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Understanding trans-border career trajectories:

Post-Soviet women professionals in London

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Abstract

This thesis analyses transborder career trajectories to explain how the micro-level of working agency is imbedded into broader social processes. Women migrants' professional careers are understudied in social sciences which overwhelmingly remain gender-blind and nationally bound. As a starting point this thesis understands working lives as a complex social phenomenon. The interdisciplinary socio-analytical framework elaborated within this thesis is rooted in the sociology of work and migration as well as in gender and area studies. The research develops a trans-border career trajectory approach which connects meanings, strategies and actions over time and space. The multi-dimensional impact of family and migration processes on working lives is critically analysed. Trans-border careers are explored from three interconnected perspectives: work-related values, resources for career-making and work-life balance practices.

The thesis focuses on women professionals originating from post-Soviet Eurasia and settling in the UK. In-depth interviews have been conducted with thirty five women working in London. The participants moved to the UK between 1991 and 2011 from Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. They are ethnically diverse and speak Russian as a first or second language; most of them are in their thirties. This study conceptualises migrants as strategising agents and raises the visibility of a particular group of non-EU women professionals who often move through non-skilled migration routes. It sheds light on the largely unexplored area of post-Soviet migration of professionals to 'the West' and to London, in particular. This research also challenges ethnocentrism in migration studies and methodological nationalism in social sciences.

The overarching argument of this thesis is that, on the one hand, neoliberal restructuring in the post-socialist region leads to mass out-migration as a life scenario. On the other, growing appreciation of 'skills' in knowledge-based economies allows for some (women) migrants with a strong ability to strategise around different forms of capital to secure middle class positions in 'the civilised West'. They can do so mainly by building professional careers and creating dual career families across borders. Therefore, trans-border careers are interpreted as part of life strategising; however, this is not necessarily a case of upward social mobility. Key findings suggest that these processes can be better understood in terms of social reproduction of knowledge workers and dual career families across time and space. Finally, this thesis shows how the study of migrants' working lives can contribute to the understanding of societal transformations in a particular country or region of origin (the post-socialist one here) and a particular place of destination (London here) as well as trans-nationally. In short, transborder career trajectories reflect the on-going interplay between continuities and changes in our society. Thus this thesis makes an interdisciplinary contribution to knowledge.

Keywords: Societal transformation, mobility / migration, life strategising, trans-border career trajectories, women professionals, the FSU, children of Soviet specialists, post-Soviet gender order, dual career families, work-life balance, transnational social class formation / reproduction

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ВСЕМ ОГРОМНОЕ СПАСИБО! О.К.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background: 1991 as a turning point for post-Soviet out-migrations

Europe has become a major region of destination for international migrants, approaching 70 million, despite restrictive immigration policies at both the European Union (EU) and national levels. The prevailing discourse today is one of 'managing' immigration from outside the EU. Anti-immigration policies at both EU and national level have grown since the 1970s, contradicting international human rights and free movement of individuals as one of the imperatives of globalisation (Morokvasic 1991; Delanty 1995, Habermas 2007). Increasing illegal migration in Europe is viewed as 'a response' to the EU anti-migrant policies (Richmond: 2005). It is also argued that 'the underlying political economy of Europe rather is one that is not closing but *opening* borders to the East.' (Favell 2008: 712). More specifically, labour shortages in Europe, 'especially in agriculture and service sector, were attracting international migrants… mostly from Eastern bloc and the developing world' (Zlotnik 2005: 77).

Some scholars see international migration as 'a natural part of economic globalisation' arguing for the management of migration flows, rather than its discouragement through unilateral actions (Massey et al 2004: 373-394; Richmond 2005: 32). On eth one hand, Wallerstein observes how pro-globalists call 'for the opening all frontiers to the free flow of goods and capital (but not labour)' (2004: 86). On the other, it seems that the European migration system is gaining greater resemblance to 'the US-Mexico migration model' by exploiting East European workers while closing its borders to non-EU citizens (Duvell 2007; Favell 2008). In reality migration flows exist between the extremes of open border policies and draconian restrictions, depending on the position of sending and receiving countries, the social position of the migrant and their individual 'skills' (Findlay & Cranston 2015).

The collapse of the socialist bloc, global economic restructuring and EU enlargement have generated significant migration of both 'skilled' and 'unskilled' migrants from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Former Soviet Union (FSU) to Western Europe. For

migrations from the FSU, the significant turning point is not 1989, as for CEE countries, but 1991, the year when the USSR was formally disbanded and transition to the market economy led to the virtual collapse of all major civic and economic institutions (Abazov 1999; Heleniak 2002; Pilkington 2002; Tishkov 2005; Zainchkovskaya 2009; Light 2010; Morrison et al. 2012, 2013; Pribytkova 2012; Harutyunyan & Zaslavskaya 2015; Nikolko & Carment 2017). Although the migration regime was gradually liberalised during *Perestroika*, it was only since 1991-1992 that strict state controls on international out-migration were lifted. The end of Cold War itself stimulated further globalisation, the spread of neoliberal policies as well as new developments in mobility within and between countries (Castles 2001, 2010; Castles & Miller 2003). Therefore, migration from the FSU to the UK represents one of the regional post-1991 out-migration trends, understood as mobility to the 'more developed West' (Morrison & Sacchetto 2014). The EU and post-Soviet migration systems will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Restrictive policies by Western states are also linked to security discourses of the post-Cold War era (Guiraudou and Joppke 2001: 1-20). They target primarily labour migrants while globalised elites enjoy care-free mobility (Tyuryukonova: 410). It is debatable whether 'skilled' migrants enjoy unrestricted mobility. 'Undocumented' migrants provide 'the bulk of the labour force in Western informal economies' (Morawska: 178). Some scholars consider neo-liberal globalisation as the main factor of raising the informal economies, what makes all subordinated groups, like migrants, particularly vulnerable (Hale 1996; Misra 2005). As a result, new forms of inequality are forming in the context of mobility (Bauman 1998; Massey et al. 1998; Castles 2010; Portes 2010). These discriminating mechanisms are particularly disadvantageous to women migrants (Kofman 2004, 2011).

At the same time migration to Europe is also highly gendered, with women totalling 51% of all migrants by 2000 (Zlotnik 2005: 79). It is expected that female migration will increase over time for four main reasons: aging of European populations; decline of public welfare; changing family and employment structures; ability of middle-class women to hire domestic labour (Kofman 2000; Bulova 2006, Pugliese 2009). A slow quantitative increase of women migrants is coupled with the qualitative change of women's migration. For the last two decades 'there have been changes in patterns of migration – with more women migrating independently or as main income-earners instead of following male relatives' (Piper 2005: 6-7). This also applies to highly educated female migrants from the FSU to Western Europe

(Kopnina 2005, Morgunova 2009). The case of post-Soviet women migrants in the UK may uncover the realities and contradictions behind these figures.

1.2 Gaps in knowledge: four dimensions of 'invisibility'

Analysts recognize the growing significance of migration from the FSU to the UK (IOM 2007, 2008). Four out of thirty seven Mapping Exercise Reports were dedicated to FSU countries. While quantitative data remain insufficient and of varying quality, there is a significant lack of qualitative research on this migration. On the one hand, research in West European receiving countries has focused mostly on migration from CEE. Here the dominant idea is that Central Europeans migrate to Western Europe and East Europeans to Central Europe and Germany (Passerrini et al., 2007; European Commission 2009). On the other, migration studies in sending countries are mainly focused on migration from the FSU to Russia or Mediterranean countries. Therefore, studies on integration of co-ethnic 're-settlers' from the FSU to Germany (Mushaben 2009), Greece (Halkos & Salamouris 2003, Popov 2009) and Israel (Gorodziesky & Semyonov 2011; Razin & Scheinberg 2001; Remennik 2003, 2010; Amit 2012) represent a welcomed exception.

