

Institution: University of Glasgow (UofG)		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 20 Social Work and Social Policy		
Title of case study: Supporting Migrants' Lives in Scotland: Improving Practice and Policy		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2013–2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): (1) Rebecca Kay (2) Moya Flynn (3) Paulina Trevena (4) Holly Porteous (5) Kyle Taggart	Role(s) (e.g. job title): (1) Professor of Russian Gender Studies (2) Senior Lecturer (3) Research Associate (4) Research Associate (5) Research Data Analyst	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: (1) 1999–present (2) 2002–June 2017 (3) Nov 2013–Nov 2018 (4) Jan 2018–Nov 2018 (5) Nov 2017–Mar 2018
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2016–2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Migration from Central Eastern Europe (CEE) to Scotland has increased dramatically since 2004, including to rural areas with little experience of supporting migrant populations. From 2016 onwards, UofG research on migrants' experiences of settlement in Scotland has (i) informed and supported the development of innovative community integration initiatives (e.g. self-sustaining language cafés in Peterhead and three other towns). A qualitative dataset developed through these community initiatives has fed directly into Kay's policy-oriented analysis and contributions to the Scottish Government Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population. This in turn has (ii) informed policy in Scotland and at UK level (e.g. providing evidence to support the Scottish Government's push for regional differentiation and further devolved powers on migration policy).</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>CEE migrants now account for nearly 40% of all non-British citizens living in Scotland and an even greater percentage of newer arrivals, especially to rural areas, such as Aberdeenshire. In Peterhead, Aberdeenshire's largest town with a population of approximately 18,500, and where much of the participatory action research was developed, EU citizens (the majority from CEE) are 7% of the local population, including 2% Poles (compared to Scottish averages of 2.6% and 1.2% respectively). Longer-term settlement is particularly important in Scotland due to declining and ageing populations in many areas and shortages of workers in a number of sectors (e.g. agriculture and food processing, tourism and hospitality, health and care). These shortages of workers have particular salience in rural areas. Nonetheless, difficulties remain in supporting successful settlement. The Scottish Government is keen to establish a different approach from that taken at Westminster, particularly in light of Brexit, and has put resource into developing more robust and evidence-based policy vision in this area.</p> <p>Led by Professor Kay at the UofG, ESRC-funded research on Social Support and Migration in Scotland (SSAMIS) explores experiences of migration and settlement in both rural and urban areas. Qualitative fieldwork in 2014–2015 in Aberdeenshire, Angus, Glasgow and Aberdeen involved over 200 migrant participants and over 60 'expert interviews' with stakeholders from local government, migrant associations and service providers. The research found that migrant experiences and decisions have been shaped by a unique period of 'free movement' which had facilitated flexible stays and shifting patterns of employment, supported by access to welfare assistance, and allowing for extensive family reunification and family formation in Scotland. Taken together these have made possible open, and often initially unplanned, pathways to settlement, including in rural areas where temporary, seasonal patterns of labour migration had been more common [3.4, 3.5, 3.6].</p> <p>More detailed key findings related to the importance of opportunities to learn English, the lack of spaces in which migrants could come together with other local residents, and the extent of feelings of social isolation especially in rural areas, even where individuals had been living in an area for five years or more [3.1]. The research found the realities of migrants' lives, their work patterns and family responsibilities often prevented them from accessing language classes or participating in community-based integration initiatives [3.1, 3.2, 3.6]. Opportunities for migrant and host populations to meet and to share community spaces were limited. Migrants felt isolated</p>		

from and misunderstood by the wider local population [3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6]. Taken together, these factors were important for migrants' decisions about whether to settle longer-term in an area. These research findings fed into participatory action research in 2016–2017, supporting the development of locally-based initiatives to better meet these needs.

The UofG research team ran community consultation events in Arbroath and Aberdeenshire in early 2016. These were organised in collaboration with local partners and, in Peterhead, fed into a wider local-authority commissioned consultation, 'Choose Peterhead'. All of the consultations confirmed a need for better community-based venues and activities to bring together residents from local and migrant backgrounds to support language learning and cultural exchange. The SSAMIS team trialled a range of activities, such as pop-up community cafés, creative arts activities, exhibitions and language-learning opportunities.

