On the day of the appointment, Pal called the inspectors and told them that because the road conditions leading to his house were bad (situated in the hilly outskirts), he would meet them further down the road and offered to drive them up to the property. The inspectors agreed, which confirmed his perception that he would be able to negotiate the informal transaction. He explained the absurdity of the situation to me that the inspectors had a car that was much more suitable for those type of roads than his car, but one of the inspectors stayed behind, while he drove up with the other inspector. He interpreted this as a mutual agreement that he will only communicate with one of them:

> *"That is when I started my 'act'* [HUN: színészkedés][24]. *I said how sad it was that I would have to take down the building and destroy my work, and why should I have to suffer when I am doing something nice, and I keep everything in order. She [the inspector] was playing along, saying, like yes, she understands, and this is a problem, and it shouldn't be like that. I asked, 'how can we solve this problem?' and she suggested a solution, and I gave her 20,000 HUF. I don't know if they shared the money, but I wasn't bothered by the authorities anymore."* (Pal, age 60-70, male, Hungarian, Budapest)

[24] He used the word acting as an actor that is a reference to performance.

Pal did not have a prior relationship with the inspectors, however he was able to initiate the informal practice somewhat directly, as first the appointment, and secondly the separation of the two inspectors was arranged seemingly with a mutual interest to negotiate the bribe. Pal could recognise and interpret the cues which shows that both Pal and the inspectors acknowledged the informal norms. Pal rationalised bribing the inspectors in order to receive the permit by referring to an external pressure stemming from the inadequate legislation. From the conversation with the inspector that Pal presented, it seemed that the inspector agreed with Pal's argument, and the inadequate legislation formed a basis for both Pal and the inspector to engage in the informal practice.

The purpose of the informal practice was to diverge from the formal procedure of issuing permission, and it took place between corrupt inspectors and those who would deal with them in a corrupt fashion. Pal knew the possibility for negotiating a bribe, but he had to find out whether it was an option in this situation by navigating the social association. According to Pal's explanation, the formal practice turned into informality when the inspectors agreed first to a pre-arranged appointment, and secondly willingly separated from each other. Initiating the transaction was direct, however the communication during the negotiation was performed in intricate ways. This is in line with what Gupta (1995:379-380) suggested, that when initiating low-level corrupt bureaucratic exchanges, even if the bribe-giving process was openly practiced, there were performative aspects of the communication that had to be mastered. The formal position of the inspector might explain that even if initiating the informal practice happened directly (by making the phone call and agreeing to the appointment), the communication during the negotiation had to be intricate.

In this social association the inspectors have more power, since only they can grant the permission, and Pal had to appeal to them. While in the first example the interaction took place between James and his former colleague (who were more equal in power as former colleagues), this transaction took place between officials and ordinary citizens, where the pre-existing power-relations dictated that Pal had to negotiate the bribe in a way that was not offensive for the inspector, for example by challenging their position. Also, the nature of the informal practice was different, as for Pal receiving the permission was a pressing issue in order to be able to sell the house. To be able to carry out this informal transaction, he had to 'act' first and test the waters. He also had to ask 'how to solve the problem' rather than

straight away offering money, although it was implied that he knew this would be the outcome. Pal explained that he developed this communication strategy by dealing with similar situations with other officials, for example the traffic police. He presented himself to the inspectors as a victim and at the same time someone who felt sorry for breaking the rules and not complying with the legislation. Presenting himself in this way on the one hand served the purpose of appealing to the inspector, and on the other hand Pal also generated a sense of familiarity in the performative aspect of the negotiation by talking about his emotions through establishing a shared moral perspective (i.e. that the formal rules are unfair). Granovetter (2007:4) argued that from the official's perspective accepting a bribe might be seen as social inferiority. This supports the necessity of intricate negotiation, which is aimed to avoid the notion of social and perhaps moral inferiority as the transaction should appear to be granting a favour rather than accepting a bribe.

Pal explained that he employed similar strategies when dealing with traffic police officers fining him for committing minor offences like speeding. In comparison to the previous example, Pal, like many other Hungarian long-term participants, explained that these dealings have other additional rules. For example, Zsolt said that when the traffic police stop him, he could normally recognise whether the police officer would rather receive a bribe than fining him formally. He explained that this manifested in the way the conversation went, as rather than immediately issuing the fine, the officer would be more hesitant and indirect, and ask for example: "*do you know how much this will cost you*?". Zsolt added that he normally answered that he did not know, and then the officer would say a large number. In this case, he explained that he normally asked: "*can we find another solution*?" and the police would say a number which indicated the amount of money that Zsolt was required to pay directly to the police officer instead of the large fine. Zsolt also added: "*it is really important that you put the money into the driving licence when giving it to the police, you need to be discreet.*" (Zsolt, age 50-60 male, Hungarian, Budapest). This gives a chance for the policeman to handle the money covertly. Complying with the modes of the transaction shows that the participants are aware of the members' positions and expectations, and they follow the rules of negotiation that the norms of 'living law' prescribe. Jancsics (2013:330) also noted that participants of an informal practice have to recognise the signs, gestures, and the language[25] of the participants that may indicate their 'willingness to be corrupted'.

[25] He refers to words and expressions that the participant used, not to the English or Hungarian language.

Connected to this notion, Zsolt's quote suggests that in a social association with members who have no personal relationship, the communication of initiating and negotiating may be more indirect, because the participants have to find out whether the person that they are interacting with belongs to the group of people who recognise a set of ways of acting (certain rules of conduct) as obligatory in a common type of situation, and whether in this instance they are willing to act. Zsolt's tentative approach shows that not every policy officer is part of the social association that accepts bribes, or they may not be acting as such all of the time. This supports the argument that the social associations of informal practices should be understood as defined by shared practices and norms, not by a particular professional (or other) status.

Bribing the police is different from Pal's example, because the informal transaction and the negotiation happens more on the spot. Zsolt described in detail the back-and-forth communication between him and the traffic police which included asking ambiguous questions (or ones with a double meaning). Jancsics (2013:330-331) identified this communication strategy as a 'mating dance', and beside these questions he noted other tools that people might use during the negotiation of an informal transaction such as meta-communication (e.g. looking into the eyes, or gestures). The intricate negotiation in some way supports Jancsics' (2013:330) findings that when the informal transaction is 'on-the-spot' (when participants did not know each other) there is an importance to effective communication, which according to Jancsics is less significant in the bond-based interactions. In these examples the power-relations within the social association were not equal between the members, because they were influenced by the pre-existing power-relations stemming from the formal relationship between street-level bureaucrats and citizens, which had an effect on the communication during initiating and negotiating the informal transaction. The nature of the transaction was diverging from formal, institutional practices, and in Pal's case the issue was pressing, while in the situation of bribing the police, the participants avoided paying a more substantial fine. The next example demonstrates a situation of more equal power-relations within a social association, and when the nature of the transaction is based on mutual benefit.

In this example the members of the social association would have a general idea of the possibility for initiating an informal practice but need to find a partner who would be willing

to negotiate with them. It is likely that the members of the social association are not familiar with each other before the negotiation. Hungarian long-term resident, property owner, Andras shared with me some probing or 'customary' questions that he normally asks when negotiating an informal deal, which involved receiving kickbacks in the tourism sector in Budapest. Andras explained that he lets out his apartments to tourists, and as an additional source of income he also sells tickets for Budapest attractions directly to tourists cash-in-hand. He suggested that he sells the tickets at the same price as they would cost at the ticket office, and that he kept about one fifth of the ticket's price as an informal commission fee, which went into Andras' pocket as undeclared income. He said that he could initiate similar deals with *'everyone'* in the tourism sector and added that the first step in the negotiation with the actor representing the tourism sector (even if the informal practices were the norms in the sector) is that "*you have to know that you are talking with the right person to be able to negotiate."* He described how he would call the general information number of the attraction, or if it was available, the number of the ticket selling manager. He would explain how he lets out his apartments to tourists, and that he could sell the tickets directly to them, which would make it easier for the tourists to buy, and for the attraction to sell the tickets. He continued that *"at this point I would expect an answer from which I could tell whether there was a business opportunity there or not."* If he got the right reaction, for example the person would say something along the lines of *"okay that sounds good, but why would we be interested and why would it be good for you? Then I would say, 'I am sure we can work out something that is beneficial for everyone'."* (Andras, age 20-30, male, Hungarian, Budapest). Andras added that this opened up the platform to negotiate how much of a kickback he could get. The quote highlights how asking probing questions is a way to navigate a social association to find the right person, and also to find out whether they are open to negotiation. When it is confirmed that the other side is interested, the conversation turns to a fairly direct communication of 'mutual benefit'. Additionally, the data showed that to be able to communicate effectively also requires certain social skills and competence from the participants, such as a degree of savvy and self-confidence, which confirms Jancsics' (2013:326) findings.

5.3. Processes of the social association: learning and routinising the norms of how to carry out an informal practice

When considering corruption practices within organisations, Ashforth and Anand (2003:3) argued that corruption can become normalised in an organisation to the extent that it is more or less taken for granted due to three mutually reinforcing processes, rationalisation, socialisation, and institutionalisation. Social associations can accommodate similar processes to those which Ashforth and Anand (2003) observed in an organisational setting. These processes help people to rationalise taking part in everyday corruption practices, as well as how to learn and routinise the norms of carrying out informal practices. I have addressed the process of rationalisation in Chapter 4, connected to external pressures and perceived harmfulness of the informal practice. Learning and routinising the norms does not only apply to specific cases which I will present in the coming section, but rather these processes are also relevant to many of the examples presented before this section. The value and rationale of addressing learning and routinising separately is to gain a more nuanced and deeper understanding of the workings of the social association, specifically focusing on these processes that contribute to participants' developing a procedural acceptance of certain informal practices (i.e. people take part in informal practices according to (obeying) their norms). The processes of learning and routinising can also influence the informal enforcement mechanisms within the social association. North (1990:55) argued that informal transactions might be self-enforcing when 'parties have to exchange a great deal of knowledge about each other and are involved in repeat dealings'. Interpreting this in Ehrlich's framework of social associations, when actors have a great deal of information and knowledge regarding the norms of the informal practice and members' expectations within the social association, and the transactions are repeated according to these, the enforcement might be more voluntary, even self-enforcing.

5.3.1. Learning

I conceptualise learning the norms of informal practices as a process that enables participants to carry out an informal practice in a way that is regarded as binding in a common type of situation by the members of the social association. In other words, learning means finding out what is expected from the members, and how the members' positions and functions are

determined. Ashforth and Anand (2003:25) described this process as ‘socialisation’ into the corrupt behaviour of an organisation, as newcomers are taught to perform and accept the corrupt practices. Ashforth and Anand (2003:25) conceptualised learning through socialisation based on the principle that behaviour is learnt during the process of social interaction. My approach, based on Ehrlich’s (2002:27) conceptualisation that the norms of ‘living law’ emerge from the members’ interactions, is in line with the idea of learning through socialisation. I develop this learning process using Zaloznaya’s (2012) framework, which utilised social learning in her work on organisational cultures in the university setting of Ukraine. She demonstrated that participants learnt norms through exposure to organisational cultures of the university (Zaloznaya, 2012:295). I regard Zaloznaya’s (2012) work as valuable to conceptualise the methods of learning for my thesis, because she developed an analytical tool for social learning in terms of informal practices which is compatible with my conceptualisation of learning. According to Zaloznaya (2012:295), participants acquired either favourable or unfavourable definitions (understandings) of bribery through encounters with institutionalised bribery mechanisms, conversations with peers and colleagues with more substantial experience within specific universities, and observations of other students and instructors. These specific ways can be generalised into methods of learning, such as ‘got told’, ‘encountered’, and ‘through observation’, that I can utilise when analysing my own data. Furthermore, people wanting to participate in the informal practices need to learn the norms, and by taking part in the transactions they are reproducing the need for further, similar transactions. Learning is an iterative and expansive process, which means that people can get more and more familiar with the nuances of the norms of the informal practice by participating in them from time to time, and gradually develop a clearer understanding of them. This type of learning also reproduces the norms that regulate those transactions, which leads to routinising the norms of informal practices when people co-operate to carry out certain informal transactions. Ashforth and Anand (2003:5-13) conceptualised learning and routinising as being mutually reinforcing and reciprocally interdependent, and both contribute to the reproduction of the norms regulating the informal practices. In this section I will build up a picture of the different ways in which people learn what is expected, allowed, or required from them within the social association, by drawing on empirical examples.

Hungarian long-term resident, Gabor, works in the visual entertainment industry in Budapest as a free-lancer. He explained that the normal attitude in this industry is that employers

"*don't want to employ people properly and pay social benefits for them."* (Gabor, age 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest). Consequently, he received all his earnings cash-in-hand. This means that rather than employers providing a formal contract with benefits and tax obligations, most employees would work as free-lancers and get paid cash-in-hand. Gabor described that at the end of the first day he got his salary in cash, which was the agreement. However, he got told that he needed to provide an invoice, and that the invoice needed to be for a certain service (not the one that he had provided), because the employer could get a tax refund on that service. Gabor explained that this created a peculiar situation, where he got paid cash-in-hand, but was obligated to provide an invoice for a service that he did not have the know-how or means to provide. He continued to explain that to solve this problem he had to ask other people in the business to provide him with that type of invoice, and that there was an intricate network of 'buying and selling' invoices [HUN: számlavásáslás][26]. The benefit, as he explained, was that when it came to the tax refund, the employers got back about 15% of the amount stated on the invoice, due to a special legislation that helps to boost the business, and he did not pay tax and therefore received the full amount of the salary. In answer to my question of how he learnt about the practice, he said that he raised the issue with his friend who introduced him to the job:

> *"My friend told me (and other people) that this is how you do it, and the people who could provide the invoice just came forward, and everyone knew who they were… they were the influential people in the business. I know that it's wrong, but that was the only way to earn money, and it just seemed normal… everybody treated it as the normal way, you didn't need to sneak around or anything, it was all upfront."* (Gabor, age 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest)

The quote suggests that the system of 'buying and selling' invoices was regarded as an accepted and obligatory way of paying salaries in the industry. Gabor complied with the practice, but he did not think that it was appropriate or right. However, due to the power-relations and hierarchies within the social association, he had no room to manoeuvre or to contradict the norms, because his objective was to earn money. Therefore, there is an element of informal enforcement due to the power-relations existing in the social association, because Gabor had no choice in complying with the practice if he wanted to work. However, in general the practice of 'buying and selling' invoices was self-enforcing in the industry as the members of the social association - including Gabor (after the initial learning process) - had

[26] Directly translated to selling and buying invoices.

enough information in terms of the norms and expectations between the members to complete the transaction repeatedly.

When Gabor started to work on the production, he was aware of some of the rules of conduct of the workplace or profession, however he had to learn the exact norms concerning the 'invoicing' practice when he came into contact with this informal aspect of the working arrangement. He needed to learn that cash-in-hand payment, combined with fictitious invoicing, was a normal and procedurally accepted method of payment in the business. Gabor learned the members' expectations and positions regarding the informal practice from a conversation with his friend. This confirms the method of learning described by Zaloznaya (2012:295), through conversation with peers and colleagues with more substantial experience within the industry. Gabor also implied that this informal practice was routinised in the conduct of the industry because people came forward with invoices, and it was treated as if it would be the normal way and upfront. Gabor, as a new member, was quickly told and learnt the norms that regulated the inner order of the social association, and his procedural acceptance and participation also contributed to maintain the practice. Therefore 'getting told' about the norms can also be regarded as actively maintaining the practice by the members of the social association who are co-operating to carry out the informal practice. This quote highlights and confirms Ashforth and Anand's (2003:1) conceptualisation, that the processes of normalisation of corruption, learning and routinising, are mutually reinforcing and reciprocally interdependent, moreover, they contribute to the reproduction of the informal practices.

Hungarian long-term resident Laura, the junior doctor quoted above (in section 5.1.) had similar experiences to Gabor. This example is situated in the formal setting of a workplace, where Laura was initially part of the workforce, but not a particular social association within the profession. She was not aware of the expectations and that the members' positions might differ from the formal expectations and position between the health care professionals in her department. When addressing the practice of accepting informal payment she explained: *"The trainee doctors and the other doctors and nurses told me that I have to accept the money, because if the patients learn that we treat them without extra payment they won't get any money either, so I must accept."* (Laura, age 30-40, female, Hungarian, Budapest). Laura was a newcomer to the social association, therefore the norms are introduced to her by the people who have more experience with the day-to-day workings of the social association.

This quote also highlights the importance of learning not only in the reproduction of the practice, but its implication in the reinforcement of the patients' perceptions of what is expected. It is a circle of demand and expectation that is maintained by introducing the new members of the profession to the norms of the 'living law'. Learning, eventually obeying, and routinising the norms appears to be mutually reinforcing in this example, because Laura got told that the reason for accepting the payment was to maintain the practice. This provides an explanation of Varese's (2000:9-10) suggestion that the belief that a bribe is necessary for every single transaction, for example between health care workers and patients, might lead people to offer unsolicited bribes that contribute to a situation where corruption is pervasive, which is due to the mechanisms of maintaining the practice.

As I mentioned in the first half of this chapter there were other informal practices in the same hospital that were not told to Laura upfront, but rather she encountered them while working at the department. Laura explained that she wanted to register a patient who came in as an outpatient and wanted to keep him in for observation. Laura thought that they had an empty bed, so she could admit the patient and started the procedure. However, the nurses intervened and told her that the empty bed was for her bosses' patients. Laura expressed that she found this revolting, and continued to explain that:

> *"There wasn't a patient anywhere, and we were not expecting one, so basically, they were just keeping a bed free for the occasion when the doctor says that she has a patient, who obviously paid her privately, to be in the state hospital, while we had to turn down people with serious illnesses."* (Laura, age 30-40, female, Hungarian, Budapest)

Laura learnt the norms, expectations, and members' positions in a similar way to what Zaloznaya (2012) described as 'encounters with informal mechanisms at the department'. Laura learnt that she should know which beds cannot be used, and that the department head does not even need to tell her, because it should be commonly known. Keeping certain beds free was a norm that was obeyed by the members of the social association and, additionally, the norms included that she could not admit patients to those beds, and consequently she had to turn patients down. She expressed her negative feelings towards the practice, however she chose to obey the norms, which implies procedural acceptability. In this example the enforcement of the practice seems to be more influenced by the power-relations and hierarchies within the social association than in Gabor's example. Gabor, after learning the

norms, chose to take part and directly benefitted from the repeated transactions, and hence complied more voluntarily, however in Laura's example a range of internal pressures can be identified which assured her compliance. To be passive, looking away, and not raising the issue were also expectations regulated by the norms of 'living law' which were told to her by the nurses when Laura encountered the practice. The nurses were lower in the formal hierarchy, but in the social association they had more experience and information, and were situated between Laura and the senior doctor, and seemingly the senior doctor could rely on them to introduce Laura to the informal norms. This suggests that the in the social association of this hospital, the nurses had more power than the junior doctors and could apply pressure on Laura to assure compliance. This is important, because it shows that social associations exist within and around professional (and other) associations, but in ways that do not automatically replicate their rules, or indeed their hierarchies. On a formal professional basis, it might be expected that a doctor has higher status and power than a nurse, but being new to the social association puts Laura in an inferior position.

Similarly, Hungarian long-term resident Imre, who works as a tradesman, also learnt the norms by encountering an informal practice. He learned that certain work-related informal practices are allowed at his workplace by encountering and observing the practices of his fellow workers. Imre explained that the formal way of training new workers at the company was that they would join a more experienced worker as an apprentice. Imre suggested that when he started to work with the long-term crew *"sometimes, it wasn't clear whether the people who I worked with were doing a private or a company job. Sometimes they just said that I should just stay outside or go somewhere for a couple of hours."* (Imre, age 20-30, male, Hungarian, Budapest). Imre learned that it was acceptable for the workers at the company to do private work (contributing to the second economy) during normal working hours, and he perceived this as the norm. Imre explained that in this instance the other workers excluded him (i.e. sent him away), because they did not want to share the extra payment with him. Imre added that these informal practices were supported by their boss 'looking away', which meant that there was a lack of enforcement of strict working hours, and diverging practices were tolerated. Supporting this notion, Baker and Faulkner (1993) argued that informal practices at certain industries and workplaces (in this instance combining cash-in-hand work with normal working hours, and also using the company's equipment) were not so much a result of individual greed, as a traditional way in the profession of 'doing things'. They suggested that, instead of rational calculus, individual

actors are driven by tacit cues from their supervisors and colleagues. When Imre realised the expectation was that workers were allowed to earn extra money by working on the side, and that the other workers were openly doing it, he imitated their actions - as he says, *"Now I have my own company van and equipment so I can have my own private petty practices* [HUN: mutyi][27]." (Imre, age 20-30, male, Hungarian, Budapest).

When the members of the social association were not open about the informal practices and the expectations for some reason - for example with the tradesman who did not want to include Imre in the details of their private, informal working practices - observation was also a method of learning alongside encountering. This means that there are situations which do not allow for socialisation into the practice, or 'getting told' about the norms directly. In this case observation and imitation are key, for example when deciding what is an appropriate gift for a health care worker or teacher, or whether there is a need for a gift or informal payment. In a Glasgow public hospital, Scottish nurse Angela described patients' decision-making patterns regarding what gift is expected: *"I think that they see other people giving stuff when they are visiting their relatives, or when they are taking them home, and they either come with a prepared gift or they just run down to the hospital shop and get something."* (Angela, age 20-30, female, Scottish, Glasgow). It was a common pattern in both the Budapest and Glasgow contexts that new parents observed more experienced parents' gift-giving habits, especially in the primary school context, and "*try to match gifts based on their size and shape."* (Erika, age 40-50, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). Observation and imitation of the norms of a social association were common amongst participants who wanted to take part in the informal practice, or rather simply felt pressure to comply with informal practices that they perceived as necessary. The meaning of this gift giving practice is ambiguous because some people who participate might interpret them as solely given in 'gratitude' rather than in the pursuit of some advantage, however onlookers might interpret the practice as corruption. This ambiguity is in line with de Sardan's (1999:34) suggestion that the interpretation between corruption and informality can depend on the position of the people involved.

[27] It refers to a secret informal arrangement that is beneficial for all who involved.

5.3.2. Routinising

In Ashforth and Anand's (2003:1) conceptualisation, the third process (besides rationalisation and socialisation) which underlines the normalisation of corruption is the 'institutionalisation' of the practices. They established a three-step process for 'institutionalisation' (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:6-7). This starts with an initial decision (from the leader or those in power) or act, that is followed by embedding the corruption in organisational structures and processes, and finally 'routinising' corruption (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:5-13). 'Routinised' means that the corruption practice is seen as normative, people are adapted to it, and it is enacted without thinking about it or about whether or not it is divergent from the formal norms (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:12). The process of 'institutionalisation' requires modification to be applicable to my research. I cannot talk about institutionalisation, because I do not examine organisations, therefore I refer to the whole process as routinisation. I argue that the initial act or decision emerges from people's attempts to co-operate in carrying out an informal practice. I recognise that routinising the informal practice requires developing somewhat stable and repetitive patterns, similarly to how Ashforth and Anand (2003:12) conceptualised this process. However, considering the power-relations within the social association, the compliance with the informal practices might be less voluntary if it is due to internal pressures within the social association from other members. This might be the case, for example, when people go along with the bribery or bad practices unwillingly but are aware that this is the only way to achieve their aim or maintain good relations. Therefore, similarly to the processes of learning and rationalisation, carrying out an informal practice routinely (with similar patterns) does not necessarily mean moral acceptability (thinking that it is right), but only procedural acceptability. When repetitive patterns of informal activity emerge, the phenomenon becomes part of the participants' normal everyday life (Jancsics, 2013:333). However, accepting these norms as binding still could be accompanied with ongoing moral struggle and concerns.