As far as the UK is concerned, for decades migration studies have predominantly focused on migration from Commonwealth countries. More recently attention has shifted to migration from EU New Member states, particularly from Poland. Despite a very extensive migration scholarship in the UK, few studies have paid attention to migration from FSU countries (Byford 2009; Morgunova 2009; Heyse 2010; Malyutina 2012, 2015a, b; Pechurina 2014, 2015, 2017). However, this research is focusses on historic and cultural aspects of diaspora and networks. Several comparative studies on the integration of Russian-speaking migrants in Europe have also been conducted (Kopnina 2005; Mannila & Reuter 2009; Jasinskaja-Lathi et al. 2011, Morrison et al. 2013). There have been no studies on the working lives of post-Soviet migrants in Britain.

A further problem in social sciences is that migration is often represented as 'genderless': 'European migration studies have been slow to incorporate the reality of female immigration <…> they have been seen as family migrants whose contribution to the labour force is secondary' (Kofman 2000: 134). This is particularly true for women originating from the

FSU, who re-produce the *working mother habitus* from Soviet times (Cretu 2010). It has been suggested that women migrants who are coming to the UK as marriage migrants or primary migrants' family members form 'the hidden majority' of the Russian-speaking diaspora (Morgunova 2009). This kind of research maintains that, despite being highly educated, these women are struggling with making professional careers in the UK and therefore they are mostly active in Russian-speaking organizations and cultural events. Not surprisingly there are no studies on 'skilled' women's migration from the FSU to the UK.

Four reasons for lack of research on skilled women migrants can be identified: 1) Gendered migration studies focus predominantly on women's role in the domestic and caring sector; 2) 'skilled migration' is mostly associated with men, with some exceptions; 3) it is often assumed that family-related women migrants are not 'skilled'; 4) gendered data on labour migration are often fragmented or do not exist at all (Kofman 2011: 72-74). Additionally, the vast body of gendered East-West migration literature from the 1990s to the mid-2000s has largely been concerned with the trafficking of women and women working in the 'sex industry' in Southern Europe. However, we can observe a growing interest in studying 'skilled' migrants from the post-socialist region in Europe. K. Csedo (2008, 2009) has carried out research on Hungarian and Romanian professionals (men and women) in London. A. Liversage (2009a, 2009b) has explored labour market trajectories for East European men in Denmark. I. Jungwirth has studied trans-border professional careers in the case of re-settled and 'skilled' women from CEE and FSU countries in Germany (2008, 2011).

The UK has become the fifth destination country for the FSU citizens, attracting 4% of female and 6% of male migrants moving to the EU (Wallace and Vincent 2007: 29). After 1989, the UK first experienced inflows of migrants from the CEE region. The Polish community is one of the largest in the UK today. Flows from ex-Soviet countries have only recently accelerated. According to the IOM (2006, 2008) there were 35.000 FSU citizens living in the UK in 2001, mostly Russians and Ukrainians. Data on migrants from the FSU post-2001 vary considerably, from one hundred thousand to half a million. Post-Soviet migrations represent a complex case for estimates, depending on the criteria selected to establish the migrant's place of origin, i.e. country of birth, current nationality by passport or other markers of ethno-territorial nationality. By 1991 at least one fourth of Soviet citizens (Brubaker 1994), were living in a country other than the Soviet Republic in which they were born. Other estimates claim that this could apply to as much as half of the originally Soviet

population (Heleniak 2002). Many migrants themselves struggle with univocally determining their place of origin if it is different from the place of birth or if they are born in USSR. UK Census 2011 suggest that there are about 2.000 Soviet-born migrants in the UK. It cannot be true simply because that would mean that all other migrants originating from the post-Soviet region were born after 1991 what means that they would be around 20 year old by 2011. The reasons for claiming to be born in newly independent countries by the majority of post-Soviet migrants (see table below) could make a topic for another PhD thesis. I think that those who called USSR their country of birth were those migrants who left the post-Soviet space either before 1991 or in early 1990s, like ethnic Germans and Soviet Jews. The methodological challenges related to 'visibility and accountability' of post-Soviet migrants in the UK have been recently discussed at full along with understanding all complexities of post-Soviet and Russian identities (Pechurina 2017).

Office for National Statistics; Population – all usual residents; units – persons; Census date – 2011

Country of birth	**England & Wales**	**London**
Armenia	1,638	923
Azerbaijan	2,641	1,335
Belarus	4,133	1,707
Estonia	7,864	2,791
Georgia	3,015	1,704
Kazakhstan	4,532	2,032
Kyrgyzstan	1,015	600
Latvia	54,669	9,857
Lithuania	97,083	39,817
Moldova	3,011	1,602
Russia	37,000	16,757
Ukraine	20,700	8,759
Uzbekistan	2,544	1,533
Union of Soviet Socialist Republic not otherwise specified	2,069	1,069

Created on 28th April 2017 by ONS; http://ons.gov.uk

There were no figures to report for Turkmenistan and Tajikistan

It can be stated that Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus are the main countries 'sending' migrants from the FSU to the UK. However, if post-Soviet EU countries would be included into analysis Latvia and Lithuania would have leading positions while Estonia precede Kazakhstan and Belarus. Yet, Moldova could be added to this list since many Moldovan migrants possess Romanian passports (see Endnote 16 for more explanation) and

they could claim that they were born in Romania within UK Census 2011. Finally, according to ONS data by 2011 there were about 93.486 migrants from the FSU (excluding Baltic countries) in the UK while about 38.021 of them resided in London. Since the former figure is relatively consistent with ONS data presented in Pechurina's work (2017) on 'post-Soviet Russian-speaking migration to the UK' a natural question occurs: Are most of migrants from the FSU living in the UK Russian speakers? Although the growth of Russian-speaking diaspora in the UK is a well-known phenomenon (Kopnina 2005, Byford 2009; Malyutina 2015 a, b) it does not seem to be convincing and calls for future research roughly speaking on more careful 'counting' post-Soviet migrants in the UK.

The Home Office estimates that the majority of these FSU nationals are 'family migrants and irregular migrants', who arrived in the 2000s. Official statistics reveal that wealthy entrepreneurs, famous artists and asylum seekers are also present. There are no specific areas in any city or region in Britain where post-Soviet migrants are noticeable: 'they tend to blend well with local people or with other migrants . . . in contrast to many other ethnic groups in the UK' (IOM 2008 a: 11). They usually rely on post-Soviet networks of friends and family members. These reports indicate that the vast majority of them live in London and are younger than forty five years old, however it contradicts ONS data which suggest that around one third of migrants from the FSU countries live in the capital. In academic and media discourses, excluding the highly discussed oligarchs, post-Soviet migrants are often 'invisible'. This may depend on the fact that they are a highly diversified and fragmented section of the city migrant population which has not created ethnic-based communities or occupied particular urban locations. Therefore, the primary aim of this study is a) to shed light on this group of migrants, generally and b) to specifically contribute to understanding what place post-Soviet women professionals occupy in London challenging myths about 'Barbie dolls from Russia'.

Positional reflexivity is at the hearth of this research. The author herself is a woman migrant from the former Soviet Republic of Moldova where she began her academic career researching men's and women's working lives. Significantly, this post-Soviet country is one of top emigration countries in the world. The author's complex identity, Soviet-born, Russian-speaking and speaking Moldovan and Ukrainian as well, ethnically mixed, is itself an imprint of the historical developments in the region, where disparity between language, 'ethnicity' and nationality is a widespread phenomenon. Regional background has played an

important role in gaining access to 'our migrants' and has facilitated the processes of engaging with potential interviewees, recruiting participants, conducting in-depth interviews and interpreting data. Qualitative research methods and data collecting strategies employed in this research as well as issues of positional reflectivity, ethics and limitations of this study are fully discussed in Chapter 4.