In Peterhead, collaborations with a local community development organisation, Modo, and with the Workers Educational Association—a key provider of English language classes—were very successful. In conjunction with local authority support for the wider outcomes of 'Choose Peterhead', these collaborations provided a basis for more sustained work. The collaboratively-developed language café model built on learning from the pop-up events and activities bringing together creative arts and language learning. Accordingly, the cafés take place in accessible, central community venues at flexible times to suit shift work and childcare needs.

3. References to the research

3.1. Flynn, M. and Kay, R. (2017) [Migrants' experiences of material and emotional security in rural Scotland: implications for longer-term settlement](#). *Journal of Rural Studies*, 52, pp. 56–65. (doi: [org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2017.03.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2017.03.010))

3.2. Kay R., Trevena P. (2018). [\(In\)Security, Family and Settlement: Migration Decisions Amongst Central and East European Families in Scotland](#). *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 7(1): 17–33. (doi:[10.17467/ceemr.2017.17](https://doi.org/10.17467/ceemr.2017.17))

3.3. Kay, R. and Trevena, P. (2019) ['New' Migrations Transforming the City: East European Settlement in Glasgow](#). In: Kintrea, K. and Madgin, R. (eds.) *Transforming Glasgow: Beyond the Post-Industrial City*. Policy Press: Bristol. ISBN 9781447349778 [PDF available at link]

3.4. Boswell, C. et al. (2017) [Brexit: challenges and opportunities – Migration, Diversity, Rights and Social Protection](#). Royal Society of Edinburgh Advice Paper, No. 17–18, July 2017.

3.5. Kyambi, S., Kay, R., Boswell, C., Taggart, K. and Porteous, H. (2018) [Choices Ahead: Approaches to lower skilled labour migration after Brexit](#). Project Report. Centre on Constitutional Change. [PDF available at link]

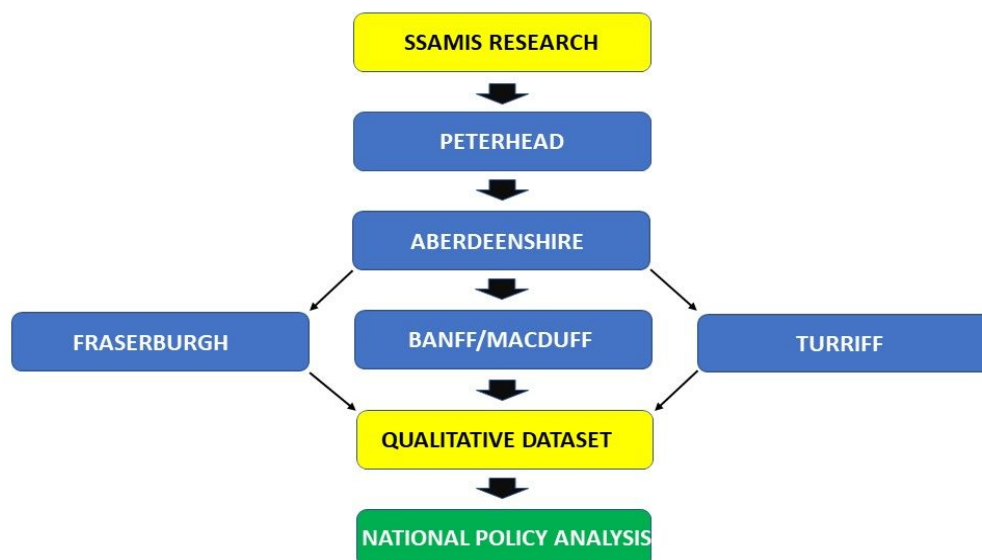
3.6. Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population (2019) [UK Immigration Policy After Leaving the EU Impacts on Scotland's Economy, Population and Society](#). Independent Report.

This body of work meets the 2* threshold because output [3.3] is an invited contribution to an important edited collection published by a respected academic press. Outputs [3.1] and [3.2] were published in specialist academic journals after peer review. Both are well-cited. The research was supported via awards from the ESRC and the Scottish Government.

