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(In)Security, Family and Settlement: Migration Decisions Amongst Central and East European Families in Scotland

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Drawing on extensive qualitative research into experiences of migration and settlement among Central and East European (CEE) migrants living in Scotland, this article examines the role of intersecting emotional and material (in)securities in migrant families' decision-making regarding and experiences of longer-term settlement. The article queries fixed or given understandings of either 'family' or 'security' and explores the complex and sometimes contradictory relationship between them. In so doing, it makes a number of significant and interconnected theoretical and empirical contributions to existing research in the field of family migration. Through a critical analysis of the relationship between family and (in)security the article offers nuanced insight into the ways in which family processes of reunion, separation and (re)formation link to decisions regarding migration and settlement. The intersecting and sometimes contradictory forms of emotional and material support, obligation and vulnerability which both family relations and processes of migration and settlement entail are critically analysed by bringing together theoretical frameworks of social (in)security and understandings of family as 'made' rather than 'given'. Finally, attention given to the temporal aspects of (in)security, as well as the transnational aspects of migrants' lives, provides new ways of understanding the open-endedness of decision-making processes relating to migration and settlement, especially where these involve multiple decision-makers.

Keywords: family migration; settlement; (in)security; Central and Eastern Europe; Scotland

Introduction

Migration from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), predominantly from the 'new' EU countries, has 'dramatically changed the scale, composition and characteristics of immigration to the UK' (Pollard, Latorre and Sriskandarajah 2008: 7). This rapid influx of people was prompted by the ongoing upheavals of postsocialist political, economic and social transformations leading to new insecurities within those countries on the one hand and new opportunities for international migration on the other. The freedom of movement

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acquired by citizens of a significant subset of CEE countries as a result of the European Union (EU) enlargements in 2004 and 2007 facilitated not only labour migration but also family migration.¹ Indeed, for the UK, the period between 2004 and the decision to leave the EU following the ‘Brexit’ referendum of 2016² might be described as something of a unique moment in terms of the opportunities and flexibilities it offered for family migration and the patterns of family separation, reunion and (re)formation these engendered.

By the time of the 2011 census, there were approximately 135 000 migrants from the A8/A2 countries living in Scotland – the largest single group (over 55 000) from Poland (Krausova and Vargas-Silva 2013). There has also been some migration from the non-EU countries of the CEE region, yet citizens of these countries are subject to immigration control (as opposed to having rights to free movement) which impacts significantly on their opportunities for economic and family migration as well as settlement.³ The demographic composition and patterns of migration within the EU have changed quite markedly over the last decade. Initially migration from the new EU countries was dominated by young, single men (Home Office 2009) who often engaged in temporary or circular patterns of labour migration. However, subsequently larger numbers of women as well as a broader age range of migrants started arriving. This trend was linked first, to a sharp increase in the number of CEE children in British schools and then to growing numbers of children born to CEE parents in the UK (ONS 2014), reflecting trends towards family reunion/formation and processes of settlement (cf. McGhee, Heath and Trevena 2012, 2013; Ryan 2011; Ryan and Sales 2011; Ryan, Sales, Tilki and Siara 2009; Tromans, Natamba and Jeffries 2009; White 2011; White and Ryan 2008).

These newer trends are particularly significant in Scotland where both national government and local authorities – especially those in the more peripheral and rural regions – have stated a wish to encourage the longer-term settlement of migrants as a positive response to Scotland’s economic and demographic needs (Scottish Parliament 2015, 2016). This political will, in combination with a generally lower density of population, has created some attractive conditions for migrant families. Previous studies have shown, for example, that the greater availability of social housing in Scotland can be important in facilitating family reunion and settlement (Trevena, McGhee and Heath 2013). Rural contexts have also been found to be attractive to some, particularly families with younger children, due to their perceived friendliness and peacefulness (Flynn and Kay 2017: 64). However, limited employment opportunities, difficulties in accessing services and language-learning opportunities, especially from more remote locations, as well as barriers to integration in what can be more ‘closed’ communities, can also cause problems for families settling in rural areas (SSAMIS 2016).

Drawing on extensive qualitative research amongst CEE migrants living in both urban and rural areas of Scotland, this article examines the role of intersecting emotional and material (in)securities in migrant families’ decision-making regarding and experiences of longer-term settlement. In so doing, it makes a number of significant and interconnected theoretical and empirical contributions to existing research in the field of family migration. Firstly, a critical analysis of the relationship between family and (in)security helps to provide a more nuanced understanding of the complex and sometimes contradictory ways in which family processes of reunion, separation and (re)formation link to decisions regarding migration and settlement. Secondly, the theoretical lens of social (in)security, in combination with an understanding of families as ‘made’ rather than ‘given’, enables us better to unpick the intersecting emotional and material forms of support, obligation and vulnerability which both family relations and processes of migration and settlement entail. Finally, attention to the temporal aspects of (in)security, as well as the transnational aspects of migrants’ lives, provides new insight into the open-endedness of decision-making processes relating to migration and settlement, especially where these involve multiple decision-makers. By drawing on a study which has involved migrants from CEE countries both within the EU and beyond, we are also able to explore some of the ways in which immigration status and (restrictions on) free movement impact on families and their opportunities for longer-term settle-

ment. This may be helpful in considering some of the possible ramifications of currently ongoing Brexit negotiations and their outcomes for migrant families which have, until now, benefitted from relatively generous social entitlements and freedom of movement as EU citizens. Whilst not the main focus of the paper, this is a point to which we return in our conclusions.