1.3 Aims, research questions and structure of the thesis

The overall aim of this interdisciplinary empirical study is to describe, analyse and explain women migrants' working agency through career trajectory lenses. This research contributes to labour/career trajectory studies, in general (Tomlinson 1999; Vasquez 2009; Valenduc et al. 2009; Goncalves et al. 2015) and to recent development of trajectory approach in migration studies, in particular (Rendall et al. 2008; Liversage 2009 (a); Ryan & Mulholland 2013; Castagnone et al. 2014; Szewczyk 2014; Vidal-Coso & Miret-Gamundi 2014; Aziz 2015; Meeteren 2015;) developing a trans-border career trajectory approach which connects meanings, strategies and actions over time and space. **Theoretically the research aims to:** 1) challenge dominant discourses in gendered migration studies which victimise or marginalise female migrant workers (see 3.3 for details); 2) understand how the micro-level of women's working agency is interconnected with broader societal processes (see Ch. 2). **Empirically this research contributes to:** 1) filling the gaps in literature on migration from the FSU to Western Europe and the UK; 2) 'giving a voice' to post-Soviet women migrants and politicising them respectively as women, as migrants and as workers. The latter objective was an initially assumed but failed to fully materialise with this group of migrants (see section 4.5 for full discussion of research limitations).

The research questions are:

1. What is the impact of family and migration processes on working agency?

2. What strategies within and beyond work do migrants deploy for making careers?

3. How do women migrants balance their professional and familial lives in the UK?

This thesis consists of six chapters, excluding Introduction and Conclusions. In Chapter 2 an interdisciplinary socio-analytical framework for this research is presented. Chapter 3 provides background information on women's migration from the FSU to the EU, the UK and London.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to outlining the design of the research and presenting the author's reflections on research practice. The empirical findings are presented in the following three chapters. In Chapter 5 participants' careers are contextualised within migration processes revealing the hidden impact of pre-UK migratory experiences, urban origin, 'in-between-cities' mobility, gradual moving to the UK and entitlements on settling and labour market integration. Chapter 6 studies a multi-dimensional impact of both family of origin and family of creation on participants' work-related values and career strategies. Finally, Chapter 7 explains career-making as the outcome of interplay between expectations, ability to capitalise on different resources and life-work family practices. Overall, it is suggested to study trans-border career trajectories connecting meanings, strategies and actions across time and space.

CHAPTER 2

INTERDISCIPLINARY SOCIO-ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The time we live in has been called *the age of migration* (Castles & Miller 2003/1996). There are 244 million international migrants worldwide (IOM 2016). They represent 3.3% of the world's population, however, the socio-economic relevance of international migrants is much greater than this number would suggest. Migration analysts predict that globalisation will generate even larger and more diverse international migrant flows (Tyuryukonova 2004; Richmond 2005). Growing economic inequalities between regions and nations, improvements in transportation and communications, demand for both 'skilled' and cheaper labour in receiving countries, market liberalisation and diminishing welfare are among the key factors behind the growth of international migration (Massey et al. 2004: 1-13).

This Chapter aims to elaborate a complex framework for understanding the migration of women professionals from the post-Soviet space to the West. First, feminization of both employment and migration is discussed as a global trend. Second, the 'skills' and 'skilled migration' concepts are subjected to critical enquiry. Migrant professionals are conceptualised as strategising agents with the ability to mobilise different forms of capital in career-making across borders. Third, the private and public spheres are brought together as inter-linked in the migration context. Finally, gendered area studies are introduced to provide a regional perspective for understanding post-Soviet women migrants.

2.1 Global feminization of employment and migration

Today, international migration is seen as a dynamic process based on intertwining and contradictory political, economic and cultural interests and factors on a global, national and local scale. 'World-systems analysis' (Wallerstein 2004) on migration highlights the importance of global capitalism in shaping immigration and emigration trends while individual motivations, social networks and state policies contribute to these processes. The ideas and practices of neo-liberalism started to spread globally from the 1970s galvanising after 'Washington consensus' (Stiglitz 2002). In Western countries politicians liberalised labour markets for managers in order to subdue unionized workers. Working class was

disciplined through a combination of legal, economic as well as openly coercive measures. As a result, wages and working conditions declined and managers gained a free hand at hire-and-fire. Subcontracting, outsourcing and off-shoring have gone hand in hand with flexibilisation and casualisation of labour (Standing 2009: 67-78).

These strategies increased unemployment and inequality across the world, weakened trade unions and de-moralised the workers movement, functioning as a drive for economic globalisation. They also increased international migration. On the one hand, structural adjustment programmes, in the South first, and in post-socialist countries later pushed many workers into international migration as a life scenario. On the other, demand for cheap, flexible, subcontracted labour as well as labour shortages in both skilled and low-skilled 'pulled' workers to the North. Neoliberal capitalist system itself has changed the nature of *work* multiplying informal and casual forms of employment (Hale 1996: 9-10). 'While subcontracting is now the paradigmatic form of employment across the world, the migrant is the world paradigmatic worker. . . Migrants workers are attractive to employers precisely because they are migrants' (Wills et al. 2010: 2-6).

State policies of sending and receiving countries also shape immigration patterns. Workers migrate in response to high levels of poverty and unemployment created by structural adjustment policies (Parrenas 2001; Anderson 2000). 'As a result, increasing numbers of women have looked for income-generating strategies, including . . . emigration' (Sassen 2003). Immigration state policies also contribute to the exploitation of irregular migrant workers since 'they will not be treated as victims of abuse, but as violators of the law insofar that they have violated entry, residence, and work laws' (Sassen 2003: 52). Moreover, 'reluctance to recognize real labour needs as part of a better managed immigration policy, leaves female migrants little scope other than informal work' (OECD 2003, p. 2).

A direct link is identified between feminization of work and feminization of migration in late capitalism (Sassen 2003). Women's participation in the paid labour market, the aging of the population and decline in state social provisions have contributed to feminization of migration (Massey 1998; Parreñas 2001). Global feminization of labour means not only an increase in the proportion of women in salaried labour force, but also a particular transformation, i.e. 'feminization', of work. Women's mass entry into labour market coincides with the 'flexibilisation' of employment (Marchand & Runyan 2000).

Flexibilisation of employment relations fosters its *informalisation*: for migrant workers this means work with few if any protections and benefits (ILO 2002). Immigrant women workers are displaced from previous forms of employment in order to cover service needs generated by globalisation (Anderson 2000).

Migration theories and concepts themselves are under transformation. The dichotomy between sending and receiving countries is called into question (Richmond 2005: 32). 'Pull' and 'push' concepts are challenged as economistic reductionism. Classifications on the basis of motivation to migrate, citizenship and migratory status are becoming blurred (Tyuryukonova 2001; Kofman 2003). Transnational networks are not seen purely as supporting migrants, but also as constraining their trajectories whereas their limited social and family networks predicate employment in informal sectors, especially for women. Moreover, 'transnationalism' hampers, it is argued, traditional understandings of gender, ethnicity and class in the migration process. (Morawska 2001; Kibliskaya 2004). Therefore, intersectionality approach is becoming a key to understanding and explanation of women migrants' life and work experiences (Slany et al. 2010).

From the 1970s migration studies developed both as a distinct discipline and within other studies in Europe. However, 'European migration studies have been slow to incorporate the reality of female immigration <…> they have been seen as family migrants whose contribution to the labour force is secondary' (Kofman 2001: 134). Three phases in gendering migration studies process are recognised: 'women and migration' (recognition of female migrants), 'gender and migration' (gendering migration patterns), 'gender as a key element in migration'. The later phase is characterised by gendering all aspects of migration cycles, processes, institutions and structures as well as emphasising diversity in migrants' identities, occupations and legal statuses, and life stories. (Campani 2010).

A more recent trend in studying female migrants focuses on diversity of experiences. Migrants are often discriminated against due to migratory status, but also 'because they are women, transgender people, young, old, an ethnic minority, a domestic worker, sex worker, asylum-seeker, or trafficked' (Jolly & Reeves 2005: 42). Kofman highlights, though, that 'the current preoccupation with… identity while potentially enriching our understandings of migrant experience, has also tended to discourage… collective political response' (Kofman et al. 2000: 192). Scholars have also highlighted some key areas which require interventions for

integrating gender into European migration studies. A wider understanding of work and welfare should be adopted and traditional separation of private and public sphere should be forsaken. Additionally, gendering migration should move away from 'a simplistic economically reductionist analysis of migratory processes' which omits studies on independent qualified women migrants (Kofman 2001: 131-134). Overall, 'more examples are needed to suggest practical ways to foster the potential positive impacts of migration on women and gender relations' (Jolly & Reeves 2005: 38).