I found that examining the informal practice of kickbacks is a good way to demonstrate the mechanism that helped the routinisation and reproduction of the informal norms in social associations overlapping with a formal workplace and relationships. The interview with Hungarian contractor Pal revealed that there were informal practices taking place between private contractors and the employees of the publicly funded institutes in Budapest. Pal

explained that contractors working with publicly funded institutes such as councils, schools, universities, and ministries, in return for officially quoting a higher price than that they actually got paid, often received kickbacks. He described the practice in detail, explaining that when they usually did their regular yearly maintenance checks in the institute, or when they are called out to fix some immediate problem, they normally dealt with the same person at the given institute. Pal said that the person who has been dealing with the issue usually told them in advance what price they should officially quote. He added that sometimes they did not even discuss it, he just added 15-20%, because they knew that was the normal, standard practice. In return for quoting a higher price, which also meant providing an invoice for more money than the person pays them, Pal got some cash as a kickback. Pal added that his boss has an informal agreement with these institutes which means that the company will keep the contract indefinitely in exchange for maintaining these practices. Pal also explained that the person who they negotiated with also kept some cash, but that they were really dealing on behalf of someone else higher up in the ranks:

> *"I heard that the kickbacks go all the way up the ranks. So, we are just dealing with the lowest ranked person, who was told by someone what to write on the paper. It is a 'well-oiled machine'.*" (Pal, 50-60, male, Hungarian, Budapest)

Pal implied that the informal practice of kickbacks was routinised into the conduct between contractors and the people working for the institution and went up the ranks. Pal referred to the system of kickbacks as being a 'well-oiled machine', and he identified this as a standard act. Routinising the practice also means that participants of the informal transaction might create standard frameworks for the transaction, such as regular prices or times and meeting places. The quote highlights that these standard frameworks emerge from the interactions between the members of the social association. I argue that, in line with Ashforth and Anand (2003:4), standardisation reduces uncertainty and decreases the transaction costs of repeating negotiations and arrangements, therefore developing standard frameworks is in the interest of all members of the social association that facilitates the informal practice.

In this example, the cost of the additional payment comes out of the state budget since these are state funded institutes. The system of kickbacks that Pal discussed is closely related to workplace practices that Ditton (1977:52) described as 'informally allowed pilferage' by the employees of higher rank in the chain, until the employees' illegal practices may become part of an organisation's 'unofficial reward system'. This supports my argument that if

informal practices are routinised into the working of the social association, especially when it overlaps with a formal setting, they can become an integral part of the day-to-day activities of participants to such an extent that individuals may be unable to see the inappropriateness of their behaviours (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:4). The example also indicated this notion as Pal described the kickbacks performed routinely by him and the other actors in the institution as normal, and even an expected part of their work. This standardised set of practices taking place overlapping with a formal social association is in contrast with the more ad hoc and creative performances necessitated in other examples introduced in the previous section. By separating these practices, I argue that routinising occurs in those other kinds of practices, and the social associations surrounding them, in a different way, which I will show in the coming section.

In the previous chapter I identified the property renting scene in Budapest as an area where corruption practices seemed pervasive, and where participants referred to informal renting arrangements as the norm, which is an indicator of embeddedness in the social context. When an informal practice was wide-spread, and the general norms of how to carry out that informal practice were known to a significant number of the society, participants mentioned that it was enough to ask around to find someone who understood and obeyed the same norms in order to associate in conducting a specific informal transaction. Confirming this notion, Hungarian participant, Imre, mentioned that he was previously renting a flat from a friend in Budapest cash-in-hand for two thirds of the market price, and he was content with the arrangement. Therefore, he explained that when looking for a new arrangement he "*would never look at any advertisements, just ask around*" (Imre, age 20-30, male, Hungarian, Budapest). In the previous chapter I suggested that many participants in the Hungarian context did not consider formal renting agreements as an option, as they regarded renting and letting out properties informally as the norm. This suggests that the norms of this informal practice are routinised in the Hungarian context in the social association between the property owners, tenants, and sometimes even the agents, and can be considered as 'living law' besides the formal renting arrangements. Property owners and tenants experience having only an informal agreement between them as binding, as they agree and choose to take part in informal agreements (which is often based on a more voluntary compliance) in preference to having a formal agreement. The aspect that the informal practice is mutually benefitting suggests that in these social associations which surround the informal practices, the power-relations are relatively equal, however the corruption aspects

lie in the fact that informal renting arrangements serve the purpose of tax evasion. Imre's quote reveals that 'asking around' is the mechanism that is used to navigate the social association where the informal norms are routinised.

Similarly to Imre's suggestion that he would find accommodation for rent in an informal way, British migrant David, living in Budapest, said that cash-in-hand employment possibilities also arose and 'found him' without the need of advertisement. "*Students find me, I don't have to advertise. I got some of the contacts from the language school - that is they referred the students to me. People seek me out, because I am a native speaker and I work with companies as well, always cash-in-hand*." (David, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). This highlights that referral is another mechanism that helps to navigate the social association and also helps reproducing and maintaining the norms. While Imre talked about arrangements between 'friends' (bond-based relationships), for David referral was important because he wished to establish contact with students and companies who were unknown to him. This quote suggests that his skills of being a native speaker put him in a position where he was sought after, and perhaps had the power to ask for cash-in-hand arrangements if that was more beneficial for him. I explored in the previous chapter how cash-in-hand arrangements seemed to be the norm for working with individual students, but David worked with companies as well where perhaps a more formal contract would usually be expected.

Referral or recommendation was a common theme emerging from both contexts, and I argue that it contributes to establish and maintain stable and repetitive patterns of informal practices, especially in social associations where the members are not necessarily known to each other, such as the social association formed in a more ad hoc way (rather than being overlapping with formal groups of people, like the workplace in Pal's example). Taking this notion further I argue that making or seeking a recommendation can contain information about the norms of the informal practice. Craig, another British migrant participant living in Budapest, said that when a cleaning lady was recommended to him by a friend, the friend also explained that the cleaning lady was good, but she only worked cash-in-hand. Craig accepted the cash-in-hand arrangement, as he was more interested in finding a trustworthy worker:

> *"I don't even know if she (the cleaning lady) has a company, or what kind of setup she has. A friend recommended her, and she just said how much it cost and that she wanted cash payment, and didn't give me a receipt, but I think that is fine."* (Craig, age 20-30, male, British migrant, Budapest)

The quote highlights that the recommendation contained useful information, namely what was expected from Craig in terms of cash-in-hand payment, and the friend's recommendation was enough for him not to enquire or question what the cleaning lady does with the money.

My data showed that the chain of informal recommendations might develop into a network to the extent that some service providers can rely on these informally developed networks as their only source of clientele. Tradesman research participants noted in both of my research contexts that they were content with this form of work arrangement, because it guaranteed them a steady workflow (of which some of the jobs were cash-in-hand). Scottish long-term resident tradesman, Duncan, said that "*about 90% of the jobs are from people who I know through work, because I already did some work for them, or just people who I have been recommended to. Most of the jobs are through word of mouth."* (Duncan, 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow). This statement reveals that 'word of mouth' can be regarded synonymous with the verbal mechanisms of 'recommendation', and 'asking around' that help to navigate the social association, and this mechanism also potentially helps routinising the informal practices. These also may enhance the actors' 'reputation', which North (1990:55) identified as a mechanism to enforce agreements in impersonal exchanges. Based on my participants' accounts in both research contexts this happens either to find a trustworthy tradesman, or a cheap price (which normally means paying cash-in-hand), moreover preferably a combination of these two valued aspects of this types of working arrangement. Hungarian long-term resident tradesman, Imre, who had been taking up informal work alongside his regular employment, had an almost identical method of cultivating networks, but he added an explanation: *"if you do a good job, then people call you back, because there are a lot of incompetent tradesmen* [HUN: Mekk Mester][28] *out there."* (Imre, 20-30, male, Hungarian, Budapest).

[28] Mekk Mester is a protagonist of a children TV show, who poses as a tradesman who can fix anything, but in reality, he is incompetent.

This reasoning for seeking recommendations rather than finding people through advertisements was echoed by Scottish participant, Lewis, in Glasgow. "*It is really difficult to find people who can actually do a good job. I would rather ask a friend or a neighbour for a recommendation to avoid 'cowboys'*[29]." (Lewis, 40-50, male, Scottish, Glasgow). It was apparent from the participants' discussions in both Budapest and Glasgow that they came to value the quality of the service over cheaper price (which cash-in-hand payments often meant) because of their negative experiences. Therefore, the demand for these skilled service providers means that they might be in a position to decide whether the transaction should be cash-in-hand or formal - whichever benefits them most. The significance of the referrals in maintaining the flow of cash-in-hand work highlights these informal practices can become somehow routinised and straightforward, and even if they do not always diverge from the formal law, there is an expectation (especially when the objective is to secure a cheaper price) that they might. Even if teachers, tradesmen, and cleaning ladies set the rules, the customer does not need to agree and take their services. This is different to the examples where research participants faced more pressing issues, for example when patients are denied medical treatment, or where people felt more acutely that the professional codes of conduct are being undermined at universities and local councils. These informal practices do not involve the same moral dilemmas as some of the earlier examples, because these are not that pressing, but rather a choice of having a benefit (i.e. cheaper price) and therefore usually there is a more equal power-relation between the members of the social association.

While informality in general can increase the risk to all parties, recommendations can also mean enhancing trust, providing knowledge of the participants of the transaction, and ultimately reducing risk. When using an informal agreement based on the norms of 'living law', formal enforcement is not available. This could be interpreted that these cash-in-hand agreements are self-enforcing, or rather informally enforced. As mentioned above, according to North (1990:55) informal transactions can be self-enforcing when 'parties have to exchange a great deal of knowledge about each other and are involved in repeat dealings'. The 'great deal of knowledge' can be enhanced by cultivating reciprocal networks, and it also helps to develop repetitive patterns of dealing. I have addressed reciprocal networks in detail in the previous chapter amongst the mechanisms to facilitate social type advantage.

[29] From what I gathered 'cowboys' are same as Mekk Mester.

Using reciprocal networks can contribute to the reproduction of the practices, as the favours are exchanged between the personal networks, and the risk of not having a formal agreement is reduced. Supporting this statement, Mars and Altman (1983:550) argued that having a large and strong personal network means taking less risks, since networks are a major resource to take advantage of in times of need. Utilising social relations and long-term reciprocal networks can also help to navigate a social association where the members have no previous relationship or knowledge of each other, by bridging the gap - as I explored in the case study between Katalin and the doctor. Finding an intermediate person, for example by referring to a common friend, and cultivating reciprocal relationships, could enhance the chances of being able to facilitate informal practices between the members of the social association where the relationship otherwise is more remote. This means, considering Jancsics' (2013:325-330) conceptualisation, that by using a social relationship a participant can fill in the gap between having the 'right connections' by establishing a bond-based chain of social associations.

5.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I engaged with the workings of the social association. Throughout the chapter I presented a nuanced picture and understanding of power-relations and hierarchies within social associations. On the one hand, I explored how pre-existing power-relations contributed to the hierarchies within the social association, and on the other hand I addressed how the power-relations within the social association can lead to internal pressures. The formation of the social association, whether it was more ad hoc, or overlapping with a formal workplace or relations, influenced the members' positions within it, as well as the norms of carrying out the informal transactions. However, the connection between pre-existing power-relations (within the formal workplace), and power-relations within the social association that overlaps with the workplace, for example, was not that straight forward. The data revealed that, for example, more compliant members, or ones who had more experience and knowledge in the workings of the social association, might have more power than the newcomers who needed to learn the norms, even if the newcomers would be higher in the formal hierarchy, which did not align with the formal relationship between them. The issues around the formation of the social association, members' positions within, and the learning of their norms explored in this chapter already suggest a complicated picture of the

interaction between the people attempting to co-operate to carry out an informal practice, which I will discuss further in the coming empirical chapter, considering the migrants' perspective.

Additionally, I also found that power-relations within the social association could influence the enforcement and people's compliance with the norms, that often manifested in internal pressures. The formation of the social associations (e.g. established between close acquaintances, or between people who did not have previous relationship) also affected the communication strategies that people needed to employ in carrying out an informal practice. Some of the intricate ways of negotiation of the informal transactions suggested that not being fluent in the language might present difficulties which I will address in the next chapter, while reflecting on the migrants' experience. The relationship between the participants of the transaction (e.g. power-relations and hierarchies within the social association) and the nature of the informal transaction influenced whether the communication was direct or indirect during initiating and negotiating the informal practices.

I established that learning the norms could take place in different ways when introducing newcomers to the norms, depending on the attributes of the social associations. These mechanisms were by explicitly getting told about, encountering, or observing the workings of the social association and its norms. It became apparent that leaning these norms enabled people to fully participate in the social associations surrounding the informal practices, and learning them was also essential to be able to 'get certain things done'. Migrants might have differing experiences and challenges with learning the norms, which I will explore in the next chapter. I showed how learning and routinising the norms can contribute to people developing a procedural acceptance of the informal practices. When addressing routinising, I explored some mechanisms that facilitated the reproduction of the norms and the transactions, such as recommendation, referral, and word of mouth. In the next chapter I focus on the migrants' lived experiences, and I explore whether people's participation in informal practices, and their perceptions of those, change or show continuity when moving to a new social setting. In the next chapter I will also address the question of internalised moral acceptability.

Chapter 6: Migrants' lived experiences of informal practices and social associations

The empirical data that I have previously introduced hinted that there might be significant differences between long-term locals' and migrants' perceptions of, and participation in, informal practices. In this chapter I explore how these differing perceptions might change or show continuity as migrants socialise into the new contexts, and attempt to co-operate with locals as well as other migrants to differing degrees to carry out certain informal practices. So far, I have utilised migrants' perceptions, alongside those of long-term local residents, to report on practices in each context. In this chapter, I take the examination through the migrants' lens further exploring how migrants' liminal position in a new context can throw into particularly sharp focus certain more general trends. The prioritisation of the migrants' perspectives - which includes examining participants' narrative and consultant type accounts of taking part in informal practices - shed a new and, in some cases, clearer light on the norms of the practices and processes which constitute the social associations, as they more consciously engage in the learning and routinisation of 'new' or 'unfamiliar' practices. Therefore, in this chapter I deliberately revisit some aspects of the workings of the social association with this particular clarifying lens.

I have addressed in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.1.) the values and purposes of considering the migrants' perspectives for this thesis, however it is worth restating them, as these are significant for this chapter. Firstly, learning the norms of the local context as part of socialisation is more observable in the case of migrants (as opposed to long-term local residents) as it usually has to take place in a shorter period of time, and perhaps is a more conscious and reflexive process. Secondly, migrants might bring their own informal practices and norms - or at least perceptions of what is regarded as acceptable (both procedurally as obeying the norms of 'living law' and morally (internalised) as thinking about them as 'right') from their old settings. Finally, in this chapter I specifically focus on the effects of migration on power-relations which are significant in the new social context and within the social association as I explored in chapter 5. Migration means changes in power-relations, hierarchies, and inequalities (Black et al., 2006; Portes, 2010; Oliver and O'Reilly, 2010), therefore I consider these aspects both as experienced by migrants, and as embedded in the local contexts (Kurkchiyan, 2011:367). I take into consideration that there is a contrast between the more privileged British 'lifestyle' migrants and the more vulnerable

Hungarian ‘economic migrants’, and therefore their ‘lived experience’ is likely to differ, which has implications for their membership of social associations, and the informal enforcement mechanisms that they encounter within the social associations.

The aim of this chapter is to gain a better understanding of the migrants’ experiences of learning and engaging in the norms of informal practices and workings of the social association. In this chapter I explore how migrants learn to understand, take part in, and to an extent (might) accept the informal practices in a new context, and in doing so become part of, but also potentially alter or create new social associations in their new social context. I address one of my sub-research questions on how migrants regard informal practices, and whether their perceptions of those are determined, altered, or show continuity by living and adapting to a new social setting. In this chapter I examine instances when migrant participants reported on attempting to co-operate to carry out an informal practice, and becoming members of the social associations. By doing so, they refer to socially constructed rationalisations for taking part in the informal practice, learn the norms of carrying out an informal transaction, and by participating in the informal practice they contribute to the routinisation and reproduction of these norms. In this chapter I also investigate further how migrants’ experiences of power-relations in the new context, due to specifically migration induced hierarchies, are sometimes more acute, and therefore can offer a particular insight into the ‘inner order’ of the social associations in terms of coercion and pressure into compliance between the members. Exploring these specific aspects of enforcement can reveal more about how ‘living law’ operates in general.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. In the first section I explore the two significantly different groups of migrants separately, drawing out the migrant group and context specific aspects of their lived experiences. I examine attitudes, strategies, and behavioural aspects that lead them to interact with and create new local social associations and learn the norms of ‘living law’ of carrying out an informal practice in their new context. In this section I focus on identifying the mechanisms by which participants interact with and within social associations, and how compliance with the norms is secured. In the second part I examine learning as a wider process of gathering information besides people attempting to learn the norms of the informal practices. Finally, I explore continuity and change in terms of research participants’ perceptions of what constitutes procedurally and morally acceptable behaviour.

I also address how an absence of change in migrant participants' perceptions and/or an unwillingness to participate in certain informal practices might create a tension between the members of the social associations. I explore these aspects with reference to external pressures in the context, and internal pressures within the social associations.

6.1. Migrants' lived experiences and interactions with social associations

6.1.1. British migrants in Budapest

In the Methodology chapter (in section 3.3.1.) I established that my data on British migrants in Budapest seemed to match the literature on 'lifestyle migration', which means that these types of migrants in general are searching for a 'more fulfilling way of life' (Benson and O'Reilly, 2016). In line with Torkington (2010), I found that British migrant participants in Budapest generally had relative security in economic terms, and my data also confirmed Egedy and Kovacs's (2011:162) findings that they had a higher level of education on average than the local population. These traits contribute to them being somewhat privileged. Their better economic position, higher status, and therefore higher level of power could lead to a specific way of taking part in informal practices, and therefore interacting with the local social associations. However, my data revealed a more nuanced picture, partly because as in any migrant group, British migrants in Budapest were also a heterogenous group of people. Additionally, my data also confirmed Egedy and Kovacs's (2011:173-185) findings that although many migrants were attracted to Budapest by work and education, a considerable number of them came to the city for personal and family reasons. For many of my participants, following their partner, or finding a partner in Hungary was the only reason to move to Hungary and stay there. Most participants had a Hungarian spouse, which might affect these participants' learning possibilities and approaches towards informal practices which I will address in detail later in this chapter.

I explained in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.3.2.) that there were some typical occupational categories that were preferred by the British migrants in Budapest. This is significant when examining the migrants' participation in informal practices, which overlap

with the workplace and associated relationships. At the time of the data collection most of the British migrant participants owned their own businesses or were self-employed. My data also confirmed Lardies' (1999:489) findings that 'lifestyle migrants'' business endeavours were not, for the most part, driven by the need for employment or profit maximisation. While many of the participants were established in their ways of living in Budapest, they also reported their experiences of initially arriving in Hungary, with differing approaches to settling. A common aspect reported by the participants, regardless of being a traveller with limited funding or someone with savings from their past occupation, and with or without a business plan, was that in the early period of settling, the participants' logical choice for generating income was teaching English. For these participants English teaching could take place at the language school, but not necessarily as formal employment. This means when they were looking for work, they found out - often by talking to other migrants or local friends and relatives - that the easiest way to secure work in the first instance was through informal employment.

Both British migrants Emily and Andrew reported that when arriving in Budapest (as young and somewhat inexperienced migrants) they obtained work informally in a language school. These participants, like others, explained that many language schools in Budapest facilitated the informal practice that native speakers (regardless of their qualifications) could work on a cash-in-hand basis without declaring their income. Emily explained that her Hungarian boyfriend's mother knew someone who worked in a language school, and she arranged for her to work there. She said that she got paid cash-in-hand and added that "*I was naïve, we didn't even have a contract [pause], but I could start working straight away."* (Emily, age 40-50-, female, British migrant, Budapest). She also explained that she earned more than other teachers who were formally employed at the same language school, but she did not receive social benefits, such as health care or a pension entitlement. Andrew also described a very similar method to securing teaching work: *"I heard from some Hungarian friends that language schools are always looking for native speakers."* (Andrew, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). Emily and Andrew obtained their teaching qualifications later, when they chose to settle in Budapest, and also secured formal employment status. These examples showed that these migrants used existing relationships (e.g. boyfriend's mother) and developed new ones (e.g. colleagues or contacts at the language school) to participate in these informal practices, and thus through engaging in the practices they became part of the social associations in their new environment.

British migrant David moved to Budapest more recently than most of my other research participants. He identified himself as someone searching for 'a better way of life', describing how he was attracted to Budapest by its favourable living conditions. While setting up his own business he planned to support himself by teaching English. He searched for contacts by asking around in a Budapest pub that British migrants frequented: "*My plan was to visit this pub, because I had heard that it is a hub for British expats in Budapest*." (David, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). He described that he was quickly directed to contact some specific language schools which employed native speakers. This narrative account also adds to the experience reported by other migrant participants, whom I recruited separately, that the practice of seeking informal employment as an English teacher was common amongst the newly arrived migrants. Amongst my participants, many British migrants consciously sought to engage with these informal practices, and through participating in them interacted with and became part of certain social associations. For David, as a British migrant, asking other compatriot migrants in the pub granted him access to a social association surrounding the practice of employing teachers unofficially, without declaring this to the authorities. It is worth mentioning that some of these language schools were run by migrants, (while other schools were run by Hungarians), but informally employing native speakers seemed to be prevalent in many language schools in Budapest. Migrants, like David, who already had some capital to invest in their business were able to support the early stages of their business endeavours with permanent or temporary jobs available to them because they were able to speak (and willing to teach) English.

The validity of the notion of having a 'somewhat more privileged position' compared with the local long-term residents was challenged as the participants provided an explanation of their own perceived status, by distinguishing themselves from other British migrants and positioning themselves in relation to the long-term residents in Budapest. My findings in some respects confirmed the literature on 'lifestyle migration' because I also found that many of the business owners utilised private funding sources and personal savings to initially finance their business ventures (Eaton 1995:260). According to Oliver and O'Reilly (2010:50) this means that these migrants aim to achieve a more meaningful way of life and leave their old life behind. Some of my British migrant participants reported going through downward mobility by choice, for example working as a language teacher despite having a

business diploma, or they exchanged working for an international company to being a restaurant owner and working there as a staff member. However, as Oliver and O'Reilly claim (2010:50), I found that despite individuals expressing a desire to leave their old circumstances behind, some British migrants mostly interacted with other compatriots, for example joining British expat societies and supporting British-led charity events (e.g. an annual Burns Supper). This seemingly led to rearticulating their old life under the new conditions (Oliver and O'Reilly, 2010:50), and it could mean that these participants have less contact with local social associations because are less likely to take part in new informal local practices. However, encountering and perhaps clashing with social associations surrounding informal practices may sometimes be unavoidable when living in a social context where many practices are embedded and part of everyday life (Jancsics, 2013). British migrants' chosen downward-mobility, the investment of their funds in Hungarian-based businesses, or simply their choice to maintain their accustomed standard of living in a cheaper environment without having to work, sometimes led to unexpected outcomes. I found that some British migrants' standard of living diminished by staying and living in Hungary for an extended period. Business owner Chris expressed his concerns and fears for some fellow British migrants living in Budapest, who had arrived there and established themselves using their savings, and lived a comfortable life by supporting their lifestyle with undeclared cash-in-hand teaching:

> *"There are many British expats[30] living in Budapest for years working cash-in-hand, with no pension, no health care - you know - staying under the radar. They don't understand that it leaves them helpless if they get some bigger health problem or have an accident [pause] or if they just get old!"* (Chris, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest)

Chris expressed that these migrants might find themselves in a vulnerable position in the long-term. The quotation also suggests that these migrants did not have formal health insurance and so they might need to find informal ways to access healthcare services. Chris, who ran a formally established business and said that he paid health care and pension contributions, also distinguished himself from these fellow migrants by expressing that he was concerned about their positions. He implied that although for these migrants it was possible to live in Budapest without formally contributing to the economy, and at the same

[30] British migrants always used the word expat to describe themselves.

time informally access certain public services, it might be disadvantageous and not advisable for them in the long term.