In the following section we explore the theoretical frameworks introduced above in more detail. We begin by explaining the anthropological theorisations of social security, which are central to our wider study. We link this to contemporary debates interrogating the meanings of ‘family’ and discuss approaches which focus on relationships that are ‘made’ rather than ‘given’. This combined approach allows us to explore family (in)securities as these relate to decisions surrounding and experiences of migration and settlement, and helps to avoid assumptions that family relationships are necessarily positive, supportive or stable. The methodology section provides information about the wider study from which the findings are drawn and explains the methods of data collection and analysis employed. The three empirical sections are structured to reflect the article’s three major contributions, as outlined above. In the first of these sections we explore some of the complex configurations of family which influenced and/or were produced by migration and settlement and the (in)securities that these configurations entailed. In the second section we focus on the multiple and intersecting material and emotional aspects of (in)security relating to different family members’ needs, aspirations and experiences. In the final section we emphasise the importance of a longer temporal perspective, showing how past (in)securities as well as future aspirations impact on decision-making in the present, and how periods of family ‘settlement’ may nonetheless coincide with and/or lead to new separations and mobilities.

Family, (in)security and migration: theories and practice

This article and the wider study on which it is based seek explicitly to bring together emotional and material aspects of migrants’ lived experiences and the ways in which these influence decisions concerning migration and longer-term settlement. It does so by taking theorisations of ‘social security’ as a central conceptual framework through which to explore intersecting emotional and material (in)securities. This framework, originally developed through the empirical and theoretical work of Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann (1994), moves beyond limited conceptualisations of social security as equivalent to formal welfare provision, focusing on the diverse and complex ways in which people produce securities (social, economic, personal and cultural) and mitigate risk through a combination of public and private resources, formal and informal networks, and state and non-state structures. Importantly, it encompasses both material and emotional aspects of security and allows us to consider these not as separate and independent spheres but as closely interconnected. These connections may be mutually productive where material securities bring with them a reduction in anxieties, or where positive social relations provide a basis for access to material needs. They may also be in tension or conflict, for example, where a search for greater material security comes at the cost of separations from loved ones (cf. Sime 2018). Hence, this conceptual framework dovetails usefully with a consideration of the complex and intersecting emotional and material connections and obligations of family relations, as discussed in more detail below.

‘Social security’ as a concept has been further developed by researchers interested in negotiations of social, economic and political transformation in post-socialist countries. Here attention has been paid to the complex strategies which people have developed, drawing on both historically informed expectations and practices, as well as contemporary realities, in their interactions with state structures and their use of informal networks and personal resources to manage uncertainty and create securities for themselves and their families (Schwarz 2012; Thelen and Read 2007). When considering migration from the post-socialist region to Western Europe, this further development of the concept is helpful in thinking about the ways in which migrants bring together

experiences and expectations from ‘there’ and ‘here’, ‘then’ and ‘now’. Moreover, the attention drawn here, and in the original conceptualisation of social security, to temporal dimensions and the interconnectedness of past, present and future in people’s understandings and negotiations of what it means to be ‘secure’ (Kay 2012; Thelen and Read 2007; von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 1994), is useful in considering migration, longer-term settlement and, indeed, configurations of ‘family’ as open-ended, dynamic processes evolving over time. Taking this focus on the complexity of the concept further, we consciously use the term (in)security to illustrate that neither security nor insecurity are absolute and that their relationship is not one of binary opposites but rather of intersecting and dynamic elements.

The idea of ‘family’ has been increasingly challenged from scholarly as well as social, political and legal perspectives over a number of decades. On the one hand, families are becoming less uniform and a wider variety of relationships, as well as the propensity for these to change and reconfigure over time, are commonly recognised as part of the ‘modern family’. On the other hand, theorisations of ‘family’, from within sociology and anthropology in particular, have strongly contested the notion of family as grounded in fixed, biologically or legally defined relationships, emphasising instead the importance of a range of practices, obligations and emotional connections involved in ‘doing’ or ‘making’ family (Morgan 1996). Existing studies have explored the ways in which everyday practices of sharing food, providing and receiving care, co-habiting, socialising and managing personal interactions constitute and ‘display’ particular relationships as family (Carsten 2004; Finch 2007). Such practices require both practical and emotional effort and are often expected to yield practical as well as emotional benefits. However, idealised notions of families as places of comfort, safety and support have also been critiqued, as family obligations and responsibilities, as well as uneven power relations within families, can bring burdens, conflicts and anxieties (Finch and Mason 1993).

In migration research, concerns about what family is and how it is practiced and recognised are reflected in studies of both family-related migration and transnational families. The former have explored the ways in which family membership and family formations – for example, cross-border marriages (Constable 2004) – intersect with migration choices and opportunities, both through formal definitions governing receiving states’ migration policies and in relation to more-complex social and interpersonal networks and relationships (Kofman 2004). Studies of transnational families have interrogated the impacts and implications of ‘doing family at a distance’ (Heath, McGhee and Trevena 2011: 7), for example, through examining the ways in which families which include both movers and stayers negotiate the emotional and practical aspects of caring responsibilities (McGhee *et al.* 2013; Parreñas 2005). In both cases, this research has been linked to a wider emotional turn in migration studies, critiquing ‘the emphasis on labour migration and the separation of the economic (...) from the social’ (Kofman 2004: 262) and calling for greater emphasis on personal relationships, intimacy, loneliness and separation as integral aspects of, and important factors in, decision-making and choices relating to migration (Heath *et al.* 2011; Mai and King 2009).