It is clear that men and women have different migratory experiences. Women's own experiences can be particularly diverse and contradictory (Jolly & Reeves 2005: 11-21). It is recognised that 'the insertion of migrant women into the economies of Western Europe has often tended to reinforce traditional gender roles, both in professional occupations and in 'unskilled' and care work (Kofman et al. 2000: 194). Migration can bring both emancipation from constraints in home country and getting into constraints in a host country. So, 'disadvantage and emancipation are not mutually exclusive, and a woman can potentially find herself emancipated on one level while disadvantaged on another' (Anthias & Cederberg 2010: 43). It is interesting to see what is happening in the case of post-Soviet 'skilled' women migrants in London.

Gender and migration impact each other. Gender affects migrants choices: from searching for jobs, life and work strategies, in attitudes to family and work and the extent of contact with home country, to the possibility of return and successful reintegration (Boyd and Grieco, 2003). Migration also has its own impacts on gender identities. Migration can improve women's lives and change oppressive gender relations, as well as strengthen traditional roles and inequalities due to migratory status, exclusion and isolation. 'Migration can provide a vital source of income for migrant women and their families, and earn them greater autonomy, self-confidence and social status. At the same time, women migrants, especially if they are irregular migrants, can face discrimination at every stage of the migration cycle' (Jolly & Reeves: 1).

So, labour migration is gendered at every stage of the migration cycle (Piper 2005: 6-7). Gendered patterns of migration include how gender impacts on the choice to migrate, the benefits and costs of migration, the impact on gender relations, remittances, 'brain drain', et cetera (Boyd and Grieco, 2003; Kofman et al.: 1-44; Jolly and Reeves: 3-21). Women's

migration experiences differ. The diversity of migrant experiences can rest in the legal-political structures which shape migrants' opportunities as well as in migrants' practices of re-negotiating these structures (Kofman et al.: 77-105). Reasons for migration are complex. They range from the need to seek economic improvement for oneself or family, developing 'self', better career prospects to escaping gender discrimination, gender roles and violence. Economic reasons effect significantly labour migratory patterns but cannot be considered in isolation (Piper 2005).

Gender migration studies have experienced a shift from work to sexuality as well as from class to ethnicity. In marriage migration discourses women migrants continue to be seen as spouses and not workers (Morokvasic & Catarino 2010). Some authors are calling for eliminating the boundaries between labour migrants and marriage migrants. Quite often women who migrate as marriage migrants enter the labour markets in a host country. (Kofman and Raghuram 2005). On the other hand, those who migrate for studies or work automatically enter so called 'marriage market'. Motives of migration are multi-layered: in fact marriage migration can be 'a strategy to circumvent immigration constraints and realise labour migration' (Kontos & Shinozaki 2010: 94).

2.2 'Skilled' women migrants: Strategising through trans-border careers?

New migrations are quite diverse, including highly educated male and female migrants, who often migrate on their own (Anthias & Cederberg 2010: 22). Therefore, understandings of 'skills' and 'de-skilling' are crucial here. 'One of the factors underlying the neglect of women in the literature on skilled migration has been the problematic definition of 'skills'. (Kofman & Raghuram 2005: 150) 'Skills' can be defined through educational level and professional qualifications gained both at home and in host countries. However, skills and qualifications also correspond to ethnic and gender divisions. (Cederberg 2010: 123).

On the one hand, the jobs are divided into those for locals and those for migrants. However some migrants are found in highly-paid and prestigious jobs and some locals can be found at the bottom of the labour markets (Wills et al. 2010: 28-58) On the other, at the background of knowledge economy ideology 'male' jobs are considered more skilled than women's ones, especially in social and reproductive work (Kofman 2011). Additionally, many skilled

women migrants are migrating for marriage, family reunification, studying and asylum seeking reasons and entry labour markets afterwards. And 'skills' are usually recognised if migrants are coming through skilled migration routes and ignored in the other cases (Kofman & Raghuram 2005). Therefore 'skilled migrants' cannot be equated with 'skilled migration' especially in the case of women. Women migrants are more likely to be de-skilled as the result of work in sectors/jobs beyond their educational and professional profiles or work below their qualifications within the occupation (Kofman 2012: 5). Both skilled and de-skilled women migrants are almost ignored in academic and political discourses.

The main limitation of the previous research on life and work experiences of women migrants from the FSU in London is connected with defining 'skills'. Most women were de-skilled upon arrival what means they were doing jobs not related with their education, below their qualifications or less 'skilled' then the ones they occupied before migration. However, half of participants moved to better jobs over time. I grouped twelve migrants into four categories through prism of 'skills': de-skilled, low-skilled, skilled and re-skilled. This typology did not prove to be fruitful, mainly since 'skills' change *over time and space*. Additionally, some women are combining 'skilled' and 'low-skilled' jobs. How to define these (migrant) workers? How to define 'skills'? What are 'skilled' jobs?

'Skills' is a contested concept in social and migration studies from the late 1980s onwards and there are many ways of approaching and categorizing it (Scott 2006; Csedo 2008, 2009). Gender approach to 'skilled migration' brings further complexity (Raghuram 2004; Kofman 2011). Nowicka has developed the idea that 'skills' are rather relevant to work experiences than education. So, we cannot treat migrants as 'de-skilled' if they do jobs below their education qualifications with no experience in 'skilled' jobs. (Nowicka 2012) Finally (migrant) workers themselves have their own opinions about their 'skills' and whether jobs they do are 'skilled'. *Skills* and *skilled* are used with quotes in this work for the following reasons: 1) to refer to it as to a social construction at particular time and place; 2) to show its relativity and changing character across borders 3) to stress the fact that not all 'skilled' migrants are moving through 'skilled' migration routes 4) to express the researcher's critical view on 'skills' as one of the mechanisms increasing social inequality between workers.

Women migrants are represented as 'passive victims' in mainstream gender and migration literature. Few recent studies conceptualize new women migrants as 'strategising agents',

including the ones from post-socialist region. Some women migrants can get into 'skilled' jobs overcoming nationality and gender division in labour, non-recognition and de-valuation of skills. Women migrants who act in the context of limited opportunities were conceptualised as *strategising agents within and beyond work* (Raghuram 2008; Cretu 2011). The analysis of migrants' agency will show how migrants' work experiences are both enabled and constrained by the following structural conditions: citizenship, race, class, gender, age, education, networks, cultural capital, family as well as immigration regimes, labour market demands, (non)recognition of 'skills', competition for and between 'skilled', feminized sectors/jobs, migrants' labour markets, access to 'skilled' jobs, welfare system and career opportunities in home and host countries.

Conceptualising migrants as 'strategising agents' has at least two limitations. Firstly, some women deploy nothing more than 'short-term tactics of survival' in the labour markets accepting extra work, additional jobs, precarious jobs, de-skilling, 'female' jobs. Secondly, migrants can use 'long-term pro-active strategies', such as getting into 'non-female' jobs/sectors, taking language and professional courses, taking up trainings within the workplaces, trying to gain recognition of their education. However, it is subjected to nationality, ethnicity and gender division in labour. In fact migrants can use either 'tactics of survival' or 'pro-active' strategies, or both depending on the circumstances they face. The previous study showed migrants also are moving from between sectors, jobs and workplaces as the result of both *intended* and *forced* labour turnover. *Over time* many migrants are moving from 'tactics of survival' to 'pro-active strategies'. This is particularly true for 'skilled' migrants with the right to reside and work in a host country.