I found that British migrants often made comparisons to other compatriots to explain their own position. For example, Craig, who initially came to study in Budapest, and later settled there to live and work, explained that he took the conscious decision to separate himself from his compatriots. He explained that he tried to mix with the locals: "*I took the time and effort not just to learn the language, but to understand what Hungarian people do and why"*. He also expressed that when trying to find a job to stay in Hungary, he "*wanted to do something more Hungarian, not just teaching English"*. Although Craig ended up working in human relations (in a role where he spoke only English), with this statement he clearly indicated a distinction between himself and other British migrants who took up informal English teaching, and who he perceived as less settled than himself. He further explained that he explicitly distinguished himself from the British people who *"got stuck in Hungary, and don't even try to engage with the locals."* (Craig, age 20-30, male British migrant, Budapest). He referred to occasions when British migrants' initial funding ran out and as they were working in Budapest for a Hungarian salary, their financial situation prevented them from moving back to the UK. Craig's response also suggests that he believed that his willingness to learn the language and the local norms might grant him - in my interpretation - a greater understanding of the local social associations. Rose, a British migrant and university teacher, explained that many discussions at the weekly meetings at her Budapest university department involved talking about 'getting things done' through informal practices. However, she said that she tried not to get involved and explained that she adopted the policy that what other people do is not her business: *"I am not very integrated as a Hungarian, I do things by the rulebook, and also I don't ask questions."* (Rose, age 40-50, female, British migrant, Budapest). This statement suggests that Rose had a different approach from Craig's in learning the norms of her department and learning the ways of 'being like a Hungarian' in general. Although Rose noticed informal practices at her workplace, she had consciously taken a position that allowed her to remain more of an external observer of these practices and remain outside the social association that had formed around these in her workplace.

Other British migrants explained their positions from the perspective of how the locals saw them and interacted with them. These descriptions painted a diverse picture. On the one hand, British migrant Andrew, who has a Hungarian wife, explained that when they wanted to find a school for their child through informal channels by utilising personal connections, Andrew's status as a British migrant helped the process. He perceived that "*it was positive that I am British. The 'tanito neni' [HUN: female teacher] thought it was prestigious to teach our child, for some reason."* (Andrew, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). On the other hand, many British participants expressed frustration at how locals usually treated them in everyday interactions. For example, business owner Charles felt it was important to emphasise at the beginning of the interview that he was upset that long-term locals kept asking him why he lived in Hungary, implying that it was somewhat strange or unusual. He expressed his frustration in the following way: *"This is my home; I have a Hungarian family"*. (Charles, age, 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). I found that many migrants, especially the ones with a Hungarian family, felt it was important to be able to engage with the locals, moreover it was part of their endeavour of achieving a 'better way of life'. This approach consequently leads these migrants to engage in informal practices and encounter the local moral codes in general. In contrast to Rose, Charles claimed that he wanted to take part in Hungarian life fully, and to do so required that he do things informally. In consequence (in my interpretation) he became part of various social associations, rather than interacting as an outsider. He explained that he usually paid cash-in-hand to locals carrying out smaller works around his house. He said that by engaging in these practices, his main intention was to take part in community life and support the locals by providing them jobs. However, recently he noticed that the locals were less friendly and suddenly were not interested in working for him. He noticed a change in their attitude compared with when they were "*eager and grateful"*. This statement reveals some ambivalent expectations about wanting to be accepted by the locals, because the data showed that British migrants' (Andrew's and Charles') informal relationships and practices were facilitated by the privilege of their status. Even Charles' discussion of 'helping the locals', and them being 'eager and grateful' suggests a certain privileged standing.

Charles, providing a narrator type account, explained that he asked around about the change in attitude, and it turned out that the change was connected to a recent event. Charles wanted to renovate his roof and although he wanted to give the job to a local person, this time he asked for an invoice because the job was more substantial in terms of work and costs

required. The local tradesman, an ex-police officer, could not provide an invoice and therefore Charles gave the job to someone else. Charles explained that he found out after this incident that the local tradesman told the other locals that Charles wanted them to provide an invoice for every small job, otherwise Charles would report them to the tax office. Charles explained that he was disappointed, because he thought that he had developed a rapport with the locals and was now trying to salvage the situation. This also suggests that Charles realised that his position compared with the other members had now changed, because he was portrayed as someone who did not obey and accept the norms of 'living law' of the social association, comprised of local workers and property owners or occupants. This meant that although he wanted to co-operate to carry out these informal practices, and in consequence to be a member of the social association, he was perceived as someone who did not play by the rules, which put him on the margins of the social association. He did not comply with the norms, because he asked for an invoice, and it meant for the other members that he was no longer obeying the informal norms, and he did not recognise the self-enforcement mechanism of the social association. For Charles, this new position meant that he was no longer able 'to get things done' in the same ways as the locals, and also while previously he was in an advantageous position of setting conditions by providing jobs 'to help the locals', now he had to rely on the locals' willingness to work for him for a reduced, tax-free price. Examining the heterogenous group of British migrants' interactions with new social associations revealed the dynamic process of settlement and learning how to 'get things done' in a new context that often requires changes in the migrants' approaches and attitudes toward informal practices.

6.1.2. Hungarian migrants in Glasgow

Hungarian migrants in Glasgow in general search for a 'normal life' (Lopez Rodriguez, 2010:349), which might include participating in informal practices. My data suggest that it is common for Hungarian migrants to initiate informal practices that are embedded or pervasive in their home country, for example using social relations to access education and trying to provide informal payments in health care. However, when trying to initiate these practices in the new context in Glasgow, they often found that informality was not required, or that there were differences in the members' positions and expectations in the social associations compared with what they were used to. On the one hand, Hungarian migrant

participants typically explained their social position in the new context similarly to the British migrants in Budapest, by distinguishing themselves from other migrant compatriots. On the other hand, it was also significant that Hungarian migrants made comparisons to their experiences in their home country when explaining their current lived experience, which was different from British migrants in Budapest. I previously addressed in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.3.1) that many aspects of my data on Hungarian migrants were congruent with the literature on CEE economic migration in the UK. The perceived difficult situation in the home labour market generates economic migration to the UK (Heath et al., 2011), and specifically to Glasgow where there is an availability of work in the low-skilled sector, and low-cost housing to support the migrants' settlement (Kay and Trevena, 2019:160). These conditions explain why Hungarian migrants in Glasgow, like other CEE economic migrants, made comparisons between the more difficult home, and the somewhat more advantageous host contexts, which often included mentioning the lack of a need to 'get things done' informally in certain areas. However, economic migration also creates unfavourable conditions for Hungarian migrants in Glasgow which in turn has repercussions on their ability to 'get things done' like the locals, and thus to become members of social associations. Certain unfavourable conditions, changing power-relations, and inequalities generated by migration are likely to affect Hungarian migrants' interactions with social associations as well as the enforcement of the 'norms of living' law, which I will explore in detail in the coming sections.

In the Methodology chapter (in section 3.3.2), I explored some typical occupational categories that were common amongst the Hungarian migrant participants. These revealed which social associations that overlap the formal workplace they were likely to interact with. Many of my Hungarian migrant participants worked in low-skilled jobs, and especially in the service sector in permanent or temporary jobs (e.g. second jobs or short-term work as a stepping stone). This is congruent with the literature - that in the Glasgow context, the service sector expanded creating a need for cheap labour (Sassen, 2001), which meant new opportunities, and, as Kay and Trevena (2019:159) argued, it also meant new forms of precarity for migrant workers. My data confirmed that the migrants' vulnerable position, especially in the case of less-settled migrants, often manifested in employers abusing their power. Hungarian migrant care worker, Jozsef, explained that when he started to work in the service sector in Glasgow, when he was looking for his first job, he needed to pay attention to whether the employer would charge an excessive amount for food and accommodation

costs (that were deducted from his salary). My data showed that there were other informal ways to discriminate against migrant workers. Hungarian migrant, Istvan, working in a Glasgow factory for more than 10 years, described that when the factory had financial problems the Scottish employees got sent on 'holiday', while most of the Hungarians lost their jobs. He continued to explain that he did not lose his job, because by the time the financial problems surfaced, he had shown that he was "*an asset, and had made friends with the Scottish co-workers"*. He added that he had also managed to prove to his employer that he was an expert in his job, and he was able to make small talk with the fellow employees, even if when he started to work at the factory his English was on a very basic level:

> *"I could say about two sentences, but I was working on learning more, and I never had a problem at work. I learnt the technical words first, and if I didn't know them, I just showed what I meant. But talking about everyday things, like having an everyday discussion was much more difficult*." (Istvan, age 30-40, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow).

Istvan's narrative type account shows that he tried to improve his position within the social association of certain co-workers, which overlaps with the formal workplace. He tried to achieve this not only by proving his expertise and ability to learn technical words, but by making friends amongst the Scottish co-workers, and by this, being more accepted into the social association of his local co-workers. This improved his status within the power-relations of the social association of local co-workers as they accepted him as one of them (or at least as not too dissimilar to them), which ultimately helped him to keep his job. Istvan also added that while less-settled[31] Hungarian employees got laid off, Polish managers ensured that Polish employees could remain in work at the factory, even if they were in a similar position to the Hungarians regarding their level of settlement. This observation highlights membership to a different kind of social association within the workplace, made up of co-nationals. Because some of these co-nationals were in positions of power as managers, they could influence decisions on which employees kept or lost their jobs. In my interpretation, based on Istvan's description of the importance of belonging to certain co-nationalities or group of co-workers, the less-settled Hungarians were not part of the social association that could guarantee them preferential treatment. In comparison, Polish nationals were more likely to keep their jobs than the Hungarians because the Polish co-workers' social association contained members who were in a position in another intersecting social

[31] i.e. not speaking English, and living in container homes on the factory's site.

association of managers or decision makers at the factory. While Istvan was also part of the Hungarian co-nationals' social association, he perceived himself as more settled, and he seemed to establish a relationship with the local co-workers.

Similarly, Hungarian migrant Bence, who, when undertaking his first employment in Glasgow, worked in another factory on the production line, confirmed the power of Polish managers recruiting and organising a Polish workforce (e.g. for working extra hours or getting employed without passing the compulsory English test). Kay and Trevena (2019:164) addressed how CEE migrants often work alongside other Eastern Europeans on the production line, which leads to fewer possibilities to interact with the native population, and chances to interact in English (rather than chatting in a Slavonic language). This also means that due to the language barriers, Hungarian migrants could experience difficulties in accessing the social association of other co-workers, or at least the ones that seemed to be in power, such as Polish nationals and Scottish locals. These examples illustrate two main points. First, Hungarian migrants usually differentiated themselves from Polish and other migrants, who as Bence put it, "*are not interested in integration*". Secondly, Hungarian migrants interacting with informal social associations within the workplace felt that the Polish migrants had more power (e.g. in keeping employment and accessing jobs). Bence explained that *"there were many Polish people amongst the managers as well, and because there were so many Poles they even gave instructions in Polish sometimes"*. (Bence, 20-30, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). Bence's narrative type of description also confirms White and Ryan's (2008) findings on Polish migrants' networks, which tend to be larger and therefore more powerful, (including having managers amongst them) than newer (less established), smaller groups of CEE migrants. These social associations grounded in co-nationalities, and which overlap with more formal sources of authority (e.g. managerial positions) also highlight the importance of how (and from whom) migrants learn about informal practices, which I will explore specifically in a later section of this chapter on gathering information and learning as a wider process (in section 6.2.1).

Bence also observed social divisions on the production lines, mainly Eastern European nationals working in lower positions, communicating between themselves in Polish, and sometimes using Russian as a common language. He explained that the different categories of employees wore different colours of hairnets, and that people working together wore the same colour:

> *"It [the social division] did not stop on the production line, it was always the same division. The 'reds' never talked to the 'blues', they even ate separately at the canteen. But I wanted to learn English and socialise, it was never meant to be a permanent workplace for me, so I wasn't faint hearted, and I was chatting to everyone, even with the 'yellows'*." (Bence, age 20-30, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow)

He explained, as had many of my participants, that he consciously distanced himself from other Hungarians in order to learn the language faster, and to present himself as someone who was interested in becoming a member of Scottish society. He believed that this would give him an advantage compared with other migrants, who could only rely on their co-national's network or social group, as I identified earlier, in the case of Istvan where these social associations overlap with the social association of the formal workplace. Bence's approach was to try to become a fuller member of the social association of local employees, in anticipation that this would grant him more possibilities. To achieve this, he engaged in communication with the local co-workers in higher positions, which he thought would facilitate their greater acceptance of him, similarly to what Istvan described at his workplace. It is possible to see how his attitude and willingness to learn the modes and norms required would provide greater access to engaging in informal practices.

Additionally, Hungarian migrants addressed some negative feelings directly related to informal practices that they observed other Hungarian migrants doing, which led them to separate themselves from these compatriots. Erika, working as a hotel manager, explained that other Hungarian employees were reluctant to comply with unwritten (but agreed) policies on tipping and 'lost and found' objects, while other nationalities obeyed. For example, Erika explained that if the guests left something in the room after checking out from the hotel, the informal agreement among the employees was that the first person entering the room (usually one of the cleaners on duty) could keep the object they 'found' and collect any tips that guests might have left. Erika added that Hungarian cleaners had accused her (as a manager) of entering the rooms before them and taking the 'loot' from them. Erika criticised their attitude, describing it as follows, "*they always found a way to make trouble and conflict, and assumed that everybody wants to cheat them in some way."* (Erika, age 40-50, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). Erika admitted, though, that sometimes she did enter the rooms before the cleaners, but none of the other cleaners

challenged her authority, not even long-standing local employees, and she also felt that the Hungarian cleaners on occasion expected preferential treatment from her as a manager. This highlights the differing expectations within and between the overlapping social associations, particularly between the formal workplace, the social association of employees, and the Hungarian co-nationals. Erika had to make the decision to act either according to the unwritten rules of solidarity with co-national (but subordinated) workers, or those of the local social association of the employees.

Hungarian migrants having to choose between obeying the norms of old social associations in their home context or the norms of new social association in the Glasgow context was also an emerging theme. In my interpretation Hungarian migrant, Glasgow tradesman, Miklos addressed this aspect, while making comparison to the Hungarian context: *"In Hungary only relationships matter, and those were also often supported by kickbacks. In Scotland people would never recommend me if I wouldn't do a good job. It is nice*." (Miklos, age 40-50, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). Miklos explained that the norms of the social association between the tradespeople and customers were different, because while in Hungary he would have to provide kickbacks, in Scotland recommendations based on the quality of his work helped him to find new customers. Contradicting this, Miklos added that he still gives presents (e.g. chocolate or wine) to long-term, returning customers and for suppliers, mostly at Christmas, when he receives a bigger commission, or when he knows that someone recommended him to a new customer: *"I know it seems strange to Scottish people [pause] - well they don't understand why I am doing this. They often get embarrassed, and some ask me why*." Miklos explained that he wants to show appreciation and the importance of the relationships, and, admittedly, maintain them. He said that he is aware that it was not necessary, but he reasoned as follows: "*It is just a small gesture [pause], I suppose it is just something that I always did in Hungary, and I got used to it.*" This shows that navigating social associations in the new social context might be influenced by the old practices, which is an important notion when exploring whether migrants participation and perceptions of informal practices change or show continuity. This shows that Miklos had to choose whether to obey the norms of the new social association, but also whether to maintain (voluntarily) some practices that were required and accepted in the Hungarian context.

The Hungarian migrants who claimed that they felt quite settled, as we might expect, had more interactions with the local norms, which was emphasised by the way they often

described their everyday experiences in contrast to their earlier life in Hungary. Hungarian migrant Jozsef, working as a carer, explained that in the Glasgow context the need to 'get things done' informally was minimal on an everyday level: *"I earn the minimum wage and we have been able to buy a house. My wife is still on maternity leave (for six years now), and we have enough money to live at a good standard. That would be unimaginable in Budapest."* (Jozsef, age 40-50, Hungarian migrant, male). However, I should note that Jozsef's wife was an accountant by profession in Hungary, but since moving to Scotland had been undertaking occasional undeclared cash-in-hand cleaning work in Glasgow, which she secured through their Polish neighbour. This type of discrepancy between educational attainment and the nature of work undertaken in the UK is common among Hungarian economic migrants, which also means a downward mobility (Pollard et al., 2008:37; Eade et al.,2006; Heath et al., 2011). It also means that while Jozsef was satisfied with his formal earnings, they also secured informal work through the help of their Polish neighbour for the opportunity of cash-in-hand cleaning work. While Jozsef perceived earning the minimum salary as enough, I found that many Hungarian migrants had been stuck with minimum salary work, or the same paygrade for years, while Scottish counterparts would progress in position and in salary. This confirmed Kay and Trevena's (2019) findings around the lack of occupational mobility of CEE migrants in Glasgow, as they work in low income and low-skilled jobs, but have better material circumstances and security in comparison to their home country. Other migrants made comparison to their life in Hungary in terms of job security, such as pointing out that in Scotland "*they can't fire you simply because someone else needs the job.*" (Erika, age 40-50, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). Erika explained that her husband had been fired from his workplace in Budapest, because his employer's relative needed a job. This example is different to Hungarian migrants losing their job in the manner that Istvan reported, because in Istvan's case the company went through some financial difficulties, and therefore there was a reason to let certain people go, rather than simply firing someone in order to support or favour their friends and family. This is significant because it shows that Hungarian migrants often learnt and experienced that in the Scottish context there is a less of a need for informality (or a need for a different type of informality) in certain areas. This has a relevance to whether their participation and perceptions of informal practices would change or show continuity, which I will address later in this chapter (in section 6.2.2.)

Bringing together these two sections on migrant participants in Budapest and Glasgow, an important point emerged which is that the two differing migrant groups (and even people within the migrant groups) had very different experiences of taking part in informal practices in their new context. This can be explained by their specific migration experience (i.e. being a 'lifestyle' or 'economic' migrant), their willingness to learn the norms, and their desire or necessity to be able to 'get things done' like the locals. Nevertheless, examining migrants' differing interactions with social associations help us to gain a deeper understanding of the processes of the social association, and how people might develop a procedural or even moral acceptance of the informal practices.

6.2. Migrants' lived experiences of taking part in informal practices

6.2.1. Gathering information; learning as a wider process

In the previous chapter I showed that learning was a key process in people eventually obeying the norms of how to carry out an informal practice and developing a procedural acceptance of these norms. In this section I examine people's differing attitudes and approaches towards learning, focusing on the migrant research participants, because their experience is often more explicit and can deepen our understanding of this process, and in general the workings of the social association. Many migrant participants addressed that when they moved to either Budapest or Glasgow their intentions for settlement and the length of their stay were unclear, or they specifically stated that they planned to stay only in the short-term. I found that for many, the intention of staying longer (i.e. settling and getting established) led to a willingness to develop an understanding of the local informal practices, and consequently these people often adopted new approaches towards learning the norms of carrying out certain informal practices. Many British migrant participants addressed the contrast between their approaches (i.e. whether their intention was staying long-term or short-term - such as for the duration of their university placement, or attaining a language teacher qualification). British migrant Katie mentioned that while she was spending her six-month university placement at a Budapest university, she was less concerned with understanding the local norms. However, she added that she encountered practices that at the time did she not fully understand, but she could later (based on her longer-term experiences) identify as everyday corruption. For example, she had to pay cash-in-hand for

her rented apartment and never signed a contract (which I explored in the earlier chapters as a pervasive informal practice in the Budapest context). She commented on this practice in the following way: "*There were many strange things, but I wasn't concerned about them, I just accepted it… I thought that even if I don't understand what people do and why, they must have a reason."* (Katie, age 30-40, female, British migrant, Budapest). This means that Katie participated without understanding the norms of carrying out the informal practice, or the member's positions and expectations within the social association. If the participants did not have enough information, knowledge, and understanding of the informal practices in the context, they might take part in an informal practice without realising that they - in my interpretation - consequently obeyed the norms of 'living law' of a social association, that in this case formed around the practice of an informal renting arrangement. British migrant Jennifer, currently a stay-at-home mother, and her British family had a similar informal renting arrangement to Katie, that she at the time perceived as a normal, standard practice in Budapest, offering her the same rights and obligations as having a formal contract. Only after problems with the informal agreement surfaced, when the owner would not fix the broken heating system during the winter, and tried to avoid paying back their three months deposit after Jennifer and her family gave notice to leave the apartment, did they learn from a discussion with a Hungarian friend, that having a formal, written contract would have been beneficial. The formal contract would have enabled Jennifer to hold the owner legally accountable for his obligation to keep the flat functional and to pay back the deposit, while their informal renting agreement did not establish a formal obligation. British migrant Emily, while traveling in Europe met a Hungarian man which prompted her to stay in Budapest. Emily similarly described unintentionally taking part in an informal practice, which according to my interpretation means that she unknowingly interacted with a social association surrounding this informal practice. In this situation she remained unaware of the social association and its norms, despite taking part in the practice that it facilitated. On an occasion when she got sick, her partner's family arranged for her to see a doctor rather than going through the formal health care system. When describing her experience with this informal practice, she commented that "*I didn't really think about it whether it was right, it was just normal, I didn't plan to stay in Hungary very long."* (Emily, age 40-50, female, British migrant, Budapest). Katie's and Emily's examples suggest that migrants with the intention of a temporary stay are less likely to engage with and learn the norms behind the practices. Additionally, they reveal an important aspect of the learning process, which is that people might have a passive engagement to start with, being 'led' by more knowledgeable

acquaintances or members of the social associations (and perhaps as such being particularly vulnerable to potential disadvantages of informality), but over time, they may choose to take a more active role, which I will explore below.

Both Katie and Emily still live in Budapest and have Hungarian families and intend to stay permanently, and in consequence they describe their changed approach towards learning the norms of carrying out informal practices. This suggests that people have a sense of the existence of an underlying set of rules (i.e. norms), but also that they do not necessarily know what these rules are. Even Katie's and Emily's previous narrative accounts implied that they had a sense that these rules are important, which was later confirmed when they talked with their families and other permanent residents. They both mentioned that having decided to stay, they now make a more conscious effort to try to understand why and how 'to get things done' informally, and actively engage with learning the norms: *"I am still trying to figure things out [pause] but now I speak Hungarian and I usually discuss with one or two of my close Hungarian friends if I have any problems, or if I am not sure about things."* (Katie, age 30-40, female, British migrant, Budapest). This quote reveals that over time, as the British migrants' positions became more permanent, they make the effort to learn the formal and informal norms in the local context. Becoming more established in social networks of friends, families, and colleagues (e.g. perhaps having an emotional bond as well) provides them with the resources and assistance to navigate informal practices in the 'right way' and with more confidence when the need for them arises. Katie also implied that to be able to communicate in Hungarian was important in this process of learning these norms. The realisation that there are informal ways of 'getting things done', and the increased ability to participate in informal practices (e.g. by learning the language) can speed up the need for any change in approach. Katie made a conscious effort to learn and 'make friends' with the local people, which somewhat mirrors the Hungarian migrants' (Istvan and Bence) efforts to establish a friendly relationship with long-term local co-workers. To be able to engage with and 'to get things done' like the locals requires a conscious decision and adopting a suitable approach towards learning.

In the previous section I showed that, in contrast to the British migrants in Budapest, many Hungarian migrants in Glasgow made a more conscious effort to engage with the locals, and consequently social associations from the beginning of their settlement. Despite their efforts,

while British migrants in Budapest often met many of the '*strange',* embedded practices regulated by the norms of 'living law' immediately after their arrival, Hungarian migrants in Glasgow mentioned that sometimes the existence of informal practices became clear to them only some time (often years) after their arrival. Based on exploring the differences between informal practices in the two contexts in Chapter 4, it can be said that due to differences in external pressures in the two contexts, some informal practices were more visible in the Budapest context and more hidden and subtle in the Glasgow context. Migrants' decisions to stay on longer, paired with improved language skills, a more secure position, and an increased familiarity with the environment opened up possibilities to learn and adopt new approaches towards gathering information. Hungarian migrant, Istvan, working in the same Glasgow factory for more than ten years, described that his approach always was to communicate and socialise with the Scottish employees. Nonetheless, when he first started to work, he lacked language skills and was not familiar with the system. More recently, with many years work experience and much improved English language skills, Istvan volunteered to become an employee representative. In this capacity, he noticed that Scottish people received a higher salary than the foreign (mostly CEE) employees doing the same work. Scottish employees also got paid more for overtime and received more benefits. Now that he was more aware of the inequalities within the workplace and the social associations of co-workers within the workplace, combined with his more powerful position as an employee representative, he chose to address the issue. He explained that he also understood that this issue should be addressed and resolved in an informal way: *"Now I know who to communicate with - and how - and they will listen to me, it is more effective than going to the HR department."* (Istvan, age 30-40, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). He added that he learnt which manager would be interested and approachable for making changes, and also when was the right time to talk to them rather than going to the HR department who would refer him to the boss. I interpret this as Istvan having learnt the ways in which informal and formal processes intertwine, and how to rectify the apparently corrupt practices in the unjustified wage differences between Scottish and CEE workers by using informal channels. While Istvan had a general willingness towards learning, the process of gathering and accumulating information happened over time. Establishing his position as an employee representative, and accessing new information, led Istvan to realise the problem of discrimination at his workplace. His familiarity with the norms of the social association enabled him to understand that informal problem solving was the way to deal with the situation.