Such scholarly debate which questions and critiques the notion of ‘family’ as a conceptual category notwithstanding, family continues to play a highly significant role as an empirical category, both because people continue to attribute great importance to ‘family relationships’ and because it is enshrined in legal codes, including in migration law. For the purposes of this article, in the empirical sections which follow we have been led by our participants’ own definitions of family: the relationships and connections which they discussed as family or to which they referred in response to our questions about the forms of support and relational ties most commonly associated with family and the ways in which they explained these as linked to their decisions regarding and experiences of migration and longer-term settlement.

Fieldwork, methodology and the wider study

The data on which this article is based was gathered as part of an Economic and Social Research Council-funded study *Experiences of Social Security and Prospects for Long-Term Settlement in Scotland amongst Migrants from Central Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union* (SSAMIS). Fieldwork undertaken between June 2014 and December 2015 involved the collection of 207 in-depth interviews with CEE migrants in four locations: the cities of Glasgow and Aberdeen and the rural regions of Aberdeenshire and Angus in North-East Scotland. Our participants had been resident in Scotland for more than one and less than ten years. In addition, observations were carried out at migrants' places of work, language classes and sites where migrants go to access services. Sixty expert interviews were conducted with a range of stakeholders – representatives of local councils, service providers, migrant associations, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) practitioners and employers.

Migrant participants were accessed mainly through their places of work, through ESOL classes, at sites of service provision and through snowballing techniques. Whilst participants were recruited first and foremost as individuals, the snowballing process sometimes led the researchers to other family members; several participants invited their partners, siblings or adult children to take part in the conversation. These small-group interviews and clusters of individual interviews involving multiple family members were often particularly rich in revealing the emotional and practical dynamics of the relationship between family, (in)security and migration/settlement.

Reflecting to some extent the dominant migratory flows from particular CEE countries to Scotland, the majority of our participants were from Poland (N=83), Latvia (N=42) and Lithuania (N=28) as well as from other EU countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia; N=42) and from non-EU countries of the former Soviet Union (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Ukraine; N=12). Participants included 129 women and 78 men and were aged between 19 and 70, although the majority were aged 25–49 (N=157). Most interviews were carried out in the migrants' native language, Polish, Russian⁴ or Lithuanian or, where that was not possible, in English.⁵ All interviews were fully transcribed (and translated into English), then analysed using NVivo 10 software.

Complex configurations of family, migration and (in)security

'Family migration' encompasses a wide variety of family configurations, migrations and institutional contexts. This is especially true for the EU context, which provides a unique setting for family migration in terms of flexibility of movement (Bailey and Boyle 2004). In EU law, the concept of family is fairly broad and goes beyond the nuclear family. It includes the rights of adult dependent children and ascendant relatives, thus recognising the existence of wider kinship relations. The legal framework of the EU allows families to move freely within the Union and to constitute and re-constitute their families largely as they wish. This right is widely used and, in addition to processes of family migration involving spouses and children, other more-extended and complex patterns are emerging. In this section we explore some of the (in)securities linked to the different family configurations which emerged through our research and the ways in which these influenced and/or were produced by decisions regarding migration and settlement.

Although financial insecurities (connected with low wage levels, loss of job, debt, etc.) remain the main triggers behind migration from the CEE region, recent studies have noted the growing role of family considerations in the decision-making process (Moskal 2010; Ryan 2011; Ryan and Sales 2011; Ryan *et al.* 2009). The most common pattern is staged migration, where a 'pioneer' moves first and is subsequently joined by their partner, children and other family members (cf. Moskal 2010; Ryan *et al.* 2009). One of the reasons for

such ‘pioneer’ migration is to mitigate the risks and uncertainties connected with migration and develop a more secure position – e.g. finding employment and accommodation before moving other family members. Frequently, these ‘pioneers’ arrive with the intention of a temporary stay; when it becomes extended, previously unplanned relocations of other family members often take place.

Re-uniting family as a source of security

Although the male pioneer, who is subsequently followed by his wife and children, remains the most typical pattern (cf. Drinkwater, Eade and Garapich 2006; Home Office 2009), our study included both a significant number of women pioneers and a variety of intergenerational configurations, with older children, for example, acting as pioneers who were followed by parents, younger siblings and others. In Kornelia’s case, the first family member to leave their small-town home in Poland and move to Glasgow was her eldest daughter, Dorota. Following a difficult period of separation, Kornelia followed, despite agonising over the new separation from her husband and other children that this entailed. Once established in a job and having built a reputation as a ‘model worker’ in her factory, she was able to create the greater material security required to bring over first her son and then her husband and younger daughter.

When I was leaving, no one believed I would go, and my husband says – ‘You are a hero’. (...) I didn’t know what would await me, and being separated from my family. It’s easy to say. You have to experience it to understand it. (...) Even though I had support in Dorota (...) she understood many things when she came over here to Scotland and she was alone. She wrote me this letter that I was crying over for a week. One of the things she wrote was that she knows how difficult things are for us and what pains her most is that she is helpless, that she can’t help us but she swears this will change (Kornelia, 57, married, 3 children, Poland).⁶

Ewa, also from Poland, moved to a small town in rural Scotland with her husband and three school-age children, motivated primarily by the wish to join her parents and siblings, who had left Poland a few years earlier. Whilst Ewa’s nuclear family moved in a single migration, they were part of a – not uncommon – process of wider family reunion in the UK:

As far as [coming to] Scotland is concerned, my whole family lives here. They all came one after the other. I was the last to join. All my siblings... My parents... (...) We were on our own there [in Poland] so we wanted to come here... (...) Why shouldn’t you take advantage of the opportunity to be together? (Ewa, 37, married, 3 children, Poland).