'In spite of the diversity of origins, profiles and patterns of migration, paradoxically there is persistence on stereotyping women as 'passive victims', which, in turn, impacts on the types of jobs women have access to. Labour migration in general continues to be 'seen merely as escaping poverty, and leading to failure and loss' in academic and political discourses about migrants failing to adapt or assimilate (Gultekin et al 2003: 26). Research on agency and migrant women's mobilisation challenges such persistent images (Gultekin et al 2003; Morocvasic & Catarino 2010: 52). Women migrant agency is studied through effort and resistance as well as compromise and negotiation. Some women migrants can succeed in career in a host country while others can 'suffer' from being exploited. But even in such cases agency is not absent. Very often, in the cases of discrepancy between work expectations

and the reality of work, agency remains hidden. Conscious narration makes women aware of exploitation and discrimination (Gultekin et al 2003: 15-18). Women migrant workers' critique of division in labour shows they do not necessarily experience 'blind' suffering.

Losses and gains, failure and success can co-exist within a migrant story. 'Exclusion' and 'inclusion' discourses and processes co-exist: 'the idea of human rights and equality of treatment of all persons is accompanied with by exclusion from full citizenship rights' (Anthias & Cederberg 2010: 31). Moreover, 'backward' migrant women are stereotyped in contrast to 'modern' Western women. As the result, migrant women are usually excluded from gender equality process. 'As long as migrant women lack the power and resources to represent themselves in a different manner, dominant images are likely to prevail' (Cederberg 2010: 128). New migrants meet new problems and constraints therefore their responses are also diverse and innovative. Campani calls for a move from 'triple marginality'/oppression approach to conceptualising women migrants as active subjects who trace their own trajectories (Campani 2010). Following structuration theory does not prevent from denying such propositions in the name of overarching structures as they are crucial to understand the ways, complexity and limits of strategies women utilise in order to resist and challenge them. The analytical approach of this research adopts the differentiation between short-term 'tactics of survival' as the re-active 'art of the weak', and long-term 'pro-active strategies' (Wills et al 2010: 122-6).

Migration studies rely heavily on human capital, ethnic and network theories. Critics have highlighted how such approaches overlook issues of power relations and class structures (Erel 2010: 645-6). Bourdieu's theory of cultural and social reproduction of hierarchies in society (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977; Bourdieu 1996/1984) can be used to overcome such limitations. Bourdieu defined class as possession of capital in four inter-related forms: economic, cultural, social and symbolic (Bourdieu 1986), which contribute to social reproduction of inequalities. Cultural capital exists in three states: embodied, objectified and institutionalised (ibid.). Mannerism, language and informal education are some elements of embodied cultural capital. Initial accumulation of cultural capital begins in family, representing 'the best hidden form of hereditary transmission of capital, and it therefore receives proportionally greater weight in the system of reproduction strategies' (Bourdieu 1986: 49). Meanwhile, formal education is a crucial part of institutionalised cultural capital. Investment in education can be converted into economic capital via the labour market (Bourdieu 1986).

Therefore, it can be stated that family social background often condition access and interest in getting higher education qualifications, in particular, and has a crucial impact on offspring's career strategising, in general. Despite growing interest in applying Bourdieu's concepts in mobility studies, migrants' family backgrounds (rural/urban, class, education, occupations) are rarely taken into account (Rye & Blekesaune 2003, Reyneri 2004; Rye 2011). Class position and related *habitus* condition individuals' strategies and actions. This is how society reproduces itself. It can be said that *habitus* mediates between subjective agency and objective structures (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu 1984; Maton 2008). However, 'the relationships between social background and actors' social practices are not deterministic, but rather probabilistic'. (Rye 2011: 179). Initial analysis of this research data on educational and professional backgrounds of participants as well as of their parents and partners (Cretu 2013) suggested that relationships between participants' family backgrounds, their education and career trajectories represented a fruitful area for exploration. Overall, this study should reveal whether Bourdieu's class-structure theory and concepts developed within Western European capitalist societies are applicable to the post-Soviet case in migration context.

It is worth emphasising that the concept of habitus, which is central to Bourdieu's sociology is widely applied across social sciences and humanities and seems to be applicable for a range of contexts, areas, practices and issues. However, it is also 'one of the most misunderstood, misused and hotly contested of Bourdieu's ideas' (Maton 2008: 50). Moreover, understanding of habitus was evolving along with Bourdieu's and his followers' empirical studies being conducted since early 1960s onwards. It is consistent with one of the key features characterising Bourdieu's sociology, namely 'fusing theory and research' (Waquant 2013: 5). It was also called 'sociology of practice' (Karadag 2011). Therefore, Maton first provides original definitions of habitus, then presents a history of this concept and finally discusses its legacy and explanatory potential finalising his thoughts with the following statements: '*Habitus*, as its evolution through Bourdieus' work shows and like the very thing it aims to capture, should not be considered as fixed or eternal, but rather an evolving idea. The development of *habitus* to become a fully operative relational concept represents the next, exciting stage for an evolving conceptualisation of habitus (Maton 2008: 65, italics is used to differentiate the concept from the object of study by Maton - OC). All this is not surprising if we know that Bourdieu himself was reconsidering his understanding of the social reality and analytical tools he created (Laberge 2010; Bourdieu 2000).

Some definitions of habitus are clear, like ‘a socialized subjectivity’ or ‘the social embodied’ (Borurdieu & Wacquant 1992: 127, 128) and meaningful like a ‘sense of one’s place’ or ‘sense of place of others’ (Bourdieu 1989: 19) as well as ‘embodied history, internalised as a second nature that conveniently forgotten as history’ (Bourdieu 1990: 56, in Samaluk 2017: 49). At the same time others are quite confusing and self-referring (like it is ‘a property of actors (whether individuals, groups or institutions) that comprises a structured and structuring structure’ (Bourdieu 1994: 170, in Maton 2008: 52). Perhaps, it is useful to explain how the author of this thesis understands it. As many others, to simplify its understanding, I see habitus as the ways we think, act, speak, move and strategise which is embedded not only in individual life history, but also in any sort of group that individual belongs to or is recognized as such (Bourdieu 1987, 1989; Wacquant 2013). And belongings can be class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, nation, region, occupation or any group related (Bourdieu 1989; Bourdieu et al. 2002). It is important to underline that Bourdieu used class as a specific concept or a generic one (Brubaker 1985). Therefore, for me, overarching Bourdieu’s theory of society aims to explain how social inequality reproduces itself not only with material or economic means, but also in cultural and symbolic forms. Since as ‘embodied social structures’ (Bourdieu 1996 (1984): 467-470) habitus mirrors social relations, it can be said that it is at the core of social class reproduction and persisting inequalities.

The nature of habitus as both topic and tool can be understood better if we follow the logic Bourdieu as a philosopher. He stated: ‘[A]ll of my thinking started from this point: How can behaviour be regulated without being the product of obedience to rules?’ (Bourdieu 1995: 65, in Maton 2008: 51). Building on different philosophers ‘from Aristotel to Aquinas and Husserl’ (Wacquant 2011: 85) and citing Erwin’s Panowsky’s ‘Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism’ as very influential for developing the concept of habitus, he revived this concept emphasising how it differed from the notions of ‘habit’ as regular practices by its *generative principle*: ‘The habitus, as the word implies, is that which one has acquired, but which has become durably incorporated in the body in the form of permanent dispositions. So the term constantly reminds us that it refers to something historical, linked to individual history, and that it belongs to a genetic mode of thought, as opposed to existentialist modes of thought… Moreover, by habitus the Scholastics also meant something like a property, a capital.’ (Bourdieu 1986: 86, in Marton 2008: 11).

Wacquant formulated four properties of the concept of habitus on the basis of studying the process of 'social making of prizefighters' 'from within', in short as boxer an as sociologist: 1) 'habitus is a set of *acquired* dispositions' 2) 'habitus holds that practical mastery operates *beneath the level of consciousness and discourse*' 3) 'habitus indicates that set of dispositions *vary by social location and trajectory*' 4) 'the socially constituted conative and cognitive structures that make up habitus are malleable and transmissible because they result from *pedagogical work* (Wacquant 2011: 85-86). At the same time studying habitus as topic of investigation was never the aim in itself. Bourdieu was interested in exploring relations between habitus, capital and field which resulted in social practices. He elaborated a simple equitation which summarising these evolving relations: [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice (Bourdieu 1986: 101, in Maton 2008: 52). So, '[p]ractices are not simply the result of one's habitus but rather of relations between one's habitus and one's current circumstances' (ibid: 53). Logically, there can be a myriad of outcomes or practices, but at this point it is important to realize that the very existence of habitus appreciates social agents who 'actively construct social reality 'through categories of perception, appreciation and action' (Bourdieu [1980] 1990: 91, in Wacquant 2011: 85). It is crucial that 'these categories are not universal and that the generative matrix they compose is not unchanging.' (ibid.)