It emerged from the data that once migrants adopt an open approach towards learning the norms, the methods of gathering information become crucial. Gathering information can be conceptualised as part of the learning process, but it is a more general mechanism than learning the specific norms of a social association, it helps participants to contextualise the specific norms of 'living law'. Another aspect that emerged from the data was that for gathering information migrants used 'reference points' or 'reference people'. The method of gathering information and using reference points could be determined by which informal practices they wanted to take part in, and through this which social association participants sought to access, or which social associations they already had access to, or were situated in. Therefore, the method of gathering information, and the reference person, could vary from people in the formal workplace (e.g. a colleague) to informal acquaintances (e.g. friends) and family. I described in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.2.2) that many participants had second-hand knowledge of informal practices, therefore this also means that people might be gathering information about a social association (e.g. workplace) from someone (e.g. family member) who is not actually part of that social association. The method of gathering information through a reference point or person is connected firstly to participants' possibilities of interacting with (and eventually perhaps accessing) different social associations, and secondly, to the type of information that they have been looking for. Therefore, relating this to the previous section on the different types of migrants and their interactions with new social associations, the modes and possibilities of gathering information were influenced by the different aspects of 'lifestyle' or 'economic' migration, due to their differences in relative power-relations compared to the long-term locals. This implies that there might also be a difference between the two migrant groups in terms of gathering information.

Some aspects of these differences might lie in the approaches and the motivations of the migrants. Many 'economic' migrants, who came to Glasgow seeking employment, tried to be practical and facilitate interactions at their formal workplace. My data showed that Hungarian migrants in Glasgow were keen to gather information related to their work, and possible (formal or informal) promotions at their workplace. For example, Bence was keen to gather information about the informal promotion mechanism at his workplace, a transportation company. He referred to the mechanism of internal informal training and job

allocation as "*built in corruption"*. He explained that although he started to work in the lowest paid position at the company, this position provided good opportunities to *"ask questions and network"*. He also added that he perceived that the other employees liked him and that he had potential, because he asked intelligent questions. Soon he applied internally for higher paid positions: "*I knew I would get the first job, because someone recommended me. I didn't get the second one because I heard that they favoured someone's relative… but you know what? Sometimes it is someone else, sometimes it is you."* (Bence, age 20-30, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). Like Bence, other Hungarian migrants working in different professions (such as in academia or a private company environment) realised and embraced the importance of networking and developing informal relationships. Hungarian migrant Nora emphasised the need for "*consciously building relationships with clients, and also other people in the department if I need a recommendation.*" (Nora, age 20-30, Hungarian migrant, female, Glasgow). In this quote Nora referred to realising the importance of establishing and cultivating personal networks at her workplace. Additionally, she implied that cultivating informal relationships could lead to the possibility of participating in informal practices in the future. Actively trying to find informal and formal ways for development and progression is perhaps amplified by the traits of economic migration, when individuals might take risks and be encouraged to be active and stretch their possibilities to the limits in order to achieve the desired normal life (Lopez Rodriguez, 2010:431).

It was also common that apart from work related information, Hungarian migrants tried to find out about other aspects of living in Glasgow. Migrants' deliberate process of learning sheds light explicitly on processes and practices which are more implicit in locals' experiences and accounts. Istvan said that as soon as he started to work in a Glasgow factory, he "*tried to chat with as many people as possible to collect information"*. For instance, he found out from the Polish employees about how to apply for a council flat, although finally he secured an informal arrangement to rent accommodation with one of his Scottish colleagues:

> *"This was after a while… I was living at the workers accommodation for a month, but this guy saw that I was different and made me an offer… I mean it was good for him too, I am sure he didn't declare the rent... if somebody asked whether I lived there, I had to say that I was just visiting."* (Istvan, age 30-40, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow)

Istvan explained that his colleague was himself a tenant and not allowed to sublet, therefore the renting agreement had to be kept secret. However, they both perceived that the colleague was helping Istvan out, and that the arrangement was informally binding by the mutual advantage of the arrangement and trust between them. Istvan emphasised that due to his approach of active engagement, he could differentiate himself from other less assertive migrants, and was able to develop a relationship with his Scottish colleague. The quote also suggests that acceptance by the locals - and in this instance by colleagues - is required by migrants to gather the necessary information, and consequently being able to take part in informal practices.

In contrast to Istvan, other migrants found that they struggled to be accepted by 'locals' and therefore had difficulties learning from them about informal practices and norms. For example, British migrant Andrew, who has a school-age child, said that he tried to engage with other parents at the school meetings, which in my interpretation meant finding out more about the norms of the social association of parents attached to the formal school environment. However, he found it difficult, because he perceived Hungarian parents as being shy talking to him in English. He explained that it was a Hungarian - English dual language school, and therefore he assumed that most parents would speak English, however this was not the case. As a result, he mostly interacted with the other foreign parents, and he felt somewhat excluded. Moreover, some British migrants expressed that on some occasions they perceived that the locals were being secretive. Confirming this notion British migrant mother, Emily, tried figuring out what kind of presents Hungarian parents gave to the teacher for Christmas, apart from the joint contribution from the whole class. To her surprise students were queuing up with presents at the teachers' desk after the school Christmas production. She received contradictory answers such as "*it is nothing valuable, but it is important, and the teacher expects it".* She got the impression that the parents "*didn't want to tell me exactly, they avoided the subject and were secretive."* (Emily, age 40-50, female, British migrant, Budapest). Therefore, it was more common that British migrant parents would gather information from other foreign parents, or Hungarian parents who had a foreign spouse and were more comfortable having a discussion in English, and perhaps had more understanding of the migrants' situations.

British migrants usually primarily relied on their Hungarian spouse and family if they wanted to learn about these types of social associations. This perhaps is a more specific difference between the two 'types' of migrants as 'lifestyle' migrants are more likely to have a 'local' spouse. They realised that family ties are important - and often primary - in finding a place to live, arranging health care, and gaining access to education informally. This mirrors, and puts into sharper relief, how locals would face the problem of carrying out informal practices which they could not negotiate themselves if they too did not have the 'right relationships' or connections, as I presented in Chapter 4 when Katalin's sister tried (initially unsuccessfully) to negotiate a hospital bed. In Katalin's case the solution was asking for help from a childhood friend, who utilised her family connections. In return for making such everyday arrangements, as Rose found out, they were often required to satisfy family favours connected to the English language, for example she was often asked to check English language homework and prepare people for English exams: *"it is annoying, but I do it, because it is family and you have to return all the favours - otherwise they will be angry with me and my husband. [It is] very tiring really, but 'family ties' are very important in Hungary."* (Rose, age 40-50, female, British migrant, Budapest).

In contrast to Hungarian migrants, regarding other areas of living such as work arrangements, British 'lifestyle' migrants could afford perhaps a more relaxed approach as they had more economic power, at least at the beginning of their stay. On the one hand, this granted them greater independence and made them less reliant on local knowledge and practices in 'getting things done'. On the other hand, it was common that British migrants had their own businesses or were self-employed. This was coupled with the difficult legal environment and general difficulties in understanding paperwork and setting up a business in Hungarian. Therefore, British migrants often established their businesses together with their Hungarian spouses, who helped with many aspects of the business. As Chris (who was a financial adviser for a British company before moving to Hungary) noted: "*I can see why people would struggle with it. My wife helped with the translation, and I also have a good lawyer who helped me to understand how the system works - as well as the 'kiskapu' [loopholes]".* (Chris, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). British business owner migrants significantly relied on Hungarian locals in understanding formal and informal norms when gathering information, partly due to the procedural and language difficulties, and partly because of the lack of general understanding of certain aspects of the local context, such as the business environment.

My data revealed that the learning process might have a broader function for migrants than just learning the specific norms of 'living law' of a certain social association. Migrants might also gain an understanding of the general norms and expectations in the local context. For example, when British migrant Jennifer tried to make schooling arrangements for her children, she gathered information from a mother who she met through their children playing together at the local playground. Jennifer learnt from this friendly mother that it is important to find a good placement and a good 'tanito' [teacher]. She also gathered that the best way to secure a placement is to ask someone for an informal recommendation to the preferred teacher. However, she explained that when she asked the friendly mother to make informal introductions to her children's teacher, Jennifer was faced with rejection: *"I got the impression that this is a special type of favour, reserved only for certain occasions and for certain people. So, she could do it for me, but she preferred not to, because granting this favour would serve her better at another time."* (Jennifer, age 40-50, female, British migrant, Budapest). From the rejection Jennifer learnt that there are different types of favours, and that some types could not be facilitated based on the relationship that Jennifer had with the friendly mother, because they were only acquaintances. Such a favour requires a trust-based, reciprocal, longer term relationship that she did not have with this Hungarian mother. With this realisation she did not only learn the norms of 'living law' of the social association that would facilitate the informal school placement, but she also learnt about the wider social context and the existence of 'blat'-like relationships that develop over time. She understood that asking for an informal recommendation was the right method for securing an informal school placement, but in this instance, she did not have the right relationship with the friendly mother, therefore she could not initiate the informal practice. This learning happened through active attempts of trial and error. A different situation occurs when migrant participants have some understanding of general norms, however it is still questionable whether they would be able to match the situation with the practice when it is needed in a more 'on-the-spot' transaction (Jancsics, 2013:330).

In connection with this, I found that many British migrants were aware of the possibility that they might have to pay informally for formal medical treatment, or to facilitate swifter public administration by paying a bribe instead of a fine to the police or ticket inspectors on public transport. However, even if they were aware of the possibility, British migrants expressed

difficulties with recognising and carrying out these informal transactions even if they spoke Hungarian. This means additional and amplified challenges for the migrants when initiating, negotiating, or even just recognising which signs or phrases indicate the need for informal practice (i.e. the 'mating dance' or dual-meaning questions that I addressed in Chapter 5 (in section 5.2.2.), apart from the obvious difficulties with language. David described a situation dealing with authorities in an administrative matter, when he had a hunch that this was a situation when informal payment for a swifter administration process would be required: "*I guessed that they were suggesting that I give them 'kenőpénz' [bribe][32], but I didn't know how to initiate it.*" (David, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). Similarly, Andrew expected that the doctor would ask him for an informal payment after a hospital treatment. He had a general understanding of the norms, because his Hungarian wife had told him that there was a possibility that it would happen: *"I was waiting for an indication that it was the time to give the money, but either it didn't happen, or I didn't recognise the signals."* (Andrew, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). This means that even if they knew that an informal transaction was likely to be required in a situation, participants would not necessarily recognise it on the spot. This usually did not cause them immediate disadvantage, but participants reported feeling uneasy wondering if they might experience negative consequences. Other Hungarian-speaking British migrants had similar experiences, for example Katie indicated that she would not be able to pick up the need for informal payment if the indications were too subtle. This shows that apart from the language skills, negotiating and performing an informal practice seems to require a high level of communication competence.

In contrast to British migrants' difficulties in initiating informal practices, I found that Hungarian migrants would try to employ some informal strategies borrowed or brought with them from their home country. Their attempts of initiating informal solutions were usually not seen as necessary by the long-term locals, or not even recognised at all. When Hungarian migrants were initiating these practices, they did not perceive any indications or invitation to take part in informal practices from the locals, and they usually tried informality in situations where such practices are embedded in the Hungarian context. This means that Hungarian migrants brought their informal norms and strategies with them from Hungary, but most of the time they were unable to utilise them. Jolan explained that she gave birth to

[32] Directly translated to money given to make things smoother, like oiling a machine.

her child in Scotland, which she described as an 'alien' experience, because she did not receive as much personal attention as she would have in Hungary. However, as a positive aspect, she noted that they did not need to pay 'thank-you-money' [hálapénz][33]:

> "*It was great, they didn't even understand the question when we asked what do we owe*? [in reaction to my confused expression] *Yes, we asked, because we are conditioned to do that… In the end we gave them some flowers and chocolates. They said we shouldn't have, but they didn't refuse it."* (Jolan, age 30-40, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow).

Jolan and her husband asked about the amount of informal payment somewhat directly, as would be the norm in the same situation in the Hungarian context. In the Glasgow hospital the health workers did not understand the question. Jolan explained that even if there was no indication in the Glasgow hospital that payment was required, she and her husband had been socialised in the Hungarian context, and therefore still anticipated the need for informal payment as the norm. A similar situation arose when another Hungarian migrant, Erika, tried to find a desirable school placement for her child in Glasgow. She explained that when they bought their house, she learnt from the estate agent about catchment areas. Since her house did not belong to the catchment area of the 'good school', she explained that she went to see the headmaster with the intention of trying to negotiate - or at least find out the possibilities of an informal placement - as she would have done in Budapest. "*I was prepared to negotiate and find out if I could influence the process somehow, but they were correct and proper, explained the formal points system, and they said that I would just have to wait and see the outcome."* (Erika, age 40-50, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). In these cases, Hungarian migrants found themself in a situation in the Glasgow context where in their home context they would normally (i.e. be required to) use informal ways to co-operate, for instance with the medical staff or the headmaster. They tried to initiate the informal practice by asking direct and probing questions, and trying to access the social association in a way that they thought to be the norm because these informal practices are deeply embedded in the social context in which the participants were socialised. Because these Hungarian participants did not know the norms in the local context, they used the learnt norms from their home country as a default. When they did not receive an answer, or even recognition of the question, they learnt that in the new social context these practices do not exist, or perhaps are negotiated differently. This type of gathering information has a 'trial and error'

[33] Directly translated as money given for showing gratitude.

element - by learning what is acceptable/not acceptable, or helpful/not helpful, as a method of 'getting things done' in the new context.

6.2.2. Migrants' lived experiences; developing acceptance of informal practices

In the previous section I outlined that gathering information and learning the norms of carrying out informal practices can lead to fuller participation in informal practices and through that, participation and membership in certain social associations. Apart from learning, other processes that contribute to people developing procedural acceptance of informal practices include rationalising taking part in them, and routinising the norms of the informal practices. As I explored in the previous chapter (in section 5.2.) on the workings of the social association, routinising and learning are mutually reinforcing and reciprocal processes. Socialisation through these processes of learning, routinisation, and rationalisation might induce changes in migrants' participation in, and perceptions of informal practices. Learning and routinising are reflexive processes, which means that rather than blindly accepting the ways that the social association operates, some aspects of the norms of 'living law' might be contested by the members, manifesting in tension within the social association. In this section I consider tension between the members over the degree and extent of enforcement with the social association, because this contributes to a more nuanced understanding of whether migrants' perceptions and participation in informal practices show change or continuity. This is significant, because migrant's participation and perceptions of informal practices are connected to whether they just find a practice procedurally acceptable, or can also develop a moral acceptance by internalising the norms (i.e. thinking them as being morally right). Consequently, I argue that participating in an informal practice (or recognising it as procedurally acceptable) does not necessarily mean a change in participants' perceptions of it (i.e. recognising it as morally acceptable). To support these arguments, in this section, I explore migrants' lived experiences with external pressures that exist in the wider social context, and internal pressures stemming from the power-relations and hierarchies within the social association. Analysis of these help us to gain more nuanced understandings of the difference between procedural and moral acceptability of the informal practices. I will assess whether my research participants developed a moral acceptance based on their explicit or implicit references of whether they

perceived participating in the informal practice according to its norms as right. I will demonstrate this through empirical examples in the coming discussion.

People referring to common rationalisations of taking part in informal practices is a mechanism that can contribute to changes in participants' participation in and perceptions of informal practices. Although participants might understand, and can invoke, the common, socially constructed rationalisation that is part of the rules of conduct of the social association surrounding the informal practice, they do not necessarily agree with it or internalise it. In other words, there can be a distinction made between the rationalisation that research participants referred to as a socially shared rationalisation in the local context, and the moral reasoning that is internalised by the participants. To support this claim, I draw an example from Chapter 4, where I examined informal practices and their rationalisations. British migrant language teachers in Budapest often explained their (and long-term locals') participation in cash-in-hand teaching using formal workplaces contacts at the language school or university by referring to the justification of 'denial of responsibility'[34] (Sykes and Matza, 1957:667). Specifically, they provide a justification for their participation constructed around the notion that 'everybody does it' (Ashforth and Anand, 2003:18), and refer to the external pressure that in the Budapest context, teacher's salaries are low - and the taxes are high. This rationalisation combines the remoteness of the perceived harm and the financial pressure, as well as pressure from peers (which I conceptualise as internal pressure within the social association). It is observable that in this case the British migrants' rationalisation is constructed from varying reference points, such as referring to the Hungarian teachers (i.e. peer pressure) and to the general context (i.e. taxation and salaries). This signals that British migrants perceive these informal practices as procedurally acceptable in the local context, as they themselves also participate in these practices. However, I argue that even if British migrants were able to invoke a common rationalisation (i.e. that it is part of the rules of conduct of the social association of language teachers), they did not necessarily internalise the reasoning or find the practice morally acceptable. This implies that they were able to invoke the matching rationalisation (that it is required in the local context), but their perception of the practice in terms of being right and morally acceptable may not necessarily have changed. Such discrepancies between moral and procedural acceptability do not only apply to migrants. For example, the same conclusion

[34] The person acts due to forces outside the individual and beyond his control (Sykes as Matza, 1957:667).

could be drawn based on some of the discussions in Chapter 4, where long-term local participants in Budapest talked about informal payments in health care settings as rationalised with reference to external pressure in the local contexts, but they nonetheless did not regard these payments as morally acceptable. Migrants' experiences in some ways might highlight the issues, processes, and tensions which are more broadly relevant, therefore the phenomenon of discrepancies between moral and procedural acceptability is likely to be more commonplace, and it is more likely to result in tension between the members of the social association, when some members are coming from another, different context.

However, it also emerged from the data that there were instances when the British migrants themselves directly met with external pressures. This first-hand experience often led them to think that taking part in the informal practices was not only necessary (procedurally acceptable), but also the right thing to do under the circumstances, and therefore they were able to internalise the socially shared rationalisation. Amongst the external pressures in the Budapest context that British migrants often referred to, were the challenges around understanding the formal rules due to the lack of clarity and transparency. The Hungarian business environment was generally perceived as difficult by the British migrants, which is in line with Egedy and Kovacs's (2011:186) finding that British migrants reported the unfavourable conditions of the extremely heavy tax burden, especially in comparison with Hungarian salaries. I have addressed in the Chapter 4 (in section 4.1.1.) how the external pressures stemming from the perceived political corruption, and the practice of invoking related rationalisations, such as 'condemnation of the condemners'[35] (Sykes and Matza, 1957:668), were widespread among Hungarian participants. Some British migrant participants also referred to political corruption when describing personal experiences of external pressures that they claimed had contributed to their participation in informal practices in the Budapest context. In terms of internalisation of the justification of 'condemners of the condemners' (Sykes and Matza, 1957:668), there was a difference between when migrant participants reflected on the political corruption in general and provided a consultant type of account identifying this type of corruption as an external factor, or encountered it personally and provided a narrative explanation. When they had had their

[35] Shifts the focus on the wrongfulness of motives and behaviour of those assigned the task of enforcing or expressing norms of the wider social context (i.e. police, politicians) (Sykes and Matza, 1957:668).

own experience with external pressures, and therefore could provide a narrative account, it was also more likely that they internalised the norms of the informal practice.

The prime example from my dataset of this personal experience with political corruption is the implementation of a section of the law on adult education (2013:LXXVII)[36] that affected many British participants who worked with, or owned their own language schools. The new law, which has a wider target of improving adult education, also contained a section which was intended to improve the general language skills of the population. This section made a distinction in terms of available funding and support between state accredited and non-accredited language schools. It also prescribed the need for all language teachers to attain a pedagogy degree valid in Hungary. Many of the British migrant participants explained that in consequence this excluded many British migrant native teachers who did not have any qualifications, or had an international qualification which was not valid for teaching purposes according to the legislation. At the language school level, as well as at the level of private teaching, this legislation prompted participation in informal practices as participants felt external pressure to take part in them. British migrant language school manager Andrew argued that in practice, the law meant that native speakers without the right qualification could still teach but fell under a higher tax rate (since this form of teaching is not supported by the law), making their employment more expensive for the language schools. This meant a high financial burden for the non-state accredited (non-funded) language schools, which employed native-language teachers with international qualifications. Consequently, this affected many of my research participants. Language school manager, Andrew, described his feelings towards the legislation in the following way: "*I thought okay, that's it, this is just ridiculous. It is not possible to live in Hungary and have an honest business."* (Andrew, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). British migrant language school owner, Chris, also expressed similar feelings and explained that *"the regulation was disastrous, because 90% of the teachers [in his language school] were excluded."* (Chris, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). Moreover, British migrant language school owners regarded this legislation as a direct attack on their businesses: *"it was a political decision against non-government friendly language schools, because this meant that the non-accredited schools were excluded from funding opportunities."* (Andrew, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). This kind of narrative description of political corruption - with this legislation

[36] Law on Adult Education ([Felnőttképzésről] (2013:LXXVII))

having the underlying goal of allocating EU or state funding to certain language schools - and its connection to informal practices shows a sharp contrast to the consultant type accounts that British migrants often provided to describe how Hungarian locals think about everyday corruption practices. Chris explained that he, like many others, was faced with the choice of suspending English-speaking migrant teachers' formal employment and asking them to work cash-in-hand, or no longer be able to finance the language school. Eventually, however, he managed to find a loophole in the legislation with the help of a lawyer. He added that he had seen many other smaller language schools struggling: *"one of my friends had to close her school because the authorities found out that she did not comply with the law, it was very sad*." (Chris, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). This personal experience changed British migrants' perceptions towards informal practices, and they arguably internalised the socially constructed rationalisation referring to political corruption.

British migrants in Budapest were subject to different pressures than those experienced by the Hungarian migrant participants in Glasgow arguably because of the type of migration and the social context, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. However one commonality that can be drawn out is the lived experience both Hungarian and British migrants shared, which was a feeling of helplessness due to these external pressures. Work related pressures were common for Hungarian migrants in Glasgow. For example, tradesman Miklos described the changes that he made in terms of his participation in informal practices (i.e. working cash-in-hand without declaring his income). He explained that his participation was in connection with external pressure of financial need, which he felt when he moved to Scotland, and tried to establish himself as a tradesman as well as trying to provide a suitable environment for his family (who would follow him once he was settled).

> *"When you don't have money and just live from one day to the next, and have a family to support, that (cash-in-hand, undeclared work) is just a thing you have to do. Until I could buy all my own equipment and a car for work, I cheated more and was less strict with invoices."* (Miklos, age 40-50, Hungarian migrant, male, Glasgow).

However, he also noted that as he became more established (in terms of having all the tools and equipment required), had a stable clientele, and was able to support his family, he conducted less work informally. He also added that he already had extensive experience in working cash-in-hand, undeclared in the Hungarian context. He noted that he always

perceived undeclared work as negative, but necessary. Miklos was glad that there was less need for informality now that he could make a living, however, he still maintained that taking part in informal practices in the Scottish context was justified by the external pressures at the beginning of his settlement, which manifested as a 'survival strategy'. His patterns of participation changed as he perceived less need for undeclared work, and he became more established. The migration aspects amplify Miklos' reflection on more immediate pressures, but a very similar narrative emerged from long-term local tradesmen in both contexts. I explored in the previous chapters that tradesmen often regarded participating in informal practices as more morally acceptable until they established a *"steady workflow"* or were able to "*buy their own van"*. Miklos referred to working cash-in-hand as something that he had to do, implying that this was not a choice, just normal behaviour. I interpret this that his perception did not change since he still perceived informality as necessary when there are certain external pressures present. There is a continuity in his perception of informal practices that are in response to external pressures prompting survival. This means that he maintains in the new social context that when struggling and facing desperate circumstances, taking part in informal practices is appropriate and morally acceptable. This suggests that both taking part in the informal practice and the rationalisation, can show continuity, when the migrant participants can bring their learning and experience with them to the new context fairly unproblematically.