4. Details of the impact

4.1. Pathway to impact

From 2016 onwards, SSAMIS participatory action research led to the establishment of a self-sustaining language café in Peterhead. Learning from Peterhead was then applied to similar Scottish Refugee Council-funded projects in Aberdeenshire. The regional expansion of this model led to the establishment of 'creative cafés' in Fraserburgh, Banff/MacDuff and Turriff (as outlined in section 4.2 below). The development of these local initiatives in the North East of Scotland has contributed to an extensive qualitative dataset. This dataset has formed the basis of Professor Kay's national policy-oriented analysis and recommendations to the Scottish Government (as outlined in section 4.3 below). The pathway from research to impact is detailed in the diagram below:



4.1 Pathway to impact

4.2. Informing the development of innovative community integration initiatives

The research activities (outlined in section 2) established evidence of a longer-term need and new ways of working. Combined with the wider research findings, this provided new insight into migrant experiences for local decision-makers and service providers grappling with the question of how best to support resident migrant populations. The Creative Director of Modo, the local community development organisation spearheading ‘Choose Peterhead’, wrote: *‘In SSAMIS we found a partner [...] who was interested in creative and proactive ways of making things happen. This has led to a longer-term collaboration, to run a weekly language café, and actively planning further and future events. The SSAMIS research and support was instrumental in demonstrating the need for these activities’* [5A].

The language café established in Peterhead became a longer-term self-sustaining entity. Between 2016–2019, the café was regularly attended by CEE migrants and other language learners (confirmed by short film [5B]). The majority of regular members were women working in local fish factories, care sector, textiles and retail. A smaller group of long-standing residents and native speakers of English also attended. The café provided opportunities to socialise through a range of creative activities (e.g. cooking, craftwork and gardening) as well as learning English, facilitated by a trained ESOL teacher (English for Speakers of Other Languages). The café directly tackled key issues identified in the research as significant for migrants in Scotland, especially those living in peripheral areas (e.g. lack of access to ESOL provisions, loneliness and social isolation). An Aberdeenshire Council Senior Community Learning and Development Worker advised that during Her Majesty’s Inspectorate review of ESOL provision in Peterhead in October 2017, *‘the Language café was singled out as one of the great practice examples of good partnership work and wider scope of ESOL provision than pure language skills’* [5C].

The learning developed in Peterhead—particularly the linking of language learning and social connections through shared creative activities—has been applied more widely in other areas of Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen city, and with other migrant groups. For example, in 2017 initiatives to support the successful settlement of Syrian families arriving in the region, funded through the Scottish Refugee Council, drew strongly on the model; combining arts, cookery and sporting activities with language learning and conversation cafés (confirmed by report [5D]).

The expansion of the model was further evidenced through Aberdeenshire Council’s invitation to tender for an EU-funded project to extend the learning to other towns in the region in 2018. The invitation [5E] directly cites SSAMIS research findings and required bids drawing on the creative and community-based work trialled through the research. The successful tender built directly on SSAMIS initiatives with Kay as part of the advisory group. The resultant project ‘Home-hame-дом-дом’ began in May 2019. It led to the establishment of creative ESOL cafés in Fraserburgh,

Banff/MacDuff and Turriff, and a programme of activities and events working with schools and other community groups. These activities showcase and share the creative skills of local residents, many of them from CEE and other international backgrounds. Each activity and event has been designed to assist with the forging of social connections, sharing cultures, experiences and languages. From May 2019 until December 2020, working with 28 local partners, the project delivered 50 courses and 114 activities (e.g. workshops, classes and information stalls) across four towns and online. These involved 1,017 participants, with many people attending multiple events. Of 30 sessional tutors involved in the project, 10 were of CEE background. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was able to successfully pivot to online activities, and has gained 285 Facebook followers, with posts reaching over 3,000 people (all figures confirmed by an email from the Project Coordinator and the Project Report [5F]).

4.3. Informing migration policy in Scotland and the UK

In October 2018, the Scottish Government established an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) on migration and population in order to provide independent evidence and advice. Kay was appointed to this group on the basis of the underpinning research. Differences between Holyrood and Westminster with regard to migration policy preferences have become increasingly pronounced since 2016. Migration policy remains a power reserved to Westminster, and the Scottish Government has no devolved powers in this area. However, as part of a strong push for regional differentiation in migration policy, the Scottish Government has determined to increase its capacity for evidence-based policy. Within this context, *'Professor Kay has made valuable contributions to the evidence base in and on Scotland. This has led to a better understanding of key population and migration-related issues in the country, particularly in rural areas, [and] the particular policy challenges that Scotland faces'* (statement from Scottish Government Deputy Director, Population and Migration [5G]).