To sum up, habitus is one of epistemological tools for studying social reproduction. Maton believes that habitus aims to transcend a number of dichotomies apart from connecting past, present and future. Habitus links the social and the individual, objective and subjective, structure and agency. Moreover, it overcomes opposition between the body and mind, between structuraslism and hermeneutics, between theoretical and practical understanding (Matton 2008). Reading Wacquant's article on 'habitus as topic and tool' (2011) where he suggested that his book 'Body and soul' represented 'an empirical and methodological radicalization of Bourdieu's theory of habitus' (Wacquant 2011: 87) was crucial for understanding that I am not doing 'Bourdieu studies'. Wacquant's ethnographic boxing project was not only informed by Bourdieu's sociology, but also guided in many ways by Bourdieu himself. Despite a very sophisticated application of the concept of habitus, methodological innovations in this respect and advancing habitus as topic and tool of investigation, not a word was said about weaknesses of application of habitus as tool of investigation. Although Bourdieu's concept of habitus 'is a powerful tool to steer social enquiry and trace out operant social mechanisms' (Wacquant 2011: 82), its limitations are also apparent.

The overview of the following limitations of the concept of habitus is the result of critical engagement with the original conceptualisations of habitus in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* and *Distinction*, critiques developed by sympathisers and non-sympathisers of Bourdieu's sociology (Brubaker 1985, Lamont & Lareau 1988; Maton 2008; Karadag 2011; Tzanakis 2011; Burawoy 2012; Wacquant 2004, 2011, 2013), diverging empirical applications of this concept in migration context (Rye 2003, 2011; Nohl et al. 2006, Reilly 2010; Nowicka 2014, 2015; Samaluk 2015, 2017) as well as the author's thinking about to what extent Bourdieu's theory of society, in general, and his concept of habitus are relevant for this research: 1) Since habitus or its effects 'can be seen everywhere' (Maton 2008: 51), such questions as 'What is not about habitus?' or 'Where it starts or finishes?' naturally occur. 2) Burawoy associates habitus with 'a black box' or 'a folk concept with a fancy name' and states that 'there is no theory of its components or how they are formed as in psychoanalytical theory'. More importantly, in his view 'Bourdieu points to the possibility of social change but has no theory of social change'. (Burawoy 2012: 204) So, following Bourdieu's logic change in habitus occurs when there is a mismatch between habitus and field, however it is not clear whether that mismatch is produced '*situationally* through the cultural lag (hysteresis)' or '*proccessually* through the very dynamics of social structure' or what are the consequences of this change (ibid.) 3) Bourdieu's three 'thinking tools' (habitus, field and capital) are empirically and conceptually interlocked (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1989: 50, in Maton 2008: 52, 62). Since 'the field structures habitus' while 'habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 127) 'one should understand first how the field works in order to observe the dynamics of the habitus' (Laberge 2010: 774). Moreover, it might be pointless to apply any of these three concepts without the other two. 4) Since Bourdieu created his key concepts mainly conducting research in France and Algeria in the 2nd part of XX century, they cannot be applied in a 'copy and paste' tradition for other research contexts. So, it should be applied critically and creatively across time and space and/or in so called multicultural societies (Tzanakis 2011). 5) It is also a big question whether Bourdieu's concepts can be applied post-fieldwork or on the writing stage without involving them on the level of research design and data collection (Cretu 2013). 6) Habitus can be traced on an individual and collective level, however if it exists only in an embodied form it can be studied only through perceptions and actions, without analysis of body which is necessarily connected to mind in Bourdieu's theory.

The latter critique represents not only one of limitations of the concept of habitus. Many cold-turkey empirical applications of Bourdieu's concepts can be criticised for misuse and 'underuse' of Bourdieu's concepts. This thesis is not an exception in this respect. Others 'over-rely' on Bourdieu's theory of society. For all these reasons, the author of this thesis uses the concept of habitus rather as socio-analytical tool or 'sociological gaze' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, Maton 2008, Wacquant 2011), which could be applied post-fieldwork for the (re)interpretations of findings and not as topic of investigation. It can help us in understanding someone's behaviour, but only partly. To sum up, despite being one of the powerful ways to see and explain the world we live critically, habitus as a concept has its strengths and limitations and therefore has to be applied and combined with other theories and concepts with caution. It has to be also pointed out that the author of this thesis neither follows a Bourdieusian approach per se nor applies, tests or refines any of Bourdieu's concepts. The latter are rather incorporated on the level of conceptualising some of the findings of this study.

To give an example, my very first research on post-Soviet women in London for a Master project (Cretu 2010) showed that participants were changing their gendered behaviour in some aspects, but not the others. Having discovered the concept of habitus I came up with the idea of post-Soviet 'working mother habitus' to emphasise inter-generational dis/continuities in behaviour. However, this behaviour could be interpreted through different lenses. During PhD questions like whether and how habitus is changing during life time or inter-generationally as well as whether and how habitus is changing in new conditions, like 'Transition' from planned to market economy in the post-socialist region or after migration from the region to the UK occurred to my mind, but they could make another PhD. It is hard not to agree with Wacquant: 'habitus, which like any another concept, is not an answer to a research question, but rather an organised manner of asking questions about the social world' (Wacquant 2011: 91). I would like to finalise my thoughts about habitus as topic and *habitus* as tool of investigation with the following questions: Can Bourdieu's sociology be absolutely self-sufficient? Can the concept of habitus be combined with non-Bourdieu's concepts? To what extent and how? Eventually this research will show in indirect way whether it is fruitful to combine the concept of habitus with other, non-Bourdieu's concepts, for the interpretation of research findings. The author has to admit that *An invitation to reflexive sociology* had a far greater impact on this research in comparison with any of Bourdieu's concepts.

Finally, the concept of 'post-Soviet' needs some clarification. Conceptually it is based on post-Soviet studies scholarship where citizenship/nationality/ethnicity is not so important due to common cultural and social heritage. Scholars have also identified a specific (post)Soviet gender order effecting both men and women workers' agency across the FSU (Ashwin 2000; Kay 2007). It excludes citizenship issue which is a subject of change and duality in the case of migrants. Moreover, the 'post-Soviet' lens allows overcoming methodological nationalism (Cretu 2014) and problematizing discrepancies between language, ethnicity and nationality (Brubaker 1994), common in the post-Soviet space. Conceptually, the term 'post-Soviet' is preferred to highlighting every informant multiple identities. Therefore migrants from the FSU since 1991 are conceptualized as 'post-Soviet' both culturally and historically.

Migrants' occupational biographies can be conceptualised as labour or career trajectories (Liversage 2009 a; Cretu 2011). Career trajectory also looks promising for identifying tendencies in migrants' lives and work histories avoiding unproductive arguments around diversity (Rendall et al. 2008; Castagnone et al. 2014; Meeteren 2014; Szewczyk 2014; Vidal-Coso & Miret-Gamundi 2014; Aziz 2015). Migrants' labour is often studied as static positions without retrospective approach. Current employment position is the result of initial work experiences at home as well as subsequent ones after migration. Current jobs are also subject to further change. 'Labour trajectory' has to be studied through prism of continuity and change in jobs, skills, mobility, and career *over time and space*. (Cretu 2011) It might be relevant to studying both 'low-skilled' and 'skilled' migrant stories. It is assumed that a career trajectory approach helps a) to understand whether and how far migrant workers moved from their last jobs in home countries as well as from the first jobs in host countries; b) to analyse factors and strategies which facilitate migrants' 'successful performance' in the labour markets; c) to explain the barriers which hamper migrant workers' progress in both home and host country; d) to explore how and why migrant workers are moving in sectors of economy, occupations and workplaces across time and space; e) not to divide life and work experiences before and after migration; f) to overcome a static understanding of migrants' employment positions, 'skills' and strategies g) to find out differences but also similarities in migrants' occupational biographies; h) to see inter-connectedness between personal/familial and professional lives.