In contrast, when the new context did not support informal practices in the same way, and the norms of these local social associations differed, migrants found utilising informal practices brought from the home context somewhat problematic. Hungarian migrant Klara, who was unemployed at the time of the interview, described how when both she and her Scottish husband were unemployed, she tried to informally influence the recruitment procedure at the publicly funded local council in the Greater Glasgow area. She described that both she and her husband applied for a job at the local council where her husband's sister worked. Klara persuaded her husband to ask his sister to influence the application procedure in a positive direction by vouching [*HUN: szól pár jó szót*][37] for her, and her husband's application:

> *"I haven't tried anything like that since I moved here, I wasn't even sure if it would work, but it was a desperate situation. That's what family is for, at least*

[37] Directly translated as putting down some good words.

> *in Hungary. She [the sister-in-law] didn't say no, but never got back to us."* (Klara, age 30-40, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow).

The quote suggests that the decision to ask for informal influence was not easy for Klara, it was the pressure of both her and her partner being unemployed that made her persuade her husband to initiate the informal request. Klara was aware that different norms may apply in Scotland, but still her attitude and expectations of family members (that they should help in desperate times, even if it requires utilising informal channels) were unchanged by moving into the new social context of Glasgow. I showed this type of informal practice in Chapter 4, in a fairly similar situation, when Hungarian long-term participant Zsolt struggled to secure employment after the democratic transition when he was fired, and he could only secure employment by utilising his social connections. Klara's example also shows that external pressure influenced at least the initiation of informal practices, even in the Glasgow context. When external pressure was encountered by Klara, she felt that initiating an informal practice was justified. The connection between external pressures due to finding employment and people's participation in informal practices is not migration specific, but the willingness to utilise informal ways to gain access may have been amplified in Klara's case by moving from one social context to the other and the uncertainties that this move induced. Although her need to find employment is the same as her husband's need, she brings with her the belief that informal means might help, which her husband's family does not appear to be aware of or share. In the first example, Miklos brought with him, and still employed, informal practices that were present in Hungary until he perceived less external pressure to conduct the informal transactions. In the second case, Klara, when feeling the external pressure, somehow reverted back to the practices that she perceived as being morally acceptable in the Hungarian context. The Scottish context was a fertile environment for carrying out cash-in-hand, undeclared work, and Miklos could make the necessary transition between working in Hungary and Scotland. However, pulling favours through family connections in a publicly funded environment for job seeking was less accepted, and Klara's sister-in-law did not act on the request. Therefore, the two participants had different levels of success in carrying out the informal practices that they perceived as appropriate when facing external pressures.

Alongside the external pressures, I also found that there were internal pressures within the social associations which were amplified by migration. In the previous chapter I addressed

the importance of power-relations and hierarchies within the social associations. I found that hierarchies among the members of the social associations can contribute to making members feel forced to participate in certain informal practices, which I identified as internal pressure. I argue that internal (similarly to external) pressures also contribute to whether participants obey the norms of the 'living law' of the social association (procedural acceptability), but this does not mean that participants regard the practice as right (morally acceptable). Taking this argument further, changes in participation do not mean that the participants' perceptions of the informal practice have necessarily changed. An illustrative example is when British migrants were faced with pressure within the social association that facilitated informal health care arrangements. Their Hungarian family members pressured them to comply with the practice of providing informal payments for health care services that they were entitled to, free of charge. I established in previous chapters that this informal practice is pervasive in the Hungarian context. The case study in the previous chapter (in section 5.1) showed that while Katalin's family paid to access health care services, they did not consider it as morally acceptable, and their compliance was not entirely voluntary due to the power-relations and hierarchies existing in the social association between patients and doctors. However, this non-voluntary compliance is more likely to manifest in tension between the long-term locals and the migrants, who did not have a general idea of these norms, and their socialisation to the local context was more rapid.

The next examples demonstrate how various family members (mother-in-law, father-in-law, and the participant's wife) enforced the informal practice within the social association, through applying pressure on British migrant participants, who did not wish to take part in these practices. British migrant participants obeyed the norms of the social association to varying extents, because, as many of these participants pointed out, due to the power-relations induced by their migration status as well as their status in their family, they had more or less room to manoeuvre when required to take part in certain informal practices. However, regardless of the extent of compliance, participating in the practice rarely meant moral acceptance. Both examples are connected to a specific type of 'thank-you-money' [HUN: hálapénz][38], which is paid to gynaecologists after a patient gives birth. The money is paid for 'extra care' to ensure that a specific doctor, selected by the family, instead of the doctor who is on shift at the department, delivers the baby. This practice is informal, as it

[38] Directly translated as money given for showing gratitude.

takes place in a public health care setting, where this service should be free for the mother, and patients should not expect to be able to pay for better treatment. The relationship between the mother and the doctor is based on trust, and therefore only an informal agreement exists between them to provide this service and in exchange make the payment. Some doctors have informal price lists, and some information on prices and the expected level of care might be circulated amongst expectant mothers through both informal networks, and in some more formally constituted groups for women, like ante-natal classes and among groups of friends. British migrant Emily explained that before she gave birth, her Hungarian partner's family, especially her partner's mother, applied uncomfortable pressure on her to choose a doctor "*who she can trust"* [HUN: választott orvos][39]. Emily expressed her discomfort with the situation as *"I just felt sick about the whole thing [pause] how should I choose someone?".* She explained that she was fed up with the pressure, and thinking about the negative consequences of not choosing a doctor, which would arguably result in worse treatment. She perceived the informal arrangements as unnecessary, and she did not choose a doctor. However, she noted that *"I still paid after the procedure. [pause] I looked up on the internet how much I should pay."* (Emily, age 40-50, female, British migrant, Budapest). The quote reveals that complying with the norms of 'living law' of the social association surrounding informal payments at childbirth was challenged by Emily, as she did not make informal arrangements in advance. However, by paying the doctor after giving birth, she still participated in the informal transaction and partly obeyed the norms of the social association. Responding to my enquiry as to what prompted her to pay after giving birth when she could no longer influence the care that the doctor would provide, Emily explained that she paid as she knew that it was expected because of the doctors' low salaries. Her negative feelings towards arranging an agreement with the doctor were not so much connected with the payment, but the fact that the services should not depend on the payment. Therefore, she said that she did not mind providing a 'thank you' payment, because she did not feel directly coerced and she knew that the doctors' salaries are low, and that a donation was expected. The difference between her not wanting to have an agreement in advance and paying after giving birth might lie in the coerced enforcement that led to tension between her and the other family members. Emily experienced more coercion before the birth, and she (successfully) resisted that, but afterwards (once the coercion stopped) she decided by herself to pay. Paying before the service meant accessing the care informally, while paying after the

[39] Directly translated as chosen doctor.

service meant giving a more voluntary donation, although she still perceived it as fulfilling an expectation.

However, I explained in Chapter 4 (in section 4.2.1.2.) the ambiguity of these informal payments, that even if she paid after the service, she perceived this as paying 'thank-you-money' - a socially expected donation to compensate for low-salaries, rather than showing gratitude in the way that was present in the Scottish context, where many long-term residents and migrants reported giving chocolates or flowers to midwives and nurses. By saying that she knew that the informal payment was expected, because of the low salaries, she referred to a rationalisation that the doctors and patients would use in a similar situation, but as I explained earlier, similarly to the British language teachers, she did not internalise the norm and her perception of the practice never changed, which she still did not regard as right or morally acceptable. Similarly, British migrant living in Budapest William described that when his Hungarian wife gave birth, she had a 'választott orvos' [chosen doctor][40]. In contrast to Emily, William, despite not understanding or agreeing with the need for the payment, complied with his wife's wishes, and he conducted the actual informal transaction (i.e. paid the doctor). He also noted that he did not understand the reason for paying a substantial amount of money (that he established as being one month of his academic salary) when he did not notice the 'extra care' that they supposedly paid for. His discomfort with the situation increased such that he described the following:

> *"My mother-in-law asked whether I paid the nurses and the person who took my wife to the operating room and back. That was the final straw. I did not care anymore. I thought it was more than enough paying the doctor. I think my father-in-law paid all these people as well."* (William, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest).

William also added that he knew that the health care workers' salaries were low, and that therefore he was supposed to pay thank-you-money, but that he as an academic also had very low salary, and he did not expect students to pay contributions to him for doing his job. This quote suggests that William was pushed to his limits. William complied to some extent with the informal practice that he was pressured into, but there was a turning point when he said that he felt that the health care workers (as the members of the social associations) were taking advantage of the dysfunctionality of the healthcare system and the vulnerability of the patients' position. He refused to comply even if his family applied pressure on him. For

[40] William used the Hungarian expression.

William, taking part in the informal transaction did not change his perception of the informal practice. Both William and Emily took part in the informal practice and contributed to the reproduction and routinisation of the practice and its norms that constitute the social association, without regarding the practice as right – i.e. there was procedural acceptability but not moral acceptability of the norms. William did not even accept the rationalisation of external pressure of low salary in the case of the nurses and the person who took his wife to the operating room, since he did not feel that the justification for supplementing their salaries was as strong as in the doctors' case. These findings are also significant because they lead to the question of how people understand everyday corruption depending on the external and internal pressures, and perceived harmfulness of the practice, developing their understanding through the processes of learning, routinising, and rationalisation that can lead to procedural (and sometimes moral) acceptability of the practices. This will be explored more fully in the final empirical chapter to follow.

6.3. Conclusion

In the first part of this chapter, I examined the differences between the two distinct groups of migrants, in terms of possibilities, language skills, and power-relations, as well as intentions to move and settle, and I explored their interactions with local social associations. These differences highlighted the ways in which migrant research participants took part in informal practices, and through that could become members of social associations. I explored how the type of migration, and the attitude that migrants displayed had a great effect on becoming members of the social associations, and eventually being able to 'get things done' informally like the locals. These attitudes were mostly connected to the willingness to learn and interact with the long-term residents, which was sometimes the research participants' conscious strategy - and sometimes a necessity. Adopting a willingness to learn could lead to access to social associations for many migrants. I found that during the process of gathering information and learning, research participants did not only learn the norms of the social association, but also gained knowledge about the wider local context. Both success and failure in carrying out an informal transaction could result in research participants gaining knowledge of the norms and members' positions within the social associations. Participants reported that on occasions they got certain aspects of the norms wrong, or, in the case of the Hungarian migrants in Glasgow, some participants tried

to initiate an informal practice that was not the norm, and they could not carry it out. However, on other occasions, when informal practices were similar in the two contexts, participants had less difficulty in carrying out a transaction.

In the second part of this chapter, I focused on the migrants' perspectives, because they have a quality of amplifying mechanisms and processes, especially the ways of learning the norms of informal practices and rationalising taking part in them. In this way I have argued that the investigation through the migrants' lived experiences can provide more general conclusions about the mechanisms of people developing a procedural (and sometimes even a moral) acceptance of the informal practices and their norms. The data analysis showed that becoming and being a member of a social association is a dynamic and often not straightforward process or state. The norms of the social association might not be equally shared, and the norms can also be complied with to differing degrees, which can manifest in less contested and more voluntary compliance in some cases, as well as creating tension between the members of the social associations. During this chapter I addressed the discrepancies between procedural and moral acceptability, which meant that even if the research participants obeyed the norms of 'living law' of the social association to a varying extent, and took part in an informal transaction, they still might not develop a moral acceptance of the informal practices. Analysing the data in this chapter feeds into a more general analysis of how people's acceptance of everyday corruption is constructed around harms and pressures, which I will address in detail in the coming chapter when I examine these socially constructed definitions of corruption, or how people assess and understand everyday corruption.

Chapter 7: People's socially constructed understandings of corruption

7.1. Introduction

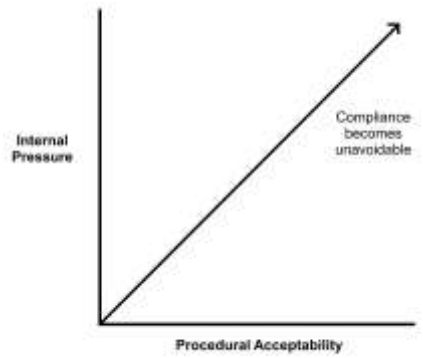
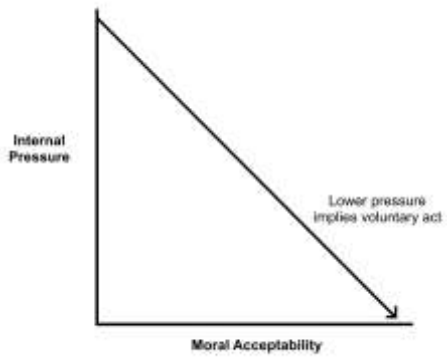
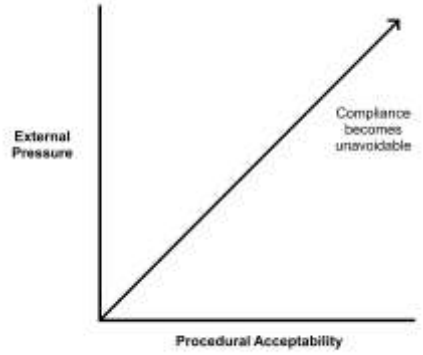
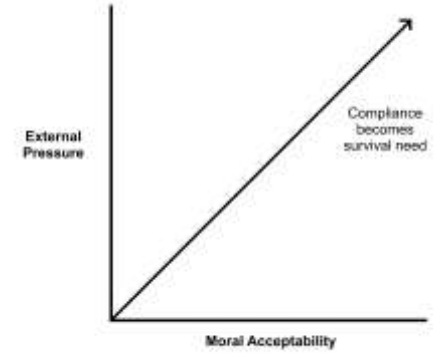
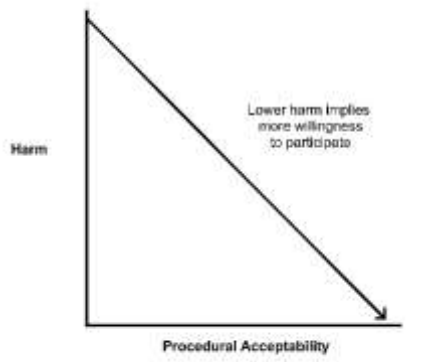
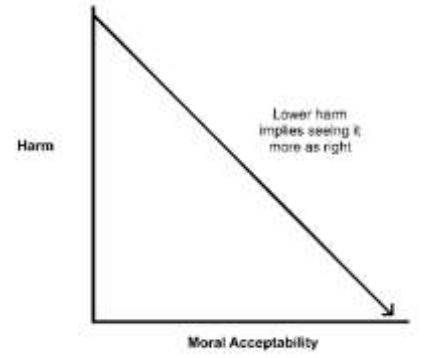
The aim of this chapter is to outline people's socially constructed understandings of corruption through examining research participants' ambivalent explanations of their perceptions of 'everyday corruption' practices, when they attempted to define corruption from differing viewpoints. By providing a 'matrix of acceptability' (Figure7-3.), in this chapter I bring together the factors of the external pressures, people's perceptions of harm, and internal pressures within the social associations, which I have explored in the previous chapters. Throughout this chapter I will show that I was able to find a common 'matrix' of issues which apply across different contexts, and for different participants, however these factors might be interpreted differently. This allows me to develop a way of understanding everyday corruption which is contextually dynamic, but without resorting to crude explanations of cultural differences. The matrix considers aspects of people's perceptions and experiences of corruption that are more generalisable, therefore it allows us to gain a more nuanced insight into people's understandings of corruption beyond context-specific explanations. The 'matrix of acceptability' should be understood in relation to the empirically emerging processes of the social association, such as rationalisation, learning, and routinising the informal practices, which helped people who are co-operating in carrying out certain informal practices to develop a procedural, and sometimes an internalised, moral acceptance of those.

From the evidence provided in previous chapters of the thesis, I can establish a connection between participant's perceptions of internal and external pressures, and the perceived harmfulness of the informal transaction, and the scale of acceptability of the given practice, which I display in the 'matrix of acceptability'. The findings of Chapter 4 highlighted that in general, when people perceived external pressures as significant, they were more likely to assess the informal practice as more procedurally acceptable and less corrupt. If people perceived harm as less significant, then they were more likely to assess the informal practice as more procedurally acceptable. Perceiving something as more acceptable could lead to

people internalising the norms and developing a moral acceptance. In Chapter 5 I explored that when the internal pressures within the social association were reported as less significant by the participants, they were more likely to assess the practice as more procedurally and morally acceptable. In contrast, if there were significant pressures within the social association due to power-relations and hierarchies, the participants would still participate in the practice and could develop a procedural acceptance, but were less likely to assess the practice as morally acceptable. Finally in Chapter 6, engaging with the processes of the social association, I addressed how taking part in an informal practice might be rationalised, and the norms of carrying out the transaction might be learnt, and even performed routinely, however if the norms are not internalised (morally accepted) the informal practice might still be viewed as corruption by the research participants. The combination of the different pressures and perceptions of harms could lead to differing outcomes in term of people developing a moral acceptance beyond procedural acceptance. On the one hand there are informal practices that are procedurally acceptable (i.e. the norms are obeyed), but still viewed as somewhat corrupt, and therefore participants identified these as acceptable corruption. On the other hand, there are informal practices that are viewed as being both procedurally and morally acceptable, and research participants often identified them as not being corruption at all. The sum of these findings and learnings constitute the 'matrix of acceptability'.

Additionally, it also emerged from the data that on the individual level, people's perceptions of the practices were influenced by whether they participated in, and moreover benefitted from, the informal practice, which is in line with de Sardan's (1999:34) findings on corruption and 'practical norms' in Africa. Participants were more likely to assess an informal practice which they did not benefit from as corrupt, but were more likely to internalise the norms and develop a moral acceptance of a practice if they benefitted from it. Considering the aspect of personal benefit and personal involvement helps us to explore people's ambivalent explanations around their understanding of corruption.

Figure 7-3.: The 'matrix of acceptability'

	Procedural Acceptability	Moral Acceptability
Internal Pressure (inside the social association)		
External Pressure (in the context)		
Harm (e.g. caused to people, institutions, or state)		

In this chapter I examine the empirically driven understandings of corruption, which were usually described by the participants pointing to typical informal practices that they perceived as being 'everyday corruption'. By doing this, participants made sense of their lived experiences by drawing examples to distinguish between informal practices that they perceived as corruption, acceptable corruption, or not corruption at all. These three

categories represent the scale for the assessment of corruption. Therefore in this chapter I explore participants' disagreements and discussions of conflicting interpretations (mainly based on the focus groups, but additionally with reference to individual interview material) of which practices do or do not comprise corruption. When conducting the research, to bring the two locations and four groups of participants together, I asked the focus group participants to reflect on cases which represented different types of informal practices in terms of their mechanisms and function[41] typical to the other research location, referring to the scale of assessment. I described this process in the Methodology chapter and used the visual tool (provided in the Appendix 5) with the participants to identify the informal practices on the above-mentioned scale. In this chapter I directly address my main research question of how perceptions and definitions regarding low-level corruption differ or show similarities (coincide) in Scotland and Hungary (i.e. in a Western and a CEE context) when taking into account both the long-term local residents' and migrants' perspectives. Through the thesis I have moved towards being able to provide a more generalisable assessment of people's perceptions, understandings, and participation in everyday corruption, while also considering the importance of the context specific nature of informal practices, and this chapter explicitly deals with balancing these.

Related to the working definition of everyday corruption, which I have addressed in the Conceptual Framework (in section 2.4.4.), this chapter focuses on unpacking the perceived acceptability element of the working definition. I have established that the working definition of corruption contains the element that the informal practices 'might be perceived as acceptable by those who take part in it, when acceptability means considering the informal practice as being legitimate based on informal norms (procedural acceptability) or as not being corruption at all (moral acceptability)'. However, I also consider that the participants displayed ambivalent perceptions of the informal practices. In this chapter, rather than trying to provide a clear delineation, or a shared definition of everyday corruption practices, I show that the research participants struggled to precisely pin down what corruption is. The differences in participants' opinions point to there being blurred boundaries between what informal practices people perceived as corruption, acceptable corruption, or not corruption at all. I recognise that there is ambivalence surrounding the explanations of acceptability, and in this chapter I also take into account this ambivalence as it emerges from people's

[41] I articulated this to the participants in the invitation, by presenting examples and during the focus group verbally, as I described in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.2.3).

articulation of their perceptions of informal practices. Considering the ambivalent explanations enables me to unpack further the distinction between procedural and moral acceptability.

In the first part of this chapter, I will explore the research location specific (Hungary and Scotland) differences between participants' wider understandings of what constitute everyday corruption practices. After that I demonstrate how participants provided seemingly cultural explanations for the differences between the informal practices themselves, and people's perceptions of those in the two contexts. As the main contribution of this chapter to the overall thesis, I apply the 'matrix of acceptability' to challenge participants' simplified explanations and tease out that there are more generalisable ways of how people define and understand everyday corruption practices.

7.2. The 'matrix of acceptability' and people's understandings of corruption

In the Methodology chapter (in section 3.2.3) I have described the focus group research in detail, however it is important to note some aspects of the focus groups in the beginning of this section, because it provides a context for the empirical outcomes. The data in this chapter are mostly drawn from the focus group conversations, because I explicitly asked participants to consider informal practices (that were collected and brought to the focus groups from the other context) on the scale of corruption that I have described above. I did not expect participants to treat these as straightforward and exclusive categories, but rather I asked them to try to place their understanding somewhere on the scale, either verbally or pointing to the visual tool if needed. I also supplement the discussion of this chapter with material from the individual interviews to balance the narrative accounts and consultant type of reflections supporting participants' understandings of informal practices. It was more common in the focus group conversations that participants provided more general (consultant type) accounts, however the same arguments also appeared in other participants' first or second-hand (narrative type) accounts, therefore, to strengthen the arguments of these chapters, I bring these reflections together here. As I described in detail in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.2.3.), in practice, during the focus groups I asked Scottish long-term local residents

and Hungarian migrant participants to reflect on typical informal practice cases collected in the Budapest context, and Hungarian long-term local residents and British migrants to reflect on practices collected in the Glasgow context. When providing these reflections, research participants also made comparisons between the two research locations by drawing examples from their own context, or in the case of the migrant participants, by drawing examples from their previous experiences with the other context. Asking participants' views of practices in the other context ultimately brings together the two locations and challenges cultural interpretations.

In order to understand what corruption (especially everyday corruption) meant to the participants, as a conversation starter in each focus group I asked the participants how they would define corruption. I communicated to the participants that I did not expect them to provide a comprehensive definition, rather their definitional attempt would serve as a starting point. In line with this I encouraged them to think about a definition in terms of elements that they consider necessary when identifying an informal practice as corruption, acceptable corruption, or not corruption at all. There was a generic mechanism by which the process unfolded, as in all focus groups one participant came forward to provide an initial definition, and other participants reflected on this. Often the first participant attempted to provide a generalised definition of corruption, which therefore was phrased in somewhat abstract terms. Other participants challenged and debated this initial definition and started to add elements that they perceived and regarded as being important when defining corruption.