Prior to the establishment of the EAG, Kay was invited by both the UK and Scottish governments to give evidence to Parliamentary Committees; the research team also made submissions to a range of government enquiries (as confirmed by report [5H]). Kay was invited to the Royal Society of Edinburgh EU Strategy Group and co-authored its report on Migration, Diversity, Rights and Social Protection [3.4]. This report was the basis for a round-table meeting with Scottish Government officials on 18 August 2017, and a subsequent meeting with members of the Scottish Government Migration Strategy team to discuss joint actions towards a clearer evidence base for a distinctive Scottish migration system (as confirmed by statement [5G]).

As a direct consequence of these discussions, Kay and colleagues from Edinburgh University co-led a joint project: 'Low-skilled Labour Migration to Scotland after Brexit: Assessing the Options' (October 2017–April 2018). The Scottish Government co-funded the project, which the Head of Migration and Free Movement of People Unit described as: *'a valuable development of the evidence base in relation to low-skilled labour migration [...] [which] will assist the Scottish Government in better understanding the mobility, work and settlement decisions of Scotland's EEA migrants'* [5I]. The published report [3.5] highlights the importance of incorporating multi-disciplinary expertise and knowledge of migrant decision-making processes into policy design. The incorporation of migrant perspectives into debate on migration policy is unusual and the team have been successful in convincing decision-makers of its significance (confirmed by statement [5G]).

The composition of Scotland's EAG reflects this approach. In contrast to the economics-driven approach of the UK Government's Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), Scotland's EAG includes political scientists, demographers, rural experts, economists and sociologists. Kay's contribution to the EAG's first report [3.6] (2019) draws extensively on SSAMIS research findings especially in relation to rural areas and their needs, and issues relating to community integration. The Scottish Government Deputy Director of Population and Migration confirms that, *'These aspects of the report [...] led – we understand – the UK Government's Migration Advisory Committee to recommend a pilot project exploring different approaches to immigration for rural areas appropriate to their demographic, labour force and other local needs'* (statement [5G]).

As the Scottish Government continues to press for further devolution of powers in this area, the work of the EAG is widely cited in the Scottish Government paper 'Migration Helping Scotland Prosper', outlining its vision for migration policy, including proposals for a place-based route for

migration to rural areas (confirmed by paper [5J]). In commissioning a new series of reports from the EAG, the Scottish Minister for Europe, Migration and International Development stated that the group's work has, '*significant reach and impact, [and] continues to inform the conversation around the UK's future immigration system*' (confirmed by letter [5K]).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[5A] Testimonial on impact of partnership working between Modo and SSAMIS from Creative Director, Modo (March 2017) **[PDF available]**.

[5B] Make it Happen Arbroath And Make it Happen Peterhead films:
<https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/gramnet/research/ssamis/initiatives/>

[5C] Feedback from HMI inspection of ESOL provision in Peterhead Aberdeenshire Council Senior Community Learning and Development Worker (Oct 2017) **[PDF available]**.

[5D] [Scottish Refugee Council: Sharing Lives, Sharing Languages report](#) (see p. 23–27) **[PDF available]**.

[5E] Aberdeenshire Council Invitation to Tender (Open Procedure) for the Provision of Social Integration Solutions for Migrant Workers – Appendix I Statement of Requirements (September 2018) **[PDF available]**.

[5F] Collated evidence: (i) email confirming participant numbers from the Home-home-дом-dom Project Coordinator (December 2020); (ii) Home-home-дом-dom Project Evaluation report (December 2020) (directly cites the influence of SSAMIS research in both the introduction and conclusion) **[PDFs available]**.

[5G] Statement from Scottish Government Deputy Director, Population and Migration (July 2020) **[PDF available]**.

[5H] [Scottish Parliamentary Committee on Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations report 'EU migration and EU citizens' Rights'](#) (confirms Kay's contributions as expert witness to 5 December 2016 Committee meeting) **[PDF available]**.

[5I] Scottish Government letter confirming co-funding of project 'Low-skilled Labour Migration to Scotland after Brexit: Assessing the Options' (October 2017) (addressed to Kay's project co-lead Professor Boswell) **[PDF available]**.

[5J] Migration: Helping Scotland Prosper. Scottish Government Report (January 2020) **[PDF available]**.

[5K] Letter from Minister for Europe, Migration and International Development to Chair Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population (4 July 2019) **[PDF available]**.