2.3 Linking public with private in migration context

Work is understood here from a feminist point of view. Global labour division analyses paid work in the public sphere and unpaid work in the private one (Kessler-Harris 1975; bell hooks 1989). 'Capitalism has always relied on a certain gendered division of labour, where women play a major role in subsidising the economy through their reproductive labour' (Misra 2005: 3). Patriarchy in family life and capitalism in public life intertwine. The latter is playing a leading role for gender relations within modern society. Gender segregation in employment operates as the main mechanism of reproducing women's dependence. Being discriminated in employment, married women often perform household chores to balance their financial instability. This in turn undermines their ability to make careers, which increases women's economic dependency (Hartmann 1976). Work and home intersected here in a way that was extremely profitable for capital (Munck 2002: 121).

Gender discrimination in employment exists in its horizontal and vertical form. Horizontal segregation means women are usually working in underpaid 'female' jobs and sectors. Some sectors of the economy are 'mixed', like agriculture and trade. Worldwide 'male' and 'female' occupations differ in terms of pay, mobility, career opportunities, attitude to work etc. Education, care, personal services, catering, garment, agriculture, entertainment and 'sex' industries are 'feminised' worldwide. They are devaluated being represented as a continuation of women's household duties (Kessler-Harris 1989; Phizacklea 2003). However, 'male'/'female' division in jobs are not the same cross-culturally. Vertical segregation means that women are facing a 'glass ceiling' in career opportunities, especially in 'mixed' and 'male' labour markets (Sassen 2003; Katz 2001). Gendered assumptions of both employees and employers consider women as less competitive than men (Khotkina 2001). Family, school, media and other structures socialize women into making 'female' careers (O'Connor 2001). Usually women who can make 'male' careers are not seen as a social norm. Insufficient life-work balance policies and enterprise practices leading to sacrifice careers for family/children is another reason for that.

Flexibilisation of work does not eliminate traditional gender segregation. A new global gender division of labour has emerged. Migrant women are often doing 'female' jobs, especially in paid care and domestic work in response to European aging population and decline in state social provisions. In the UK, women migrants from ex-colonies have to

compete with ‘new migrants’ from post-socialist region in most low-paid jobs (Anderson 2000; Mcllwaine et al: 2006). Even skilled women globally tend to work in the welfare and social professions (education, health, social work) or traditionally ‘female’ jobs. However, some highly educated women migrants succeed in making professional careers.

Cross-cultural research criticizes the intensification in the ‘globalisation of care’ and the constant devaluation of care work (Misra 2005: 2). However, in some cases care work allows immigrant women to combine work and house chores (Kofman 2000: 135). The problem of exploitation of immigrant women in reproductive labour in societies promoting gender equality is highly debated (Marchand & Runyan 2000). Both ‘feminization’ and ‘flexibilisation’ of labour and migration reflect specific capital accumulation strategies as well as state policies. It looks like a vicious circle which interconnects public and private spheres through women’s work trans-nationally. Therefore examining career-making post-Soviet migrant women strategies and trajectories in London can reveal how all these structural constraints are overcome.

Migration and family life interweave in several ways. ‘Dependant’ women rely on the residency status of their husbands, and as a result, some women are forced to stay in abusive relationships (Boyd and Grieco 2003). Some migrant women become the breadwinners while men take on new gender roles and look after their children (Jolly & Reeves: 20). ‘Mixed marriages’ can be a cause as well as a consequence of labour migration (Perrin & Rajavali 2005; Conradsen and Kronborg, 2007). The increasing numbers of mixed marriages across Europe, especially between women from CEE and FSU and Western men, have been identified as a new study subject (Haug 2005). We have to see whether ‘skilled’ post-Soviet women migrants form mixed families in London.

Migration studies have also focused on human rights and citizenship issues. Migration is seen not just as a socio-economic phenomenon but also as a political one. In some immigration countries citizenship rights are extended to immigrants (Ackers 1998). The *new international labour division* is primarily based on nationality as well as gender segregation (Marchand and Runyan, 2000: 1-21; Tyuryukonova 2001: 409-417). Both ‘feminization’ and ‘flexibilisation’ of labour and migration reflect specific capital accumulation strategies as well as differentiated state policies. Many women are working in the informal sectors of economy and are responsible for domestic work in their households (Munck 2002: 121-5). Therefore

women migrants are recognized as more vulnerable than men in the context of existing gender inequalities and global restructuring (Phizacklea 1998; Kofman et al. 2000).

2.4 Imagining the post-Soviet gender order on the move

The socio-economic and political changes in CEE/FSU have had a huge, and in many respects, negative impact on women. The *feminization of poverty* is recognized (Perrin and Rajabaly 2005). Neoliberal reforms have reduced key social guarantees, making women more vulnerable (Morrell 2005; Ashwin 2000, 2006). Women experience decline in labour force and political representation under post-communist transition (Pollert, 2003). Post-Soviet women have become extremely active, designing different strategies for survival, seeking new jobs as well as trying to break 'glass ceiling'. However, segregation and gender pay gap have increased (Khotkina 2001; Katz 2001). Women tend to be discriminated in the new private sector both as entrepreneurs and employees. Only a small group of career-oriented women have benefited from new opportunities (Chirikova 2001). Many women enter new emergent sectors/occupations, however their upward mobility is limited (Yaroshenko et al 2006; Kozina & Zhidkova 2006: 58-86). It might have an impact on decision to emigrate.

Women are active in the labour market but face greater constraints than men do. However, it is too simplistic to acknowledge post-Soviet men have more chances to achieve better outcomes in terms of pay and career. In fact most men are marginalized in the society and subordinated to *glocal* political and economic elites as well as women. Women workers express their dissatisfaction; however rarely unite for resistance (Morrison et al: 2009). Migration can be seen as 'a strategy for success' as well as 'a strategy for survival' (Block 2006). A wide variety of overlapping 'new' post-Soviet migrants' types are identified: asylum seekers, seasonal workers, 'tourists', 'visitors', 'students', business/artistic people, trans-migrants, marriage and family migrants, political migrants, contracted and informal workers (Kopnina 2005: 34). But economic factor is still considered as the most significant reason for emigration (Kopnina 2005; Mosneaga 2006).

Sztompka's *trauma theory* might be helpful for understanding the context of mass migration from both CEE and the FSU countries (Sztompka 2000, 2003). 'The ambivalence of social change: Triumph or trauma?' was published in 2000 by Piotr Sztompka, a Polish sociologist

who put the discourse of trauma at the core of his understanding of change developing a concept of 'cultural trauma'. 'Society is nothing but change… constant *becoming* than *being*', which brings 'shocks and wounds to the social and cultural tissue'. However, 'only some types of changes bring about traumas, and therefore only some societies in some periods of their history become traumatized' (Sztompka 2000: 5-7). Only those changes which are sudden or rapid, wide or comprehensive, radical or deep and unexpected (faced with 'unbelieving mood') are potentially traumatogenic; they lead to structural and collective traumas. Since 'the cultural tissue is most sensitive to the impact of traumatogenic changes' and 'wounds inflicted to culture are most difficult to heal' Sztompka believes that '[c]ultural traumas are most enduring, lingering; they may last over several generations.' (ibid: 11).

Sztompka identified four sources of cultural traumas (inter-cultural contact, spatial mobility, change of fundamental institutions and changes of ideas), distinguished between objective and subjective character of cultural traumas, gave examples of traumatising conditions and situations, and suggested that different groups have different degrees of sensitiveness to traumas. Subsequently he suggests that there are four mechanisms for coping with traumas: innovation, rebellion, ritualism and retreatism. The latter is an adoption of Merton's theory of deviance and the following 'anomie', which appears in society when there is a discord between culture and social structures. (ibid: 15-18). Meanwhile, emigration can be interpreted as one of manifestations of innovation within this approach (Slany & Malek 2005).