I noticed a difference between the ways that the native English-speaking and native Hungarian-speaking participants gave this initial definition. The initial definition provided by Scottish long-term locals in Glasgow and British migrant participants in Budapest were usually phrased in a way that resembled the formal (and somewhat more abstract) definitions of corruption used by international organisations[42]. I explained in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.3.2.) that to ensure a balance between the participants recruited in the different contexts, the recruitment process was based on occupational categories. This means that although I encountered some challenges in terms of recruitment, there was not a significant educational difference between the different groups, therefore this aspect does not explain

[42] e.g. 'Abuse of entrusted power for private gain' and variations of this are used, for example, by the World Bank and Transparency International.

these definitional differences. For example, Scott, a member of the focus group with long-term local residents in Glasgow, suggested that corruption is *"when someone is using their power and influence to gain something"* (Scott, age 40-50, male Scottish, Glasgow). Similarly, British migrant participant Chris, in the mixed focus group[43] (double interview) in Budapest, defined corruption along similar lines - and this was perhaps even more closely formulated with the formal definition of corruption: *"corruption is abusing someone's power for personal gain, obtaining something undeservedly"* (Chris, age 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). Chris' definition proved to be so succinct that Bela, the Hungarian participant of the mixed focus group, nodded approvingly and raised his hands showing his palms - indicating that he could not give a better definition of corruption himself. My field notes taken during the focus group showed that at this point it was not obvious for me whether Bela had nothing to add or found it difficult to make up such a compact definition of corruption in English. This focus group was conducted in English, therefore Bela might have found it much more difficult than Chris to express a nuanced definition of corruption in a foreign language, even if he was a trainee lawyer and a part-time English teacher. However, based on my collected data, I found that in general English-speaking participants (including Scottish long-term locals and British migrants) were somewhat more assertive in proposing a definition in abstract terms on the spot than their Hungarian counterparts. I conducted only one mixed focus group, and in this group the language barrier might have contributed to definitional issues, however in the other focus groups this factor was not present. Scottish long-term local participants and many British migrants were likely to associate corruption with using one's power and influence to gain advantage in a broader sense in their first definition. In comparison, many Hungarian participants had a different approach to defining corruption initially. For example, Attila, a member of the focus group with Hungarian long-term locals in Budapest, suggested that *"corruption is [pause], the real corruption is what politicians do."* (Attila, age 40-50, male, Hungarian, Budapest). This statement not only distinguishes between political corruption as 'real' corruption and other informal practices which people participate in on an everyday basis, but also implicitly implies that Attila would not describe these everyday informal practices with the word 'corruption'. In the next section I will explain the possible reasons for these differences.

[43] This was conducted in the focus group phase based on the same methodology as the focus group, however due to the circumstances only two participants were present. The conversation was in English.

In line with Attila's statement, from both focus groups with native Hungarian-speaking participants (including Hungarian long-term locals and Hungarian migrants), a common pattern emerged, which differentiated between everyday informal practices and grand corruption, claiming that 'real' corruption is when informal transactions take place *"on a higher level* [HUN: magasabb szinten[44]]". (Dora, age 20-30, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). This initial statement in the focus group with Hungarian migrants in Glasgow was followed by a connected argument about differentiating between people's everyday practices and government corruption, which was typical of the focus groups consisting of both Hungarian long-term residents and migrant participants. Panna expressed her views in connection with participating in informal practices generating cash-in-hand undeclared income in the Budapest context, based on her personal experience, providing a narrative account as follows:

> *"I don't feel bad about it, because it takes away from the government - and they steal a large amount of tax. If I knew that they would spend it on good causes, to improve health care, feeding the poor, solving homelessness or do things that we tried to do as volunteers, then I would feel worse."* (Panna, age 30-40, female, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow)

This quote reveals that Panna obeyed the norms of the informal practice of informal renting arrangements, and she also expressed that she did not have negative feelings towards participating in the practices. Therefore, she developed both procedural and moral acceptability of taking part in informal practices which generated undeclared income. Panna rationalised her participation in this practice by using a downward comparison between government corruption and people's everyday practices. Panna also added that she saw 'everyday corruption' as a *"grey zone"* in comparison to the government (higher level) corruption. In contrast, another research participant Aron, in the same focus group, reflected on this as "*I think there are no grey zones, it is either corruption or not [pause], it is either right or wrong. Even if I take part in it, I know it is wrong." (*Aron, age 30-40, male, Hungarian migrant, Glasgow). With this last statement Aron implicitly described his ambivalent view between the procedural and moral acceptability of carrying out an informal transaction - his participation in the informal practice (and by this obeying the norms of the informal practice) did not mean that he found the practice morally acceptable. Similar perceptions to Aron's also emerged from the individual interviews as research participants

[44] Directly translated as higher level, but at the same time it refers to political corruption (with more influences) and also involving more money (grand corruption).

who had experience with the Hungarian context often described everyday corruption practices as *"wrong, but necessary*" (Zsolt, age 50-60, male, Hungarian, Budapest).

These starkly different initial definitions of corruption between native Hungarian and British speakers suggested that participants had seemingly differing understandings of corruption. Supporting this notion, I found that the reason for giving a definition pointing to grand (or political) corruption, rather than proposing a more abstract definition, was not so much due to the Hungarian (long-term local and migrant) participants' lack of words or skills to describe corruption either in English or in Hungarian, but rather, the word corruption had different meanings and connotations for them. It surfaced during the focus group conversations that Hungarian participants were often reluctant to use (or refused to use) the word corruption for everyday corruption practices. Some participants indicated that they only use it because it makes the conversation either with me or with the other focus group participants easier. These indications were made by saying the word corruption in an emphasised way, accompanied by an eye-roll or putting the word into air quotation marks[45]. The mixed focus group between the Hungarian long-term local participant Bela and British migrant Chris illustrated the differing use of the word 'corruption'. When Chris explicitly noted that he identified certain informal practices as 'everyday corruption' and named those practices, Bela pragmatically reflected on Chris' examples – "*it is not corruption, it is 'thank-you-money'"* [HUN: hálapénz][46]*, "it is nepotism", or "it is tax evasion"* (Bela, age 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest). These quotes highlight a common pattern emerging from the interviews as well as the focus group conversations with Hungarian participants when talking about everyday corruption practices. They would either use the specific names of the practices, for example 'számlavásáslás'[47], 'jatt'[48], or 'csókos'[49], or they used another word for corruption that indicated a 'lower level', which had many variations, such as 'mutyi'[50], 'sumákolás'[51], or 'okoskodás'[52]. The fact that a very wide array of different and very specific terms for these different practices exist supports the argument that the term corruption [HUN:korrupció] does in fact have a different connotation in Hungarian, as it

[45] A gesture in which two fingers of each hand draw quotation marks in the air, used when uttering a word or phrase one does not think is appropriate or accurate, or in a sarcastic manner.
[46] Directly translated as money given for showing gratitude.
[47] Directly translated to buying and selling' invoices.
[48] Small amount of money that is not just a tip, but a small bribe.
[49] Directly translated as connected.
[50] It refers to a secret informal arrangement that is beneficial for all involved, petty practice.
[51] It refers to an informal arrangement based on hiding something, either material or information.
[52] It refers to an informal arrangement when the person uses his or her wit, such as finding loopholes.

seemed to be deeply associated with grand or political corruption (mostly due to how the term is used in the media, and in political debates).

I have established that there were differences in the connotations of the word corruption, however in some instances during the conversation between Bela and Chris, the differences around identifying a practice as corruption primarily came down to their perceptions of the harmfulness of the practice. This points towards the value of considering more generalisable factors in participants' perceptions of corruption. I addressed in detail in Chapter 4 (in section 4.1.2. and 4.2.2.) how many other participants noted the significance of harm as well. Bela defended his point of view by explaining that he does not regard tax evasion as corruption, adding that *"I don't see much of a problem with that, because it is not causing harm to anyone else, and everybody gets a good deal out of it."* (Bela, age 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest). As a counter argument, Chris pointed out that the state and other taxpayers might be disadvantaged. In analysing data from this exchange (and other research material which I gathered), it became clear that I needed to include this factor (i.e. degree of harm) when developing the 'matrix of acceptability'. However Bela's and Chris' perceptions differed on whether it is acceptable to cause indirect harm to the state (I explained qualifying different harms in detail in Chapter 4 on the informal practices and their rationalisations). However, simply explaining their differing assessment as to what constitutes corruption as based on the difference in their perception of harm is unsatisfactory. As I displayed in the matrix, there are other factors as well that can be relevant in assessing their understandings of corruption, such as the external and internal pressures.

Another section of the same focus group conversation contained some better insights into the possible reasons behind the differences of the British migrants and Hungarian long-term local participants' perceptions regarding the notion of harm. After Chris provided his succinct definition, he started to give narrative accounts about instances when he and other British migrants had been wronged due to the prevalent corruption in the Budapest context. One of his examples was that his friend, a British migrant restaurant owner, was fined by the tax authorities over a minor offence occurring in his restaurant. The friend did not agree with the charges and started a court case against the National Tax Office. Chris' argument was that his friend could avoid the court case, and moreover even paying the fine in the first place, if he had understood that he could bribe the tax officer (which was what was expected

from him in the situation, but he did not act as such, because he thought the fine was unfair). Reflecting on this example of "*how things work in Hungary"*, Bela, the Hungarian participant studying to be a lawyer, expressed a high level of astonishment:

> *"I don't think that any Hungarian would want to go to court against the National Tax Office. I mean people can't trust that the court will make a fair decision against the state or a state office. It is all about authority, and they would never ever admit a mistake, even if everybody knows that they made a mistake*." (Bela, age 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest)

This reflection on trust in the court and the authorities highlights something more general about the Hungarian context and related external pressures. The British migrant restaurant owner had a different perception of the role of the court and had more trust in the system than Bela (the long-term local resident) had. Bela perceived the corruption of the authorities as an external pressure, which helped him to rationalise people's participation in informal practices when interacting with authorities. Bela's distrust of the authorities included the courts, however while the British migrant restaurant owner claimed not to have complete trust in the authorities, he did trust the legal system, including that the courts function and take action (even against other authorities). Therefore he did not perceive one tax officer's actions as an overwhelming external pressure that would force him into compliance with the informal expectations of paying a bribe rather than receiving a fine.

As the focus group progressed, the conversation between Bela and Chris led to a friendly argument and discussion on cultural differences, which in my interpretation means context-specific differences, and is an implicit reference to the external pressures. Therefore I decided that this was another significant factor to include in the 'matrix of acceptability'. In this section I challenge the narrative of cultural differences which was mentioned by a participant, and I argue that there are other more generalisable factors that should be included in the 'matrix of acceptability' to avoid crude, culture-specific explanations of corruption. I will show that on many occasions, participants provided a simplified description of something that is difficult to conceptualise, and reduced a more complex phenomenon to being 'cultural'. Bela elaborated on his perception of British values, which according to him are not valid in the Hungarian context:

> *"I think that corruption has a different meaning in the English language, or in the British culture. They have a very idealistic picture of how people and the*

> *society should behave, and anything that is not by the book is corruption - and it might work in the UK, but in Hungary it is simply not the reality, and people can't just follow the rules because they wouldn't survive."* (Bela, age 30-40, male, Hungarian, Budapest)

This quote shows Bela's understanding of difference in British and Hungarian people's perceptions of corruption which he explained in a simplified way as cultural difference, however he also provided some more nuanced points of argument. Referring to the different meaning of the word corruption in the English language (and in British culture) to in Hungarian seems to be a valid point to some extent, as Bela also connected the differences to context specific external pressures. Bela's perception is that this idealistic view of corruption might work and be valid in another local context, however in the Hungarian context this does not match people's everyday reality, because of the existing pressures, which range between economic pressures and pressures derived from the distrust in state authorities. Bela, in his explanations, misidentifies external pressures as cultural differences. Bela's comment on cultural differences also highlights the context-specific meaning of corruption, which is somewhat in line with the studies that emphasise considering the local moral codes and cultural norms when examining corruption (Shore and Haller, 2005). In the following arguments I suggest that cultural explanations provided by the participants should be treated by balancing and prioritising more generalisable factors, which I included in the 'matrix of acceptability' in order to be able to gain more nuanced understanding of everyday corruption. During this thesis I have emphasised a non-judgmental approach towards examining informal practices, but as Bela's quote reveals, the idea of constructing a value-free judgment, and therefore attributing less importance to what participants called 'cultural differences', was not always straightforward for participants when they talked about the notion of acceptability. I addressed in the Conceptual Framework (in section 2.3.2) that many area-studies on informality and corruption recognised the importance of understanding the meaning of these practices considering the local cultural context and local moral codes. The key point is that there is a difference between taking these aspects into account and solely attributing the existence of everyday corruption practices to local moral codes and culture, especially when making comparisons between two differing (Eastern and Western) social contexts. The question of cultural differences was raised in different ways, and to different extents in the focus groups.

In general, the participants of the focus groups consisting of only long-term local residents, who had no first-hand experience with informal practices in the other context, were reluctant

to challenge other participants' notions of acceptability (moral and/or procedural) and understandings of corruption in the other research location. However, these reflections often gave rise to cultural explanations for taking part in informal practices, as a result of trying to explain something complex. Scottish long-term participant Jamie tried to display his view on what constitutes corruption by drawing a connection between corruption and moral codes, reflecting on an initial definition provided by another participant:

> *"I don't think about corruption in terms of legality, but I think something is corrupt if it is against the moral codes [pause] - but I know that people have different moral codes, so something that would be immoral for me, it would be totally fine for someone else [pause] - it is a cultural thing [pause] so some practices might be accepted in Hungary."* (Jamie, 30-40, male, Scottish, Glasgow)

Later during this focus group, I presented informal payments in the Budapest health care sector as a typical informal practice, which induced a lively debate and discussion amongst the Scottish long-term focus group participants. The same participant, Jamie, following his argument on cultural differences, reflected on informal payments in the Hungarian health care as the following: *"if people accept this system, and they know that they will need to pay for the better service… then… well it might sound bad, but if it is a normal practice in Hungary… then it is not corruption."* (Jamie, 30-40, male, Scottish, Glasgow). As I established in the previous chapters, the individual interviews revealed that informal payments had many interpretations amongst the research participants who had first-hand experience with them in the Budapest context. Some of them were close to Jamie's interpretation, however I found that most participants, even if they took part in the informal practice, did not necessarily find them morally acceptable. Jamie's reflection can be interpreted as that he did not separate the procedural acceptability and moral acceptability of the informal practices, and did not consider the possibility that participation does not necessarily mean moral acceptance, since it could be the result of internal pressures within the social association (as I have learnt from the individual interviews). He implicitly regarded informal payments as a cultural norm, an interpretation which does not consider the external and internal pressures present in the Hungarian context - as he had no personal experience with that. Richard, another Scottish focus group participant, challenged Jamie's answer by enquiring whether Jamie understood that this system of 'thank-you-money' is informal, and that often it is pressured, demanded, or extorted, in other words it is not necessarily a voluntary payment. He also asked me for confirmation regarding whether his

interpretation was correct (Richard, 50-60, male, Scottish, Glasgow). I confirmed the validity of Richard's interpretation, and elaborated on the external and internal pressures that long-term Hungarian research participants and British migrants mentioned during the individual interviews.

Triggered by Richard's enquiry, Jamie attempted to refine his assessment. This time he added that since this often seems to be the only way that people can get proper treatment, this affects people's participation in these practices. In my interpretation with this statement, he identified that there are external pressures affecting residents in the Hungarian context. Jamie also said that he now understood that patients are expected to pay, and doctors expected to get paid. This means that in my interpretation he also recognised the internal pressures within the social association, which is one of the factors of the 'matrix of acceptability'. Finally, he explained that based on our discussion of the Hungarian context, he still perceived the extent of harm as low, saying that *"this is horrible and unimaginable in the UK, but no one gets hurt, people still get treated [pause] I assume [pause] they just have to wait a bit longer."* (Jamie, 30-40, male, Scottish, Glasgow). Therefore, Jamie re-assessed the informal payments in the health care sector as acceptable corruption in the context of the Hungarian system. This second reflection was constructed along similar lines to the description of perceptions of acceptability provided by participants with personal experience in the Hungarian context gathered from the interview phase, referring to the perceived absence of direct harm discussed in Chapter 4 (in section 4.1.2.). Once moving beyond the perceived cultural differences - that provide insufficient explanations - Jamie was able to assess the acceptability of the practice in a way that can be placed within the matrix of harm, and external and internal pressures, which seemed to provide him with a more nuanced understanding, even if he did not have first-hand experience of the informal practice. In the end of the focus group, Jamie explained that now he understood the importance of considering how "*corruption means different things for different people, and the context [pause] or culture that the practice is situated in is important."* (Jamie, age 30-40, male, Scottish, Glasgow).

In contrast, participants in the focus group with the British migrants had first-hand experience, and therefore a more nuanced understanding of the informal practices in the Budapest context. Because of their experiences, they were able to address their perceived

difficulties within the local context, which sometimes manifested in narratives of cultural differences. I will continue to challenge this notion by looking beyond the cultural explanations, and rather explain such reflections of my research participants according to the more generalisable factors that I have included in the 'matrix of acceptability'. For example, Charles, a member of the Budapest-based focus group containing only British migrants, stated that in his business environment he noticed that Hungarian people had *"different morals".* Charles continued explaining that *"if you don't work according to their system, then they think that something is suspicious, and they won't trust you, so you have to act like them."* (Charles, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). Moving beyond Charles' explanation of different morals, I can interpret this quote as referring to the internal pressures within the social association of his business, explicitly addressing the enforcement of the norms of 'living law'. Internal pressures on certain members within the social association, overlapping with Charles' business environment, meant more contested compliance with the norms, which resulted in him perceiving practices as less acceptable even if he complied with the norms. The point is that internal pressure makes compliance increasingly difficult to avoid, but it does not mean that people find the practice morally acceptable. Situating this in the matrix, in can be explained as where there is a high-level of internal pressure, people in a less powerful position (may) feel that they have to comply, but they feel coerced. Therefore, even if they participate in the informal practice, they do not perceive it as right. Although those who in certain instances apply the pressure within the social association may feel that there is a strong incentive to take part, they therefore can also feel that is morally acceptable as they are likely to benefit to a greater extent than the people who are forced or need to comply.

Another British migrant focus group participant somewhat supported Charles' argument on internal pressures in the enforcement of the norms of 'living law', but he refrained from making a connection between local moral codes and informal practices. David said that he had always paid cash-in-hand for rent in Budapest, and moreover he could not yet find a place where he would not have had to pay cash-in-hand, although he explained "*it would be much easier for me if I could just transfer the money [through the bank]*." (David, age, 50-60, male, British migrant, Budapest). In David's example the reference to local moral codes is not explicit, but he implied that paying informally for rent is not his choice, he just complies with what seems to be the norm. On reflection, Katie, another participant in the same focus group, added that when it comes to *"invoicing-questions"*, when it is obvious that the lack of an invoice accompanies and facilitates tax evasion, she does not "*want to*

appear problematic" in the long-term locals' eyes regarding these practices. While first Katie implicitly implied that she takes part in these informal practices, because she does not want to challenge local values, she later presented a first-hand narrative account of an informal practice that provides a more nuanced insight into her understanding of this type of corruption, which reinforces the value of establishing the 'matrix of acceptability' and its factors. Katie drew an example of when she purchased a ticket directly from the bus driver (which is normal procedure, as often it is not possible to buy the ticket elsewhere), and the driver did not provide a receipt which also functions as the ticket, because he pocketed the money without any explanation. First, this left Katie worried during the journey that she might get fined by the ticket inspector, but at later bus stops she observed that new passengers got on the bus without receiving a ticket, and from that point she assumed that this was the informal norm. However, she suggested that she did not think that this was corruption, and that she would not ask for her ticket specifically next time. She explained that *"I just accept that it is how it is, and I don't have a problem with someone making a few hundred Forint. It is such a small amount of money.*" While saying this she was getting emotional and added that this low-level of 'cheating' showed her something about the Budapest context. Katie explained that the reason that she was sharing this narrative account was *"because it just showed me how desperate people are [pause] that they would cheat £1-£2. It is nothing [pause]. I mean what difference would it make?"* (Katie, age 30-40, female, British migrant, Budapest). In her narrative there is an element of helping the locals, which means that she did not perceive the practice as harmful and therefore corruption. Seemingly Katie developed a moral acceptance of the practice as she made a connection between her participation in the informal practice, and her explanation of why she did not perceive this practice as corruption. In my interpretation she addressed external pressures which affect others or local people (due to low salaries), which was a factor contributing to her moral acceptance.

Additionally, participating in these low-level practices did not cause any significant financial harm to her, although at first she was worried that the ticket inspector would fine her. But her next comment reveals that she developed a moral acceptance, acknowledging the driver's point of view, saying "*if it doesn't cause me any harm, then I am okay with them doing things in their way."* (Katie, age 30-40, female, British migrant, Budapest). She did not agree with the practice, and it made her uncomfortable at first, but coming to the understanding that it was the norm, and that other people on the bus in the same situation were not worried, she

accepted (and consented to) it as something that she could participate in to 'support the locals'. She took part in the informal practice due to her understanding of a local resident's 'survival' in the context of the post-socialist setting, something that Bela mentioned above. Katie, in her interpretation, did not encourage informal practices, merely chose to not ask explicitly for the receipt, which is the ticket. She reflected on the practice as 'their' (the Hungarian people's) way, and she developed a procedural acceptance by obeying the informal norm, as well as a moral acceptance because she acknowledged the external pressures on the driver and saw the practice as causing minimal harm. This means that Katie understood and accepted that there are external pressures in the local context which mean that some people cannot follow the formal rules, because they could not survive. This suggests that there is a strong connection between high levels of external pressures and the high level of acceptance which motivated me to include this factor in the 'matrix of acceptability'. These examples showed that all three British migrants developed a procedural acceptability of the local informal practices due to the context containing external pressures, and additionally they noticed internal pressures within the social association that are situated in the context. They perceived that it is not possible, or that it is difficult, to 'get things done' in a different way than is acceptable in the local context. While some participants simply attributed other people's differing acceptability of informal practices to cultural or even moral differences, examining these narratives in the 'matrix of acceptability' reveals that when moving beyond these narratives, people's perceptions of acceptability in general are still constructed along similar lines, regardless of the perceived or real cultural differences. These examples also revealed that to define their understanding of acceptability, people usually do not refer to only one factor of the 'matrix of acceptability', rather it is a combination or two or three.

Addressing the combined importance of external and internal pressures, Imre explained in the focus group with Hungarian long-term residents that his employer pays him minimum wage to avoid the high taxation rates, and in return he looks away when Imre contributes to his salary in other informal ways:

> *"It is normal in Hungary. It is wrong… I mean it is wrong that the system is like that. It is wrong that I am doing it, but I don't have any bad feelings about it, because we can only make money this way. We are forced into this situation*."
> (Imre, age 20-30, male, Hungarian, Budapest)

Imre somewhat understood the pressure on his employer due to the high tax rate, but he still found himself in a situation where he is forced into informality within the social association in the workplace. This quote highlights Imre's internal dialogue and struggle in terms of trying to define his perception of acceptability. An ambivalent argument emerged, as Imre said that his participation in the informal practice is wrong, but he does not have negative feelings about it because of the external pressures of the system, and the internal pressures within the social association due to the members' positions and power-relations. He acknowledged that the procedures are unacceptable – they should not be the way they are, but since they are, the practices are morally acceptable. There is a significant element of ambivalence in this argument that comprises conflicting views of wrongfulness and necessity. This quote also supports the notion that ambivalence allows for people developing an internalised moral acceptability beyond procedural acceptability, which might mean assessing the practice as not corruption at all.