As both examples show, patterns of family migration and reunion are complex, often staged over time and involving both nuclear and extended family members. They are also often incomplete and open-ended processes, as discussed in more detail in our final section. Unlike Ewa, most of our participants did not have what they would describe as their ‘whole family’ living in Scotland: Kornelia’s elderly parents remained in Poland and were a source of worry, whilst others who experienced a period of family unification in Scotland found this disrupted again as adult children, siblings or partners made different choices about the length and permanence of settlement.

Nonetheless, as illustrated in both cases above, many of our participants attributed great significance to having close family members nearby. For both Ewa and Kornelia, strong emotional bonds were key to expe-

periences and expectations of family relationships and part of ‘making family’. They viewed these as best nurtured and most rewarding where there is close physical proximity. Indeed, as Kornelia makes clear, distance can create deep and painful emotional insecurities. The ‘helplessness’ which Dorota experienced when separated from her family and the ‘opportunities’ which Ewa was able to take advantage of thanks to her parents’ and siblings’ earlier migration also point to the practical support and assistance which were assumed to be part of ‘proper’ family practices (Morgan 1996).

As noted in the wider literature on family (Finch and Mason 1993), however, there is no universal or automatic link between family and either emotional or material security. Indeed our research has shown that family insecurity can also play an important role in decisions regarding migration and settlement; the breakdown of relationships and changing configurations of family could both motivate decisions to migrate and shape choices regarding longer-term settlement.

Family (in)securities, separations and reconfigurations

As our fieldwork progressed, we were struck by the number of single mothers who explained their move to Scotland as part of a search for a ‘better life’. For women like Elizabete, the experience of single parenthood and the obligation to provide materially for their children that this placed upon them was compounded by wider post-socialist insecurities, including precarious employment and labour-market discrimination, fluctuating prices and uncertain access to welfare services and state support, as well as financial barriers to accessing (higher) education. When Elizabete moved from Latvia with her young daughter to join her mother in a small town in rural Scotland, the ‘better life’ she sought certainly entailed not only greater financial security but also better educational opportunities for her daughter:

Because I’m single mum I’m looking for ways to support my daughter and make sure she has best educational opportunities as possible. (...) Because here I can just work and support myself and my daughter, I don’t have so much worries about her education in the future, so it’s like (...) for my daughter’s future, really (Elizabete, 39, divorced, 1 child, Latvia).

Elizabete’s migration also involved reunion with her mother, with whom she shared a council house and who provided both financial/practical and emotional support in caring for her daughter. This was not an uncommon experience. Iza’s story further exemplifies the complex and changing family configurations and redistribution of family practices relating to childcare, material support and practical assistance which staged and dynamic processes of migration and settlement can entail:

I was here first. The first year I was here, my daughter was with my sister in Poland. Because when I was starting out here, you know, I was living with some friends so I couldn’t bring over my sister with my one child and her two children. So by the time I’d applied for a council flat, by the time I’d received a permanent job, a contract and so on, these things took time. It took time for me to gather enough money to bring them over. (...) This was a rather difficult time (Iza, 31, single, 1 child, Poland).

Iza went on to explain that, while half of the family were in Scotland (herself, her two sisters and their children), the other half had remained in Poland (her father her two brothers and their families). Nevertheless, this family configuration was fluid, allowing the family as a whole to resolve a variety of (in)securities and provide different family members with the emotional, material and practical support they required. While Iza and her sisters were settled in Scotland and her father and brothers were settled in Poland at the time of interview,

various family members changed country of residence periodically, depending on their own and the wider family's needs. It was Iza's need for childcare that had first spurred the migration of her sisters and, later of her younger brother (who eventually returned to Poland). Iza's father, while living permanently in Poland, visited Scotland for extended periods of time, especially in the winter when he was without work in Poland and took on seasonal packing and fish factory work which was readily available in this rural area of Scotland.

Unexpected separations and reconfigurations can, of course, also occur in the country of migration, either after a family has relocated together or following an initial period of reunion. In such cases, new and unexpected insecurities may arise which are often linked to decisions regarding continued stays or return to the country of origin for some or all family members. Mariusz, for example, originally moved to Scotland from Poland as a 'pioneer' and subsequently brought his wife and child over. The couple's second child was born in Scotland. However, after several years the marriage broke down and the couple, now legally separated, continued to live in the same mid-sized town, sharing childcare on the basis of an informal agreement. Whilst Mariusz was unsure about whether he wanted to stay in Scotland long term, any prospect of a return to Poland was complicated by his family situation. His ex-wife had formed a new relationship in Scotland and had no intention of returning to Poland. His eldest daughter, who had been born in Poland, longed to return, in particular to be closer to her grandmother and favourite cousin. However, she had been living in Scotland since she was four years old and Mariusz was unsure about her ability to reintegrate into the Polish education system (cf. Ryan and Sales 2011; Trevena 2014). Mariusz' own plans and intentions seemed to be constantly changing or on hold and, in practical terms, he could not envisage a return in the near future. He was very committed to maintaining close emotional ties with his children and to having an active involvement in their upbringing and his way of 'doing family', in this case fatherhood, was a key motivating factor for him to stay in Scotland, for the time being at least.

Unlike Elisabete and Iza, Mariusz and his ex-wife had no other relatives living in Scotland and he felt that this breaking up of the wider family made their situation all the harder to negotiate:

It is really all about the children now, to pull ourselves together and try to give them a proper upbringing. Well, I am telling you, my older daughter is simply (...) she was told it was me who dragged them all here and she holds a grudge against me, that I dragged them away from the family, from her gran and so on. So, you know, that's the first issue. The second one is we don't have anyone from family here, we've broken up (...) the ties it seems... (Mariusz, 37, separated, 2 children, Poland).

Nonetheless, for these three families of EU citizens, the relative flexibility and freedom of movement to which they were entitled allowed a considerable degree of fluidity and interchangeability of family practices and relationships, as well as multiple possibilities in terms of family configurations. The same flexibility is not available to non-EU migrants and this can compound sometimes extreme experiences of insecurity, for example in cases of family breakdown. Valerija, a Russian citizen, initially moved to England as part of the seasonal agricultural workers programme. During this time she met a Latvian man and they married. As the spouse of an EU citizen she gained the right to reside in the UK and the couple made Scotland their home. However, following the birth of their child, the relationship broke down. Valerija filed for divorce due to her husband's substance abuse and violent behaviour, but was faced with the prospect of deportation when the Home Office queried her continued right to reside. With support from her employer and good legal advice she was able to formalise her status; however, the experience was extremely distressing and added a layer of insecurity not faced by our EU participants. Moreover, unlike Elisabete or Iza, Valerija's migration status afforded her far more limited options in terms of reconfiguring her family to receive support from other relatives. Her parents and sister lived in Russia. Not only was it impossible for her to bring them over to live in Scotland but even

shorter family visits, in either direction, were complicated by the time-consuming and costly process of applying for visas and the subsequent long and anxious wait to see whether these would be granted. In these circumstances, family configurations are to a greater extent, shaped by immigration policies, rather than their desires, needs and choices. Families are less able to respond flexibly to changing needs which may be caused not only by the breakdown of relationships but also by new family formations, marriages and births taking place in the country of migration.

New family formations and the role of children in determining longer-term stays

For a significant number of our participants, new family formations had arisen as a direct result of migration. These new formations involved finding a partner and sometimes, by extension, new wider family relations, but also, and perhaps most significantly, the birth of children in Scotland. Such new family formations were frequently described as a significant factor behind longer-term settlement in Scotland. Gatis became part of an extended family of Latvian migrants when he met Madara and her older sister, Dita, in England. The three travelled to Scotland together and Madara and Gatis became a couple. At the time of interview, their child had recently started primary school, whilst the family's increasing sense of security had led Madara's older son also to move to Scotland as well as Dita's two adult daughters and grandchildren. As the three of them explained, the extended family was now well embedded in the village where they lived, the children were settled at school and Dita's daughter was engaged to a local Scottish man. Although they remained concerned about their elderly parents still in Latvia, there was little prospect of a return:

Of course, we can go back and find a job, but I don't see any prospects for my grandchildren in Latvia. What will they do there? Here they go to a good school and I don't have to pay a lot of money because they go to a state school. They go on school trips, and they're treated well. The teachers are good and treat them very well (Dita, 45, single, 2 children, Latvia).

For Dita, Gatis and Madara, like Elizabete cited earlier, the vision of a 'better future' for their children (and grandchildren) was the primary motivation behind their long-term or permanent stay, but this was also rooted in a more generalised sense of material and emotional security and broader family connections within this rural Scottish context. As Madara (38, in a relationship, 2 children, Latvia) explained, *It's quiet here and better for the child and I don't need to worry about him going outside and something happening. (...) Anything but Aberdeen – it's noisy.* For others, like Mariusz, the different and sometimes contradictory practical needs and emotional desires of both parents and children could make decisions about longer-term stays complicated. Nonetheless, as children who had been born (or raised from a young age) in Scotland settled into local schools and developed friendship networks and proficiency in English, ideas about return to the country of origin faded for many families and longer-term settlement appeared something of a *fait accompli* (cf. Trevena 2014). In the following section we explore in more detail the complex and sometimes competing intersections of emotional and material (in)securities linked to decisions regarding longer-term settlement in Scotland.

Intersecting emotional and material (in)securities

As noted earlier in this article, family practices and obligations entail both material and emotional effort (Morgan 1996). For many of our participants it was precisely this combination of material and emotional support which provided a strong sense of connectedness and was viewed as key to 'proper' ways of doing family. At

the same time, questions of material and emotional (in)security also underpinned decisions relating to migration and settlement insofar as these were intended to secure a ‘better life’ for both individual migrants and their wider families (cf. also Flynn and Kay 2017; Sime 2018; Stella, Flynn and Gawlewicz 2018). For Andrei, from Bulgaria, the arrival of family members, including his wife, daughter, elderly mother and disabled brother, was part of an extended process of family reunification, interwoven with and interdependent on a parallel process of growing material and emotional security. After several years of seasonal farm work, Andrei had been offered a permanent full-time contract in a food-processing factory and the material security this offered allowed him to begin reuniting his extended family. At the time of our interview, his wife had already moved to join him and they were planning to bring their young daughter over very soon, to be followed by Andrei’s brother and mother in due course. Andrei explained that this reunion of the family was also in some way a prerequisite to his own sense of ‘belonging’ and emotional security in Scotland: *Home is in Bulgaria, not yet, not yet [here]. Maybe when my daughter is here, my whole family, maybe. But for the moment, no, not home here* (Andrei, 27, married, 1 child, Bulgaria). As well as hoping that this reunion would lead him to feel more ‘at home’ in Scotland, Andrei saw it as an important step towards further and more permanent material security for the whole family – it would increase his chances of obtaining social housing and he hoped that his brother and mother would have better access to disability benefits and care than in Bulgaria. Thus, material and emotional securities were mutually reinforcing, each providing new potential for the other.