Connected to people developing a moral acceptance of norms through the process of internalisation, in the focus group of British migrants, perhaps controversially, Charles explained that he perceived the other focus group participant David's regular cash-in-hand payments to his cleaning lady (mentioned by David earlier) as corruption, but he felt that the substantially higher one-off payment that he received recently as a kickback for making business arrangements was not corruption. He argued that the kickback was only occasional and justified, because he normally conducted most of his business by the books. He explained that he was under pressure from the rest of the social association to adopt the same practices, because it was a normal practice in his line of work, and therefore he felt the need to comply occasionally. Charles added that he accepted kickbacks only once in a while, "*but other people in the business always do it and get rich*." (Charles, age 40-50, male, British migrant, Budapest). This quote also highlights that in the social association of Charles' business, the practice of kickbacks is routinised and acceptable - and while he does not fully accept the norms that regulate the system of kickbacks, once in a while he allows himself to participate without regarding this practice as corruption. Charles' ambivalent description of the kickbacks reveals that peoples' assessment of the informal practice on the scale of corruption is also based on who participates in them and who benefits from them. It is possible to interpret that Charles' argument contains references to internal pressures, as well as perceiving the caused harms as less significant - because he only takes part on occasions - making a downward comparison to the other people in the business (internal pressure and

harm are two factors of the 'matrix of acceptability' that in my interpretation he is referencing). These elements imply that he developed a procedural acceptance of the practice. Moreover, the fact that he is benefitting from the informal practices helps him to internalise the practice (i.e. thinking that it is morally acceptable to take part in it). Charles seemed to be very blatantly demonstrating how people resist defining things they themselves do as corrupt, even if it met a definition of corruption that they themselves proposed. In line with this notion, while providing the main characteristics of bureaucratic corruption in Africa, de Sardan (1999:35) argued that people who play a role themselves never condemn the practice, and that the border between legal and illegal practice is viewed and considered differently according to whether someone benefited from the practice or not. In my interpretation this can manifest in ambivalent perceptions towards informal practices, which means that participants can regard the same practice differently depending on their involvement. They are less willing to perceive those practices (and their norms) which they are not able to participate in (or which are not beneficial for them) as acceptable. However they are more likely to internalise these practices and their norms and see them as not corruption at all if they are benefitting from them. As I addressed in Chapter 4, the same notion emerged from the individual interviews of many participants, regardless of their context and nationality, for example when they identified utilising their connections to gain access as a privilege.

7.3. Conclusion

In this chapter I have demonstrated that considering informal practices in the 'matrix of acceptability' allows for the examination of the everyday corruption phenomenon through differing contexts, however I also emphasised that the context still has an importance in fully understanding the informal practices. The fact that research participants in the Budapest context mentioned different names for certain informal practices (e.g. 'jatt'; 'csókos', and 'mutyi'), rather than categorising them simply as corruption, was a typical phenomenon in the Budapest context, even if similar informal practices also existed in the Glasgow context. This highlights some differences between the participants' perceptions and understandings of everyday corruption situated in the two contexts, which I argued should not be labelled as cultural differences, but rather to consider them as the outcome of context specific external pressures.

Throughout this chapter I showed that the ‘matrix of acceptability’ enables a more nuanced understanding of people’s perceptions of corruption beyond context-specific explanations. I examined how different participants tried to define corruption using different viewpoints, such as making comparison between grand (political) and everyday corruption, and debating the existence of local moral codes. The difficulties of explaining a phenomenon that is often ambiguous and complex often led to ambivalent discussions, and sometimes contradictions in people’s arguments. This reinforced that rather than clearly defining everyday corruption, it is more productive to understand people’s perceptions through their understanding of informal practices case by case, based on them referring to a combination of internal and external pressure, and perceived harm. In next the chapter I will provide a conclusion of the thesis by revisiting my research questions and drawing out empirical and theoretical contributions, while also addressing the limitations of this study and the possibilities for further research.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

I had the overarching aim of presenting a theoretically informed and empirically grounded account of peoples' perceptions of everyday corruption practices in Hungary and Scotland (Budapest and Glasgow). Throughout this thesis I aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of everyday corruption in two different contexts through the lived experiences of long-term locals and migrants, as well as why these understandings and perceptions emerged in certain instances. My collected data, based on in-depth interviews and focus group research, revealed what everyday corruption meant for the local long-term residents and migrants, how these understandings were generated, and additionally in certain cases how they changed or showed continuity through migration. Considering informal groups of people who co-operated in carrying out an informal practice based on Ehrlich's concept of 'living law', i.e. various sizes and forms of social associations (or a plurality of human beings), enabled the investigation in the two differing contexts of Budapest and Glasgow by allowing me to make comparisons and find common themes. I employed migrant's experiences as a lens, and this method allowed for a greater understanding of the processes and practices involved in being members of the social associations, and the ways in which people develop a procedural, and sometimes moral acceptance of informal practices. Therefore, this thesis explored people's participation in everyday corruption practices, as well as their socially constructed understandings of the acceptability of those. These reflections were in line with my main research question which was designed to examine the ways in which practices, understandings, and definitions in relation to everyday corruption differed or showed similarities in Scotland and Hungary (in a Western and CEE context) when taking into account both the long-term local residents' and migrants' perspectives. In this section I will show that I have fulfilled the aims of the thesis by answering my sub-research questions.

I was particularly interested in the question of under what circumstances, and for what reasons, long-term local residents and migrants took part in informal practices. This exploration included an investigation into the local contexts in two ways. First, considering informal practices as they are situated in a particular local context, and secondly, considering the importance of the context in terms of how people come together to co-operate in conducting a certain informal practice (i.e. the formation of the social associations). By unpacking and analysing the ways in which people justified their participation in informal

practices, through reference to socially constructed rationalisations, I was able to answer this question. When providing rationalisations, research participants also elaborated on the circumstances and reasons for their participation (which I have addressed in Chapter 4). Understanding peoples' rationalisations of informal practices in their specific context was significant because the contexts contained certain external pressures. Additionally, I also found more general narratives that are manifested in rationalisations which were used by all groups of participants and in both locations. Participants presenting narrative accounts of their involvement in certain informal practices enabled me to learn not only the detailed informal norms of these informal practices, but also people's desires and needs to participate in them. In exploring this question I came to the conclusion that external pressures which were prevalent in the local context (as well as internal pressures within the social associations) prompted certain people to participate in informal practices (which I have addressed in Chapter 5). In Chapter 6 I specifically explored the migration-specific circumstances, and the differences in people's participation in informal practices, between the British 'lifestyle' migrant in Budapest and the Hungarian 'economic' migrants in Glasgow. I established that knowing the language was a necessity to be able to fully participate in the informal practices, but also importantly that the barriers went beyond language per se, and linked to other forms of social knowledge and connections. Therefore, the lack of language skills, knowledge, and connections often proved to be a barrier to participation in certain informal practices for migrant participants. During this investigation I did not only consider when people took part in informal practices, but also when they wanted to take part, however under the circumstances they could not. I found that not only external circumstances, but also power-relations within the social association and participants' language and negotiation skills also played a role in determining whether they could take part in informal practices, under what circumstances and to what extent.

My investigation also included the question of how long-term local residents and migrants know and learn when and how to carry out everyday corruption practices as a way of 'getting things done' in everyday life. To answer this question, I had to delve deeper into the workings of the social associations, because this question refers to how people learn the norms themselves of carrying out the informal transactions, and the means of communication during the negotiation of these informal transactions. I addressed these questions specifically in Chapter 5 on the workings of the social associations. I argued that learning the norms of 'living law' of the informal transactions happens within the social association by various

mechanisms, for example participants directly getting told, encountering them, or through observation. In Chapter 6 I additionally explored how migrant research participants showed differing levels of willingness or need to learn the norms, and generally to participate in informal transactions. In Chapter 5 I found that the processes of learning the norms, and routinising them, helped to reproduce and maintain the informal practices themselves, and their norms. I established that participants actively maintained these informal practices through various mechanisms, such as using recommendations or 'word of mouth', which helped to develop negotiation patterns as well as trust and expectations between the members of the social association.

Throughout the thesis I sought to grasp how long-term local residents and migrants regarded informal practices, and whether those perceptions were determined, altered, or showed continuity when living in new social settings. I addressed participants' migration-specific aspects of understandings and perceptions of everyday corruption, especially focused on the migration generated power-relations and hierarchies that affected the different type of migrants. I devoted Chapter 6 to this investigation, where I first addressed separately the two different migrant groups, which were the British 'lifestyle' migrants in Budapest, and the more vulnerable Hungarian 'economic' migrants in Glasgow. I reviewed the typical occupations that the members of these diverse migrants group undertook, or rather had the opportunities of undertaking. This was important because it highlighted what social associations the participants were likely to interact with, and how these might overlap with the workplace and connected relationships. Migrants' experiences put into sharper relief how people's memberships of the social associations are not straightforward, and also highlighted the importance and means of gathering information and learning. Perhaps the most important finding was that experiencing external pressures in the local social context, and internal pressures within the social association prompted many participants to take part in informal practices, or to 'get things done' like the locals, but it did not necessarily mean that participants regarded these informal practices as morally acceptable. I also showed how sometimes participants were not able to carry out informal transactions, because they did not have a full understanding of the informal norms, or they had been excluded from the social association. This was seen specifically with the Hungarian migrants in Glasgow, who would often try to carry out (mostly unsuccessfully) informal practices in the Glasgow context which they experienced as the norm in the Hungarian context. Summarising, I found that even if people's participation in informal practices changed, their understanding of whether

the informal practice was corruption, acceptable corruption, or not corruption at all rarely did so following migration.

Finally, addressing the overarching aims, I offered an investigation into people's understandings of everyday corruption practices and the assessment of 'everyday corruption' on the scale of corruption, acceptable corruption, or not corruption at all. In Chapter 7 I argued that establishing the 'matrix of acceptability', which includes the external pressures, internal pressures, and perception of harm - which I identified as the key explanatory factors in the previous chapters - allows for a more generalisable investigation into people's perceptions of everyday corruption practices. My data showed that there are context-specific differences between Budapest and Glasgow, however considering these differences using the 'matrix of acceptability' reveals that how people define and understand everyday corruption in an Eastern and Western context is not too dissimilar, and that generalisable patterns emerge.

8.1. Discussion of the findings

I employed a novel research design, investigating corruption and informal practices in a nuanced way, bringing the two locations and four groups of participants together. To achieve an in-depth understanding of the informal norms of the everyday corruption practices I asked the research participants detailed questions regarding the actual conduct of the informal transactions in terms of norms and communication methods, as well as about the relationships between the participants of the given transaction. This method provided me with many narrative accounts on the informal practices, which I utilised in each empirical chapter throughout the thesis. I mostly used the focus group conversations (which mainly consisted of reflections and debates around the informal practices collected during the individual interviews) in Chapter 7 on people's understandings of corruption. The focus group method can be considered as innovative, because it allowed for conversation and debates on rarely occurring topics, such as what corruption meant for people, and how people would define and understand corruption. While the focus group participants reflected on informal practices from the other context, they often challenged each other - as well as their own assumptions. This research method led to significant findings by gaining an in-depth

account into people's perceptions and participations of informal practices with four groups of participants and two locations, and bringing these accounts together. Reflecting on the other context added nuance to participants' understandings of what they meant by 'culture' and cultural differences, because these conversations allowed them to learn about the local context and possible pressures on people. The narrative accounts contributed to understanding people's rationalisations for taking part in informal practices in Chapter 4, but these in-depth, first-hand descriptions of the practices especially came to light in Chapter 5 where I used them to describe the norms of how to carry out an informal transaction in detail, and the connected communication strategies.

A unique feature of my thesis was utilising the migrant's perspectives as a starting point. This revealed more general issues about membership in social associations, separating moral and procedural acceptability, the lack of communication skills in initiating or negotiating an informal transaction, and the lack of the 'right' relationships. These are all issues that long-term locals can also face, but which the migrants' lived experiences put into a sharper relief. In Chapter 6 I demonstrated that different groups of migrants (British 'lifestyle' and Hungarian 'economic') had differing lived experiences regarding work possibilities, living standards, and interactions with the locals due to differences in their relative power-relations as a result of migration. However, I also explored issues commonly affecting the two different migrant groups, such as the difficulties and importance of language in understanding the informal norms, gathering information, being accepted by the locals, and ultimately being able to take part in informal practices. The significance of all this insight and learning from the project is to prove the value of considering migrants' perspectives in gaining a more nuanced and in-depth insight into a phenomenon such as everyday corruption.

My research greatly contributes to the understanding of low-level corruption not just in the CEE (Budapest) and Western (Glasgow) contexts, but more generally, examining how people developed an acceptability of informal practices based on socially constructed rationalisations and interactions with other people through the processes of the social association, such as learning and routinisation. Relating to the previous literature, processes of neutralising corruption had been described in the discipline of organisational sociology (Ashforth and Anand, 2003; Zaloznaya, 2012; Jancsics, 2013), as a phenomenon that

happens within the organisation, but my thesis expands on these ideas by addressing it in the wider context of society as people come together in more informal ways within and outside formal organisations. Rather than providing a strict definition of everyday corruption, I took into account the ambivalent explanations and blurred boundaries between informal practices and corruption, considering the context specific meaning of informal practices, similar to other research studies on informality (Ledeneva, 2014b; de Sardan, 2015; Morris and Polese, 2016). However, taking this further, I also distinguished and described the moral and procedural acceptability of the practices, and I argued that the discrepancies between these two is the essence and source of the ambivalent explanations surrounding the everyday corruption practices.

In this thesis I tried to balance context-specificity and generalisability when exploring people's understandings of everyday corruption practices. Throughout this thesis I explored how there were many context-specific differences between the informal practices and people's perceptions of those in Budapest and Glasgow. I agree that considering local moral codes and culture can enhance an understanding of these practices in their local social context. However, when it comes to a comparison between an Eastern and a Western context, such as Budapest and Glasgow, I argue for moving beyond 'culture' as an explanation (cf. Hooker, 2009; Sanyal and Samanta, 2002) of people participation in and perceptions of everyday corruption practices. Therefore, the biggest empirical contribution of the thesis is that I provided a framework for people's assessments of corruption, through the 'matrix of acceptability', which can be applied across different contexts and groups of participants.

The explicit theoretical contribution of the thesis is that I applied Ehrlich's 'living law' theory to the research of everyday corruption. This had challenging aspects, because Ehrlich's theory contains some notoriously difficult elements to apply as an analytical tool, which mostly manifest in the difficulties of distinguishing between the norms of the 'living law' and other norms. However, I overcame this problem by examining the enforcement element of the norms based on North's (1990) theory, which distinguished between informal institutions and other norms, rather than trying to judge the 'particular importance of norms' based on people's 'feeling' of importance of norms when they 'actually regulate their conduct according to the norms of the social association' (Ehrlich, 2002). Considering enforcement and compliance with the norms of the social association provided a sounder

way of distinguishing the norms of 'living law' from other norms. In Chapter 5 I systematically used the 3-step framework that I established in the Conceptual Framework (in section 2.3.3.) to identify the norms of 'living law'. Additionally, the fact that I incorporated and considered the importance of power-relations and hierarchies within the social associations when explaining how these affect people's understandings of the informal practices, and people's (procedural and/or moral) acceptability of the norms of 'living law', helps to utilise Ehrlich's theory in a more analytical way. Including power-relations in my analysis greatly contributes to developing a nuanced understanding of everyday corruption.

I also succeeded in incorporating the empirically emerging processes of rationalisation, learning, and routinising of the norms of how to carry out an informal transaction into Ehrlich's original concept. I realised the importance the processes of learning and routinising have in reinforcing and reproducing the norms of 'living law' in the workings of the social associations. I also conceptualised that the socially constructed rationalisations provided by the participants are a product or a sign of membership of a social association, as people belonging to the same social association tended to evoke the same rationalisations that reflect on external pressures in the context, or the perceived harmfulness of the informal practice. I understood rationalisation as being part of the conduct of the social association besides the norms of 'living law' of how to carry out an informal transaction. I recognised that the different types of enforcement correlated with the different levels of compliance of the members with the norms of 'living law' within the social association. If the participants reported on less-voluntary compliance due to the power-relations within the social association, then the coercive nature of the enforcement was more dominant, as well as participants' need to take part in these informal transactions, for example to negotiate access or avoid negative consequences. However, in other social associations surrounding informal practices, members' compliance was more voluntary, because these people had a more equal footing within the social associations, and were mutually benefitting from the informal transactions, therefore these norms were self-enforcing. Summarising, equipping Ehrlich's original 'living law' theory with an assessable enforcement element, and, situating the processes of rationalisation, learning, and routinising within the conduct of the social association, and considering the effects of power-relations and hierarchies within the social association is a theoretical contribution that enables Ehrlich's 'living law' to be used as an analytical concept to study informal norms.

8.2. Reflections on this study: Limitations of the study and emergent questions for future research

This thesis presents a careful selection of the empirical material which was produced during the research project. Some issues that are not strictly connected to the research questions, and less directly connected stories that the research participants shared with me during the fieldwork could not be included here, partly due to limitation of space, and partly because they had no direct relevance to my research. This study did not aim to comprehensively cover or quantify all the ways in which informal transactions can take place, cover every possible perception of corruption, or give a comprehensive definition of everyday corruption. Rather, the analysis focused on the aspects of everyday corruption that were widely shared or mentioned amongst my research participants and had a great importance to them. I sought to provide an in-depth and nuanced understanding of some of these aspects, and people's perceptions of those in their complexity.

At the same time, on reflection, the empirical approach and analytical perspective that I have taken throughout the research process have resulted in some unintended gaps. Having four different groups of participants (Hungarian migrants, British migrants, Hungarian long-term local and Scottish long-term local residents) meant that there was not enough room to explore, for example, gender or class-specific aspects of people's participation in informal practices and perceptions of corruption. I focused on different ways to access an adequate number of participants with differing lived experiences in all four groups. As I described in detail in the Methodology chapter (in section 3.3.2) I focused on the participants' occupations during recruitment.

Although I tried to balance the number of female and male individuals, I chose to prioritise other, more relevant ways to balance the heterogenous groups of participants for my research purposes, as participants' occupation, and their possible experiences of meeting with informal practices, was more important. Consequently, analytically my study did not pay explicit attention to gendered ways of taking part in and understanding everyday corruption. However, based on my data I propose that, for example, in the context of communication

strategies there could be differences between participants based on gender. I also found a pattern that when negotiating informal access to health care, or providing gratitude presents in education, women would take more responsibility for carrying out these informal practices because women more often take responsibility for caring roles within the family, and so negotiated these kinds of practices on behalf of other family members and friends. At the same time, negotiating cash-in-hand payments, or bribing street-level bureaucrats on the spot required an assertiveness that was more characteristic to male participants, as only male participants provided narrative accounts of participating in these types of informal practices. Therefore, an interesting aspect that could potentially be explored more is the question of gender, and whether and how that might have informed participants' perceptions, experiences, participation in, and understandings of everyday corruption practices. In the same way, I could have also enquired into potential differences between male and female participants in having certain resources, and utilising these resources, such as networks, friends, and family ties. A more thorough investigation into these issues might have revealed interesting findings regarding whether men or women could more readily draw on personal connections of a certain type. This investigation could also be used to explore a gendered way of utilising social relations when gathering information on how to carry out an informal transaction or negotiating membership in social associations. Similarly to the gendered investigation, another theme that I could not draw conclusions on based on my collected data is the connection between people's social status and their participation in certain informal practices. However, the significance of participants' possibilities of meeting with and accessing certain social associations in determining whether they can 'get certain things done' suggest that social status, and having the 'right relationships', is likely to play a role in people's participation in, and perception of informal practices.

Additionally, I can address among the limitations that originally I planned to conduct mixed focus groups. However, on the one hand I experienced difficulties with recruiting in this second phase, and on the other hand I noticed some issues with the power-relations due to the difficulties with language when I conducted the mixed focus group in the Budapest location. This experience directed me to have focus groups containing the participants belonging to the same participant groups (i.e. only British migrants, or only Hungarian long-term residents). Conducting mixed focus groups might have produced even more interesting discussions and revealed more in terms of differences in perceptions and understandings of everyday corruption, especially in terms of location-specific differences. However, bringing

typical cases to the focus groups from the other location and asking participants to reflect on those was a way of getting around the problems identified with running mixed focus groups, while still maintaining some kind of reflection and 'dialogue' between materials from the different groups. Therefore, the focus groups provided satisfactory results as I was able to collect rich empirical data.

Overall, despite these limitations, this thesis provides original, empirically grounded insights and themes emerging from the data that can be used in future research. In relation to some theoretical ideas which I developed in the thesis, it would be beneficial to explore the participants' perceived level of integration, which was based on their assessment of whether they are able to 'get things done like' the locals. This research would connect informal practices and integration, which might even have the potential to advise policies in the subject area. While foregrounding the migrant's perspectives and past experiences in their countries of origin in order to understand their practices, views, and needs in the host society are important, the examination of those should not stop at providing cultural explanations for an individuals' situation and actions. Instead, and this might be the most challenging insight, taking into account migrants' perspectives, everyday experiences, and concerns when thinking about integration issues requires our ability to question our own assumptions and ideas, for example regarding what is relevant for migrants in order to be able to 'get things done' like the locals.

Focusing on the bigger picture, similarly collected data, especially utilising focus groups, could reveal important elements and contribute to establishing people's collective legal consciousness, focusing on the question of what corruption and consequently law means for the participants. I argue that collective legal consciousness could be examined through the sum of what people experience as law in a multitude of social associations, and it can build a picture of, for example, what Hungarian people experience as law in comparison to the state law or even the EU law.

Further research on informal practices could focus on certain areas in depth, employing my conceptual framework and the revised version of Ehrlich's concept of 'living law' as I articulated it in the conceptual framework, and used it to analyse the empirical data. These

areas could include exploring migrants utilising resources from their home country and/or utilising migrant-community based relationship networks, or the informal payments in the Hungarian health care context - this subject could be investigated in depth by utilising Ehrlich's concept of 'living law' addressing the strength of the norms of 'living law' and the difficulties and discrepancies between implementing state legislation and the already existing informal norms. Recent legislation in Hungary[53] on the legal status of health care professionals (2020:C) introduced a new paragraph to the Penal Code's section on corruption crimes, which means that from 1st January 2021 any person who offers or accepts informal payments in the health care sector can be imprisoned for up to a year. Additionally, health care workers cannot accept (or ask for) any other non-monetary reward or advantage. However, the health care workers can accept gifts up to the value of no more than 5% of the monthly minimum wage (which currently means a gift value of about £20 (8000 HUF)) - and if someone needs longer care, a gift of that value can be given every two months. This issue is especially interesting, because the new law seems to resurrect the attempt to criminalise informal payments, because already in 2012 informal payments were regulated in the Penal Code. It was a crime in every case to accept money before treatment - the sanction could be 3 years imprisonment. To accept money after treatment was also illegal, but there was one exception, if the hospital gave permission in its code of conduct. In 2014 the Attorney General Office advocated to modify the law because the wording was ambiguous, and in consequence the law was not applied and furthermore abolished. In 2015 the Government stopped pursuing the reform around penalising informal payments in health care, and abolished the section in the Penal Code, however the new legislation aims to penalise informal payments in similar ways. This new legislation (2020:C) once again seemingly neglects to consider the importance of informal norms or 'living law' in the health care sector, which raises serious questions about the implementation of such a law. Ehrlich's 'living law' concept, enhanced with the understanding of power-relations within the social association, and the clarified element of enforcement, could be applied to investigate this dilemma.

With regard to the empirical findings, further studies could examine, for example, whether the 'matrix of acceptability' is applicable between different contexts and participants with perhaps even greater perceived cultural differences, such as in the context of China, India, Africa, or South American countries, when compared with Western or CEE contexts. Future

[53] 'Egészségügyi Szolgálati Jogviszonyról Szóló 2020. évi C. Törvény', directly translated as Law on the Legal Status of Heath Care Professionals.

research could also investigate the question of whether the experiences and understandings of everyday corruption presented here are shared more widely, rather than being specific to Hungarian migrants in Glasgow and British migrants in Budapest. Further research could explore whether other migrant groups would have the same experiences regarding participation in, and continuity of, their perceptions of informal practices. It would be especially interesting to examine a group, like Polish migrants in the UK, who are more numerous and more established in terms of resources and networks than the Hungarian migrants. Along similar lines it would be interesting to situate the research in another location, and to explore whether and how migrants' experiences would differ moving into a multicultural and super-diverse context of London, or to a rural area with a small close-knit community.

It is my hope that the findings presented here will succeed in challenging cultural explanations and moral code-centred interpretations of everyday corruption practices by considering people's participation in, and understandings of corruption in the matrix of external pressures, internal pressures, and perceived harm. Also, I hoped to show that focusing on the informal norms in general can be a productive way to move forwards in understanding wider issues regarding migration or legislation.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet

Study title and Researcher Details:

Title: ***Exploring the socio-legal aspects of low-level corruption: A study of informal economic transactions of long-term local residents and migrants in Scotland and Hungary***

Researcher: Fanni Gyurko (PhD researcher and Central and East European Studies) E-mail:

Phone:

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Invitation Paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you make a decision it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

The purpose of the study

This is a PhD research study where I am interested in perceptions of informal economic transactions and low-level corruption practices in both Hungary and Scotland. Informal economic practices/low-level corruption can be understood as a system of favours and gift-giving in order to maintain a relationship or achieve some benefit, which wouldn't be granted without the gift or favour. In some cases paying a small amount of money is required or it makes it easier to access certain services. Citizens should receive these services by law (for example health care services or obtaining certificates from authorities), however gift money makes the procedure faster and guaranteed. Having a 'friend' or a relative can be also advantageous. Often it isn't clear cut whether a gift, favour or even a relatively small amount of money paid represents gratitude or if it is given for the purpose of gaining exceptional treatment. These practices may be seen to result in the abuse of public money (the money of the state or the institution).