The availability of some formal provisions – especially social housing and benefits relating to children and employment but also ill health and old age – are much appreciated by many CEE migrants and can be a motivation for families to consider longer-term stays. This relates not only to the young families described thus far but also to migrants arriving at a later age – either with their families or alone. Our research has reflected a relatively small but growing trend towards migration of people in their late 40s, 50s and 60s, often linked to particular insecurities associated with ageing, retirement and formal state provision in CEE countries (Lulle and King 2015). Boris had followed his adult son to Scotland, motivated both by a wish to be closer to his child and grandchild and by the prospect of better state provision. Once in Scotland, despite living in hostel accommodation and experiencing precarious employment in the agricultural sector, he explained his decision to stay permanently as prompted by a nonetheless positive view of the extent and range of state provisions available. He described these as directly related to the possibility of a healthier and more fulfilling life, again bringing together material and emotional aspects of security:

Here in Scotland, I saw – for the first time in my life and I’m 62 – a state that thinks about its people. (...) I was telling my son that I was planning to sort out my pension paperwork in Latvia this year. (...) He told me that I could get my Latvian pension here in pounds and it will be worth more, and as another plus you have work. I was at the doctor... you don’t think you’ll be running around like a young man, do you? But I will! [laughs] Here you have free medical care. Free rides on the bus too, I can get that (Boris, 62, divorced, 2 children, Latvia).

For Boris, like Andrei, emotional and material aspects of security appeared to be well aligned through a combination of access to formal provisions (state support, employment, etc.) and informal connections and support, facilitated by the closeness of other family members (von Benda Beckmann and von Benda Beckmann 1994). Such alignment is, however, not always the case (cf. Sime 2018).

Bożena had moved to Scotland without her family following redundancy in Poland. A divorcee in her late 40s, she had feared that due to age discrimination in the employment market as well as rather limited access to state support, her future in Poland did not look promising. In Scotland she had been able to find continuous employment, albeit in low-skilled and relatively insecure jobs, yet sufficient to support herself. Despite having

gained a relatively strong sense of material security in Scotland, however, Bożena felt that she could not achieve a full sense of emotional security because of living away from her loved ones. Her two adult daughters and their families remained in Poland, whilst her son lived in Germany. She described missing her family terribly and hoped to return to Poland following her retirement *to spend some time with my family. If not now then later. My grandchildren are being born and I'm not there*. In the meantime she planned to stay because, as she put it, *I have to think about my own future* (Bożena, 56, divorced, 3 children, Poland). Thus for Bożena, making longer-term plans was difficult and involved a complex negotiation between her own emotional and material needs and those of her family (cf. Lulle and King 2015: 453).

For Svetlana, negotiations of emotional and material (in)security were also complicated and ambiguous, linked to the differing needs and migration decisions of other family members. Svetlana and her teenage sons had initially moved to Scotland together. However, when her elder son decided to return to Latvia with his wife and young child, Svetlana felt torn between the material security she could provide by remaining in Scotland and a desire for the emotional securities linked to reuniting the family:

I don't even know how to explain it. (...) On one hand, I want to go back to Latvia, but the main cause of that is that my elder son and his family are there. (...) We've never been split before. Always together. For me, family means a lot: of course, that's the main reason I would go back to Latvia. But considering living standards, and money for my family, I want to stay here. It's easier here for me. It's just that I feel myself putting down roots. I feel calm here (Svetlana, 44, divorced, 2 children, Latvia).

As well as experiencing tensions between material and emotional aspects of (in)security, Svetlana also saw them in some ways as aligned. The emotional pull to return to her family notwithstanding, she also found that the material stability of her life in a Scottish village and the knowledge of what this provided for family members back in Latvia – thus fulfilling an important family obligation – gave her a sense of calm and a competing feeling of ‘rootedness’ in Scotland (cf. Stella *et al.* 2017).

Svetlana's and Bożena's examples hint at the importance of considering longer temporal perspectives in order to unpack the relationship between material and emotional (in)securities and decisions regarding family migration and settlement. For both women, past insecurities in their countries of origin played an important role in their initial decisions to migrate and their longer-term plans regarding settlement or return. However, the future was also a significant factor in their considerations and, whilst they tried to balance and plan for future emotional and material securities for themselves and their loved ones, decisions about length and permanence of stay remained open-ended (cf. Lulle and King 2015: 459). It is to these temporal aspects of (in)security which we turn in our final section, below.

Temporal and transnational aspects of (in)security and the open-endedness of ‘settlement’

Our research reflects well-established understandings of migration and settlement as open-ended processes which emerge over time and for a range of reasons (Piętka-Nykaza and McGhee 2016; Piore 1979). Having arrived in Scotland, often with uncertain longer-term intentions or, in some cases, with a clear idea that their migration was only a short-term solution to insecurities ‘back home’, many of our participants found that a combination of material and emotional securities prompted them to rethink their stay as a longer-term commitment. This longer-term planning was often linked to processes of wider family migration and reunification. As such, their decisions were influenced by the emotional and material needs and (inter)dependencies of different family members. These were often explicitly compared to past insecurities in their country of origin and interpreted through expectations of a better future in Scotland. As Iza explained:

We're definitely staying here longer-term because, first of all I have nothing to go back to in Poland. I haven't got a flat there and my parents wouldn't be able to help... Here I have the comfort... I can afford a flat, a car, I can live normally and earn my keep. I can maintain my child as well and don't have to wonder how I'm going to pay my bills the next day. And I'm afraid that's what I was experiencing in Poland for five years. And I suspect it would be difficult for me to adjust (Iza, 31, single, 1 child, Poland).

Iza draws our attention both to the material insecurities in Poland that prevent her from returning and to the material securities she has created in Scotland, which motivate her to stay. Although Iza's family (parents and siblings) was split between the two countries, Iza did not doubt that her future and that of her young daughter lay in Scotland. Indeed, as mentioned above, for families with school-age children, longer-term settlement was, in many ways, the 'obvious' choice. Living in Scotland allowed them to provide basic material and emotional security for the whole (young) family, which they did not see as equally possible in their countries of origin.

Meanwhile, decisions around settlement and return for older migrants with adult children were often more complex, shaped not only by past, present and projected future (in)securities of the family as a unit, but also involving the varied and changing needs of independent decision makers within it. The interdependencies and complex decision-making processes which the migration of multiple and varied combinations of family members entailed could also mean that decisions were ultimately made on the basis of what was not possible or what was least undesirable rather than on more positive grounds. Sometimes, it was difficult to decide what was, in fact, least undesirable and some migrants became 'stuck' between various realities and considerations, both positive and negative, material and emotional, unable to make a conscious choice. As Henryk, whose family was split between Glasgow and Poland, explained:

[M]y situation is quite particular because I'm here alone in practical terms. My daughter's here, and my granddaughter. So part [of the family] is keeping me here. The other part is in Poland and they also absorb me because my wife's there, she's taking care of my mother-in-law. She's 86 years old, she's ill and she simply cannot imagine life without my wife (...). There's also a teenager there, she's 19. She's also very absorbing. And what am I to do, I don't know! I've just left everything to God's will. Of course I think about it, I ponder on it. And it's this way: a flat for free, transport for free, medicine for free and that's good. Barriers: the language, what I'll be doing here, this is terrifying for me (...). If I had some money and knew the language then maybe I could go places, if I had enough money to travel, go sightseeing. And also have family with me. Then I probably wouldn't mope about it. But I don't know how much money I'm going to have. (...) So I'm thinking about it but I'm not planning anything (Henryk, 64, married, 3 children, Poland).

As Henryk's case demonstrates, making a 'rational' choice between present and future material and emotional (in)securities can be near impossible. Henryk had spent 10 years in Scotland working towards his retirement. He could not go back to Poland before reaching pensionable age in the UK for financial reasons. In Scotland he had a job and various social entitlements which allowed him to provide for his family and which gave him a sense of material security. At the same time, he spoke about the emotional insecurities caused by living away from his closest family and of not feeling 'at home' in Glasgow. For Henryk and his family, migration had resulted in multiple and intersecting (in)securities. At the time of our interview, Henryk was also looking towards his impending post-retirement future and trying to weigh up his options: should he go back or stay? He felt insecure about his financial situation in Scotland following retirement and this was unsettling. The feeling was strengthened by his dislike of the neighbourhood he lived in and his lack of English. Henryk was therefore 'stuck', unhappy about his personal situation but unable to make a choice between present and future,

material and emotional (in)securities. As this example shows, tangled webs of emotional and material interconnections and separations linked to family can make decisions about settlement or return extremely difficult and complicated.

Wider societal, political and legal contexts, which shape both the present and the imagined future, also play an important role in families' (and individuals') decisions regarding migration and settlement. It is not only family relationships, practices and configurations which shape migrants' longer-term plans; external conditions and legal frameworks also impact on both present and future material and emotional (in)securities (cf. Stella *et al.* 2017). In Scotland, a political commitment (at national and local levels) to 'welcoming migrants' as a solution to demographic and economic concerns can lead to policies and practices (for example, the availability of social housing, local integration efforts, etc.) which encourage settlement. At the same time, however, more mixed or negative social attitudes and wider media discourses and political processes can contribute to a sense that migrants' future is out of their own control, creating feelings of uncertainty and insecurity. This was clearly expressed by Bogusława, who was interviewed at the time of the Scottish Independence Referendum⁷ and an increasingly negative portrayal of migrants in the British media:

I don't know for how long [I will stay here]. At least 5 years, I'm assuming, but I think that if I feel good here, because it all depends on whether I find my feet here, then we'll stay for longer (...). How things will ultimately turn out it's difficult for me to say (...) and this makes me inclined not to make any big plans because I really don't know what will happen next. I don't know what the situation will be like over here because as you can see yourself, the way things are at the moment, the focus of the British Government on immigrants and so on. So if we are no longer welcome here then I don't know if there's any sense in staying here and... well, you don't know what's going to happen, you know, we might leave the EU... (Bogusława, 48, married, 2 children, Poland).