The research has a socio-legal aspect. This means that I am also interested in when and why people take part (or choose not to) in these practices. When they make a choice, do they obey state law or do they follow their own moral codes, initiatives, rules? These rules could be commonplace and accepted for a group of people or for a bigger part of the society despite not being part of state law.

Participation in the research:

The participation is voluntary. It depends on you and only you whether you want to take part in the research or not. Even if you decide that you wish to take part, you can change your mind at any time without stating any reason. It is not automatic that you need to take part in both interviews and focus groups..

(a) Interviews:

You will take part in an informal conversation when I will ask you to talk about your perception about informal economic practices and low-level corruption. It will take around 60 minutes. During the talk I will use audio recording and I will take notes.

(b) Focus group:

You will take part in an informal discussion with 5 or 6 other people, lasting from 60 to90 minutes, where I will ask you to reflect on cases and situations collected in Hungary

and Scotland, from migrants and long-time local residents. During the discussion I will use audio recording and I will take notes.

The outcome of the research and data handling:

The data collected will be used for the writing up of my PhD thesis and academic articles. The results might be presented in academic conferences. The data will be stored electronically on a computer, accessible by password only. In accordance with the University of Glasgow Research Guidelines the data will be retained for 10 years after completion of the project. After 10 years the data will be disposed according to the following: (1) paper documents will be shredded straight away after digitalisation (2) electronic files deleted using secure removal software. The data may be shared or re-used in accordance with the University of Glasgow Data Sharing Guidance.

Confidentiality:

Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to. All respondents will be given a pseudonym and the data will be anonymised., I won't use your name, address or any personal data. You won't be recognisable.

Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines.

In the event of any information being received indicating any possible harm or wrong doing to someone involved in the research, that this will be reported to an appropriate agency.

The project has been considered and approved by the reviewed by the College Research Ethics Committee.

If you require further information or you wish to pursue any complaint you can contact with the College of Social Science

Appendix 2: Invitation Focus Group

For the second part of my PhD project I am doing so-called ‘focus group’ research. In practice it means 3 or 4 people having a friendly discussion about everyday corruption and informality.

I will present everyday corruption cases that I collected in Scotland (Greater Glasgow area) that were performed by Scottish-local citizens. These accounts are generalised, so the participants will remain anonymous.

Here you can find 4 examples that we will potentially discuss. I will ask your opinion about cases along these lines:

1. What do you think in general?

2. Is this corruption or something else?

3. Is it acceptable?

Example 1.

Paying cash in hand to tradesmen is an accepted practice in Scotland. Paying cash in hand makes the service cheaper for the people and it allows the tradesmen to not declare the cash in hand payment, which results in tax evasion.

The practice is against the law, but it is widely practiced and accepted.

“It is quite common to get your house painted or windows cleaned and pay with cash without asking for an invoice. It is illegal, but it worth it for both parties. It is cheaper for me, and he (the worker) doesn’t need to declare the cash. Well… it is not my responsibility anyway, it is the painter’s problem.” (Scottish participant - working for a big private company)

Example 2.

Taking equipment home from the work place for private purposes seems to be accepted and treated as an informal benefit for the employees. The equipment belongs to the institute, factory, council, but people treat it as their own.

“Taking the equipment home is fine with me, if they let me know, that they take this and that for the weekend and they bring it back. No problem. In fact, if I know that someone

moving house, for example or wants to carry something big I offer that they could take the van. I mean, why not, I try to help them if I can. But if someone would use the tool, to do some on the side job, for cash in hand, I mean to earn money, that is a problem for me. Because I don't want to encourage that. " (Scottish participant - higher position at the institution)

Example 3.

NHS services are free, but the procedures are slow. If one's condition is not life threatening it can take a long time to get a treatment or get the necessary tests done at all. However, having a doctor friend or family member can enhance the chances for a better treatment without going private.

"I don't get many requests, but it is something that doctors can do, I mean that is totally accepted that you and your family can get preferential treatment. I think it is treated like some kind of privilege of the doctors. So for example I had some problems and rather than going through the NHS procedure, which wouldn't guarantee that I would get the test that I wanted I just phoned up a friend and he

arranged it for me to undertake the procedure. It is not a cheap one, so there is a board which decides if people can take the test or not. But I bypassed all that." (Scottish participant - doctor at NHS)

Example 4.

At public services (council, NHS), public offices, universities and state funded institution in general there is a formal procedure in place for job advertisement and having a fair recruitment process, which includes open advertisement and interviewing at least 3 candidates in front of an interview board. However, positions are often informally allocated, but the formal procedures are carried out at the expense of the applicants, who didn't know that the job is already 'taken'.

"…this practice is very common, you see job advertisements all the time in academia, and for example at the Scottish Government or other public institutions, where you can see from the call that they are written for someone, that they want a specific person. So you know they have the Essential and Desirable criteria, and they write something very specific at the essential, that only one person has and often if you are familiar with the people working in the area, you know who they meant." (Scottish participant - working in academia and public office)

Appendix 3: In-depth Interview Themes

Before starting the interview

(1) I will explain how the conversation will take place. I will tell them about health and safety issues, and I will remind them that we can stop the conversation any time and that they can leave if they choose to not to take part into the research.

(2) I will let the participants know that in the event of any information being received indicating any possible harm or wrong doing to someone involved in the research, that this will be reported to an appropriate agency.

(3) There will be a possibility for the participants to ask questions regarding the research and the subject, if they wish to clarify certain issues and details.

Interview themes:

Potential areas for exploration through the interview include education, healthcare, housing, local government, police.

I will ask open ended questions referring back to the project description provided in the Participant Information Sheet. I will let them talk about situations that they think are relevant and as the interview unfolds I will ask more direct question regarding corruption.

Guiding questions:

(1) Please tell me about a situation when you had to use your personal connections ('asking a friend' or a favour) in order to achieve something, if any? (2) Please tell me about a situation when you felt that someone required you to pay a bribe, if any? (3) Have you ever given a gift to someone in a professional context? (4) In the event that you have ever felt the need to give a gift in this context, how (if you are in fact aware of how you consciously or subconsciously make this decision) do you determine the value/nature of that gift? (5) Can you tell me a situation when someone else initiated such a transaction, if any? (6) What do you think about these practices? (7) How do you regard these actions? (positive / negative / necessary).

Appendix 4: Focus Group Themes

Before starting the focus group session: I will greet the participants and explain how the conversation will take place. I will remind them that they can leave the room any time if they choose not to take further part into the research.

Focus group session:

(1) I will start with a brief introduction of the subject by providing a summary of previous research and my research objectives, as well as the scholarly work regarding informal economic practices, all in simple language, avoiding any information which might influence the content of the focus group.

(2) There will be a possibility for the participants to ask questions regarding the research and the subject, if they wish to clarify certain issues and details. I will remind them that I will use audio recording and will take notes.

(3) I will present cases of informal economic transactions and perceptions collected during the unstructured interviews and ask the participants to reflect on those:

I will modify the names and locations so they won't be recognisable.

Example for a case and 'perception' of corruption and informal economic practices:

1. "It is hard to define corruption, because other people in the institution don't even realise that what they do is corrupt, they just simply go with the flow. I am conscious about it but I have to do it, because often my boss does it and I am forced to take part in it: everybody is involved and they are involved at higher levels as well. It is more comfortable to take part in it. 'Just get on with it' - I tell to myself. Some also say that the salaries are too low, but it is not true really. I heard such excuses from colleagues, that 'everybody does it, so I can as well'."

2. "There are certain communication methods and typical questions that the parents ask when initiating a proposal: 'My son will get the best grade in mathematics, won't he?', or, 'What we can do to get a better grade?'. But after 40-years teaching you know just from the behaviour of the parents and you feel when someone expects something (for example) in return for the "end of the year" present. But nowadays parents can surprise me, really, some

of them clearly states an offer. One of the parents offered to buy a new electronic board for the school, if the headmaster fires one of the teachers."

3. "It is quite common to get your house painted or windows cleaned and pay with cash without asking for invoice. It is illegal, but it worth it for both party. It is cheaper for me, and he (the worker) doesn't need to declare the cash. Well… it is not my responsibility anyway, it is the painter's problem."

Examples for guiding questions:

- What do you think about it in general?

- What would you do in a similar situation?

- Would you regard this as corruption or something else?

- Have you noticed any similar practices or requests in your environment? Or have you heard about any?

4. I will end the session and let the participants know that they can contact me in case they want to add or change something or withdraw from the study.

Appendix 5: Visual Tool Focus Group

Corruption	Not corruption
Acceptable	Not acceptable

Appendix 6: Consent Form

University of Glasgow

College of Social Sciences

Consent Form

Title of Project: ***Exploring the socio-legal aspects of low-level corruption: A study of informal economic transactions of long-term local residents and migrants in Scotland and Hungary***

Name of Researcher: ***Fanni Gyurko*** *(PhD researcher in Central and East European Studies)*

I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

Consent on method:

I consent to interviews being audio-recorded. ☐

I consent to focus group conversations being audio-recorded. ☐

Confidentiality:

I acknowledge that participants will be referred to by a pseudonym. ☐

Data usage and storage

- All names and other materials likely to identify individuals will be anonymised.
- The material will be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage at all times.
- The material may be used in future academic publications.

I consent that the data may be shared or re-used in accordance with the University of Glasgow Data Sharing Guidance. ☐

Participation:

I agree to take part in this research study **and** the conversation being audio-recorded ☐

I agree to take part in this research study **without the conversation** being audio-recorded ☐

Name of Participant …… Signature ……..

Date ……

Name of Researcher …… Signature ……..

Appendix 7: Participant Information Overview

Long-term local Hungarians:

Name	**Nationality**	**Place of residence**	**Age**	**Gender**	**Associated Occupations**
Zsolt	Hungarian	Budapest	50-60	male	pensioner, chemist
Bela (focus group only)	***Hungarian***	***Budapest***	***30-40***	***male***	***trainee lawyer, language teacher***
Laura	Hungarian	Budapest	30-40	female	doctor
Judit	Hungarian	Budapest	30-40	female	PhD, stay at home mother, language teaching
Anett	Hungarian	Budapest	40-50	female	estate agent, land lady
Katalin	Hungarian	Budapest	50-60	female	primary school teacher
Imre	Hungarian	Budapest	20-30	male	tradesman
Anita (focus group only)	***Hungarian***	***Budapest***	***30-40***	***female***	***postal worker***
Attila (focus group only)	***Hungarian***	***Budapest***	***40-50***	***male***	***tradesman***
Maria	Hungarian	Budapest	40-50	female	academic lecturer
Zoltan	Hungarian	Budapest	40-50	male	business owner
Pal	Hungarian	Budapest	50-60	male	tradesman
Andras	Hungarian	Budapest	20-30	male	property owner, landlord
Gabor	Hungarian	Budapest	30-40	male	entertainment industry
Valeria	Hungarian	Budapest	40-50	female	civil organisation, charity worker
Marcel	Hungarian	Budapest	30-40	male	sport organisation, self-employed

British migrants:

Name	Nationality	Place of residence	Age	Gender	Associated Occupations
Katie (+focus group)	British migrant	Budapest	30-40	female	PhD student, maternity leave
Rose	British migrant	Budapest	40-50	female	university teacher, private teacher, translation
Charles (+focus group)	British migrant	Budapest	40-50	male	estate agent, landlord
David (+focus group)	British migrant	Budapest	50-60	male	self-employed, language teaching, marketing adviser
Andrew	British migrant	Budapest	40-50	male	language school manager
Emily	British migrant	Budapest	40-50	female	language school, exam centre
Craig	British migrant	Budapest	20-30	male	entertainment industry, student
William	British migrant	Budapest	40-50	male	academia, language teaching
Angus	British migrant	Budapest	60-70	male	restaurant owner, language teaching
George	British migrant	Budapest	40-50	male	entrepreneur
Chris+ focus group	British migrant	Budapest	40-50	male	language school owner
John	British migrant	Budapest	30-40	male	unemployed

Long-term local Scottish:

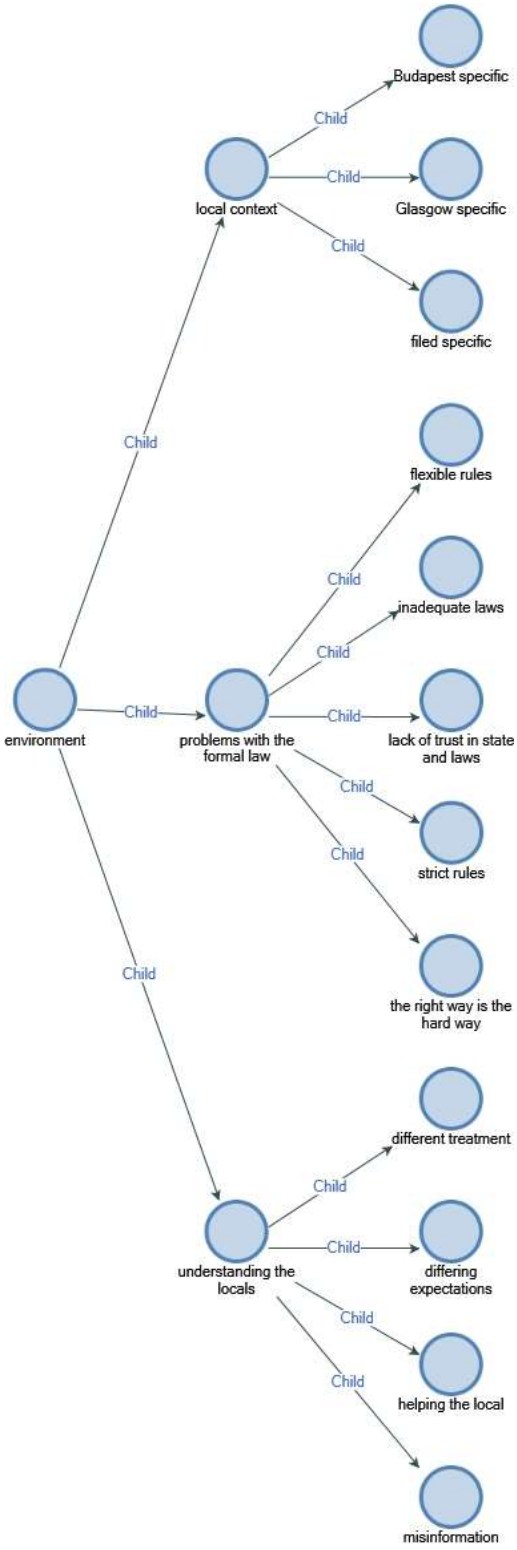
Name	Nationality	Place of residence	Age	Gender	Associated Occupations
Angela	Scottish	Glasgow	20-30	female	nurse, social care
Freya	Scottish	Glasgow	30-40	female	Primary school teacher
Duncan	Scottish	Glasgow	40-50	male	tradesman
Jamie (+focus group)	Scottish	Glasgow	30-40	male	doctor
Richard (+focus group)	Scottish	Glasgow	50-60	male	accountant, private company
Scott (+focus group)	Scottish	Glasgow	40-50	male	unemployed, council worker
Liam	Scottish	Glasgow	50-60	male	council worker
Lewis	Scottish	Glasgow	50-60	male	hardware store owner
James	Scottish	Glasgow	40-50	male	academia, Home Office, Scottish Government employee
Cameron	Scottish	Glasgow	40-50	male	postal worker
Steve	Scottish	Glasgow	40-50	male	self-employed
Derek	Scottish	Glasgow	40-50	male	finance, private company

Hungarian migrants:

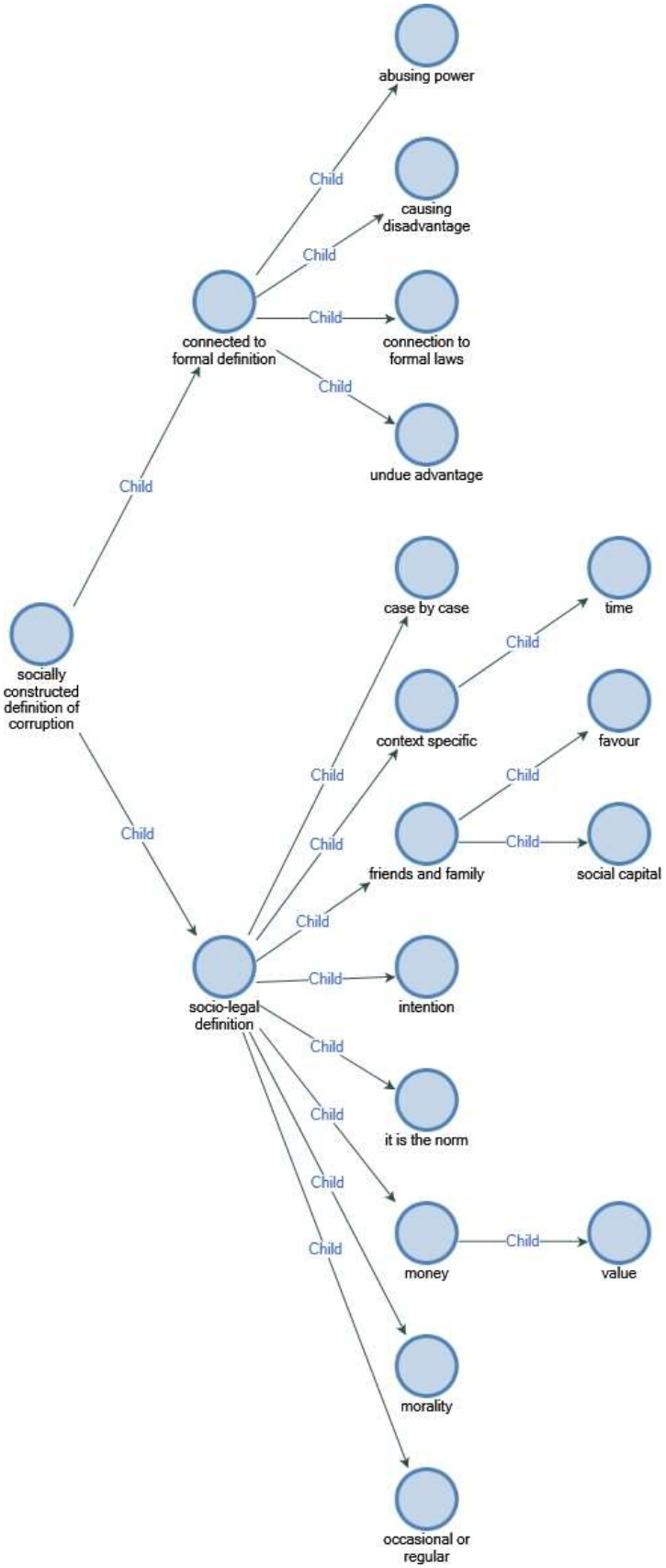
Name	**Nationality**	**Place of residence**	**Age**	**gender**	**Associated Occupations**
Klara	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	30-40	female	job seeker, social care
Panna (+ focus group)	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	30-40	female	psychologist, social care, unemployed
Aron (+focus group)	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	30-40	Male	entertainment industry, student
Jozsef	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	40-50	male	social care
Jolan	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	30-40	female	administrator
Attila	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	40-50	male	bed and breakfast employee
Istvan	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	30-40	male	factory worker
Miklos	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	40-50	male	tradesman
Nora	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	20-30	female	student, IT company employee, shop assistant
Erika	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	40-50	female	cleaner, unemployed
Bence	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	20-30	male	factory worker, transportation company
Marta	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	40-50	female	academia, Home Office employee
Anna	Hungarian migrant	Glasgow	30-40	female	academia, shop assistant
Dora (focus group only)	***Hungarian migrant***	***Glasgow***	***20-30***	***female***	***shop assistant, student***

Appendix 8: Node-report

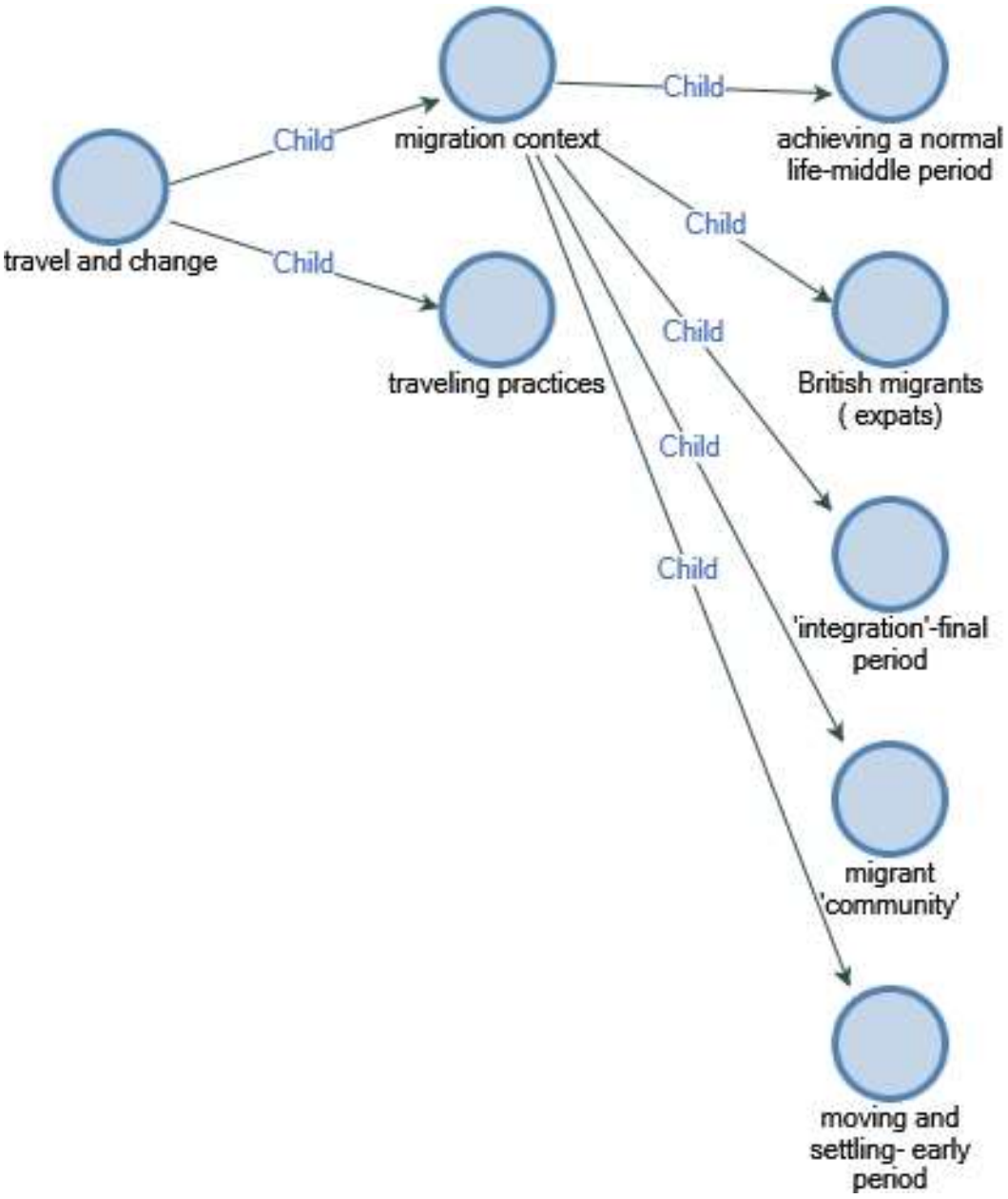
Nodes Coded Under Environment



Nodes Coded Under Socially Constructed Definition of Corruption



Nodes Coded Under Travel and Change



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