Conclusions

As this article has shown, migration and settlement are complex and open-ended processes, all the more so when we consider how they intersect with the negotiation of family relationships and responsibilities, processes of family formation, reunion and/or separation. Drawing on and further contributing to the framework for understanding (in)security originally developed by von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann (1994), we have explored the ways in which multiple material and emotional aspects of social security, which seek to accommodate different family members' needs and aspirations, influence migrants' choices regarding both initial decisions to migrate and the gradual emergence of longer-term stays. Migrants' initial decisions to migrate, linked to opportunities for work and (post-socialist) experiences of employment insecurity and financial instability in their country of origin, appear to prioritise immediate concerns regarding material and financial security, for themselves and for wider family members. However, material security is related not only to the immediate availability of work and earning potential but also to questions regarding children's education, the availability and perceived reliability of state support, particularly for those facing issues relating to poor health, ageing, etc. Here we see the importance of a more open understanding of the temporal aspects of 'social security' and the ways in which these can bring emotional and material concerns together. Aspirations for security in the future, both for the individual and for their other family members, especially children, as well as calculations based on past experiences of (in)security, play an important role and are often experienced and expressed as much in emotional terms of 'anxiety' or 'calm' as they are in relation to specific material or financial circumstances.

As longer-term stays emerged for those already in Scotland, these were often related to decisions to reunite families by bringing over spouses, children and other relatives. For these ‘new’ migrants the decision to move was motivated not only by the current and future securities, both emotional and material, that other family members had been able to access or produce in Scotland, but also by a sense that family reunion could itself further support and engender such securities. For some, reuniting in Scotland was as much a prerequisite for longer-term stays as *vice versa*. Here, a strong sense of the emotional and material significance of family practices (Morgan 1996) emerged through the experiences and perceptions of our participants. For many, physical proximity was perceived as a prerequisite for the proper performance of family relationships; however, for others, emotional and material obligations to themselves and/or to others could be in tension, prompting a range of decisions and sometimes indecision regarding migration and settlement. On the other hand, longer-term stays could result from new separations: divorce and family breakdown had for some been a catalyst for initial migration and for others a reason to stay, especially if combined with new family formations (new relationships, the birth of children) in Scotland. Re-emphasising the ongoing and open-ended nature of these interrelated processes of making and remaking family, those who had spent time together in Scotland could find themselves separating again if adult children, or others, decided not to stay longer-term. Negotiation of these complex and interdependent emotional and material aspects of both family life and social security mean that decision-making relating to migration and longer-term settlement is highly contingent and open-ended.

Significantly, however, migrant families’ lives and the decisions they (can) make are also shaped by external factors over which migrants have little influence – for example legal frameworks. As we have demonstrated in this article, while some constraints in decision-making always exist, families from the EU – as opposed to those from third countries – have enjoyed a high degree of freedom in shaping family life according to their changing circumstances and needs. This raises many questions and uncertainties about their ‘post-Brexit’ future, with regards not only to their own basic rights to stay and work in the UK but also to freedom of movement for the (extended) family. How will the new legal frameworks impact on the family life and migration decisions of EU citizens living in Britain? At the time of writing, decisions on the conditions of stay and travel for EU citizens living in the UK (and their families abroad) have not yet been taken. Nonetheless, as indicated in Boguslawa’s example above, the temporal aspects of (in)security can give very tangible present-day meaning to such future uncertainties.

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Notes

¹ In May 2004, eight CEE countries ('A8') joined the EU: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The UK fully opened its labour market to A8 nationals but introduced a seven-year transition period during which A8 workers had to register with the Workers Registration Scheme and gained welfare entitlements only after 12 months of continuous employment. In January 2007, the 'A2' countries of Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU. Their access to the UK labour market was initially more restricted. In December 2013 they gained the same rights and entitlements as other EU nationals. At the time of writing this paper, EU nationals had unrestricted access to the UK labour market but somewhat restricted access to welfare – having to fulfil additional requirements such as passing the 'habitual residency test' when applying for certain benefits (Kennedy 2015).

² 'Brexit' is a term commonly used for the referendum on the UK's membership in the European Union (EU) which took place on 23 June 2016. The overall result was a 'leave' vote and the UK is currently taking steps to enact the process of formally leaving the EU. Notably, while the majority of people living in England and Wales voted in favour of leaving the EU, the majority of people in Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to remain.

³ CEE nationals from non-EU countries ('non-EEA nationals') are subject to UK immigration control and have limited access to the labour market. In most cases they (and their families) need to apply for a visa to enter and/or work in the UK. Access to welfare depends on individual immigration status and circumstances (e.g. whether they have indefinite or limited leave to remain in the UK) but most non-EEA nationals have no recourse to public funds (Kennedy 2015).

⁴ Many of our Latvian participants were native Russian-speakers, reflecting the high percentage of ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers within the Latvian population and amongst migrants from Latvia to Scotland.

⁵ Where interviews were conducted in English, citations in the text are verbatim and reflect the differing levels of fluency amongst participants. Citations from interviews in Polish, Russian or Lithuanian have been translated to retain the fluency of the participants' speech in their native language.

⁶ All names used in this article are pseudonyms to protect participants' identity.

⁷ On 18 September 2014, Scotland held an independence referendum. People living in Scotland (British citizens aged 16+ resident in Scotland, as well as Commonwealth and EU citizens who had been resident in Scotland for at least 12 months) were asked whether Scotland should be independent of the UK. The result was a 'no' vote. Ironically, although several of our participants feared that an independent Scotland would be forced to leave the EU, it was, in fact, the subsequent Brexit referendum in June 2016 which led to this outcome for the UK as a whole.

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