Finally, following the logic of Smelser's theory of collective behaviour and his understanding of emergence of social movements, Sztompka describes trauma as a 6-stage process or *traumatic sequence* which starts with 'initiating traumatogenic change' and closes with 'overcoming trauma'. Yet, he acknowledges that '[t]he traumatic sequence does not hang in a vacuum, but runs in the wider context of other processes which occur at the same time, but have nothing to do with trauma'. So called 'parametric processes' outside or within of a given society either aggravate traumas or having a healing effect on them. He concludes that 'the universal and inevitable process of *generational turnover*' facilitate the process of 'overcoming trauma and achieving final re-consolidation of culture' (Sztompka 2000: 18-19). The latter demonstrates his understanding of societal changes is culture-focused and therefore is applicable to this study only to some extent.

Szompka's approach has three obvious limitations: 1) four culture-related sources of traumatogenic changes are discussed while socio-historical, 'material' and class-related

causes which lead to them are almost ignored; 2) the assumption that cultural traumas go with older generations socialised in the previous cultural mileu and cannot be transferred to the following generations seems to be short-sighted 3) the concept of cultural trauma is mainly grounded in and illustrated through the Polish case of post-1989 transformation. Nevertheless, unemployment, inflation, criminalisation, poverty, inefficiency of political elites, privatisation of health and education services, the reform of pensions are conceptualised as traumatising conditions and situations which are relevant for 'the post-communist transformation', in general (Sztompka 2000: 14-15).

Overall, Sztompka's understanding of social change through cultural trauma lenses seems to be applicable for this study mainly for three reasons. The collapse of the socialist block as well as dissolution of USSR were sudden, rapid, fundamental and unexpected both within and outside the region. Transition from planned to market economy influenced all spheres of life and society having a big impact on socio-economic and psychological well-being of people living on its territories also because 'cultural traumas often demand re-learning, re-skilling, and re-socialising'. After all, 'reorientation to capitalist entrepreneurship, free markets and individualistic responsibility' is or can be traumatic for post-socialist societies (Sztompka 2000: 16). Perhaps, changes were even more traumatogenic for populations of countries which did not join the EU which had an 'airbag' effect on New EU Members. Yet, traumatogenic changes in society can partly explain mass migrations from and within CEES and the FSU countries. They might try to escape traumatising conditions of the withdrawal of the welfare state (Meardi 2012; Meeus 2013, 2016) and settle in countries which provide better welfare, even for migrants. Finally, women might be affected by post-socialist transformation even more than men and seek access to social security in the 'civilised' West with different means.

This study will show whether, to what extent and in what sense Sztomka's theory is applicable for understanding post-Soviet (female) migration from the region. Last, but not least, Sztompka's attitude to post-1989/1991 transformation differs drastically from that of the author of this thesis. He seems to be rather enthusiastic about having access to 'actual laboratory for the theory of cultural trauma' where the traumatic sequence is 'still uncompleted' and 'the revolution is unfinished' (Sztompka 2000: 21). I see the post-socialist region as a place where millions of people or even biggest parts of populations were put into precarious living and working conditions and became deeply traumatised as the result of

inhuman shock therapy and neoliberal orientation of 'Transition', implemented from above, by Western and local elites.

A critical perspective on transformation of work in the post-socialist region is well developed (Clarke et al. 1993; Clarke 2002, 2007; Ashwin 1999, 2006; Pollert 2003, 2005; Bohle 2006; Croucher 2010; Croucher & Morrison 2012; Bohle & Greskovits 2012; Meardi 2012; Morrison 2007, Morrison & Croucher 2010; Morrison et al. 2012; Stenning & Horschelmann 2008; Stenning et al. 2010; Upchurch & Marinkovic 2011, Upchurch 2015; Upchurch et al. 2015; Meardi 2012; Meardi et al. 2013; Delteil & Kirov 2017). Labour is a key concept in understanding Soviet working-class society (Goldman 2000; Marody 1993). Historically employment was central to both men's and women's Soviet identities. They shared strong attachment to their occupations but faced different dilemmas. Women displayed greater flexibility on pay and status with and instrumental approach to work as opposed to men (Kukhterin 2000; Kay 2006; Ashwin 2006). Vertical and horizontal forms of segregation were common in the soviet workplace. Female-dominated professions were in health-care, trade, education, food and textile industries (Katz 2001). Research on gender and employment in the region shows that the Soviet legacy still provides citizens of multinational post-soviet countries with a definite institutional framework, including its particular *post-Soviet gender order* (Engel, 2004; Ashwin 2000, 2006; Kay 2006, 2007).

Long-term migration in the UK society might challenge initial migrants' gender identities (Jolly & Reeves, 2005; Pipe 2005). To understand life and work experiences of post-soviet women migrants, we have to define the specifics of the *gender systems* they have been socialised into. 'Post-Soviet gender order' is broadly used in understanding gender systems in the FSU. The Soviet gender order defined triangular relations between state, working men and working mothers (Ashwin 2006; Kukhterin 2000). It was a complementary but not an egalitarian gender system. The patriarchal state sustained ideologically and materially institutions such as the 'new socialist family', 'working mother' and motherhood 'as the service to state'. Men and women identities were constructed as 'equal but different' in both public and private spheres (Kay 2007: 1-15). Participation in paid employment though did not equal gender equality. The 'working mother' contract allowed women to balance their productive and reproductive labour (Aivazova 2001; Rotkirch 2004), while maintaining the status quo in gender relations (Connell 1990; Kay 2007: 7).

At the same time many women were present in academic and technical jobs in 'mixed' or 'male' sectors/occupations. Therefore today 'the proportion of female PhD graduates in the natural sciences and engineering is higher in post-socialist states than the average in the EU' (Jungwirth 2011: 110). Some women occupied high level positions in both 'male' and 'female' sectors/occupations. However, in general institutionalised paternalist policy and occupational segregation coupled with understanding family as 'the primary cell in communist society' (Issoupova 2000), motherhood as 'highest form of service to state' (Kiblitskaya 2006), and fatherhood as breadwinning (Kay 2006) and heterosexuality as a norm (Liljestrom 1993) contributed to greater segregation in gender roles.

The Post-Soviet gender order is characterised by strong continuities with the past and competing developments. It is not surprising that in some post-socialist countries the employment rates of women are higher than the EU average (Jungwirth 2011: 110). But the continuity with Soviet practices and representations also includes a certain set of beliefs about men's and women's roles in society. It results in differences between men's and women's attitudes to work, career expectations and labour experiences as well as employers' preferences (Ashwin 2000, 2006). The Soviet gender order, its structures and believes, continue to hamper some women's careers.

Another feature of post-Soviet gender order is that women do not experience much state support as mothers and workers. Motherhood is redefined as a private affair and women have lost guaranteed employment and comprehensive welfare coverage (Iossupova 2000). Paradoxically, during *Transition* women's responsibility for home and children played a 'protective' role. Many men experienced a crisis of masculinity, being unable to fulfil traditional expectations of being breadwinners (Ashwin 2006; Kay 2006). Men also find it more diminishing to accept low status and/or low paying jobs while this is considered acceptable for women (Bowers, 1996; Ashwin 2006; Kay 2007). Crisis of masculinity in the FSU could stimulate women to look for partners and their future children's fathers abroad.

Competing gender discourses and contradictions in everyday practices, to be precise, existed during as well as after socialism (Kay 2007). From *Perestroika*/Gorbachev's times, traditional gender roles were *reinforced* rather than challenged (Engel 2004: 250-257) with the revival of 'back to home' and 'heroine mother' ideology (Bridger 2007). Radical changes under Gorbachev meant that women could choose to be either mother or worker, however in

practice the majority of women continued to live as 'working mothers' for cultural and economic reasons (Engel 2004: 253-6). I conceptualised it as *post-Soviet habitus of working mother* (Cretu 2010: 15-16), which could be reproduced after migration as well (ibid: 38). The 'working mother' contract which was sustained ideologically and materially under state socialism still represents a main social model for women from Central and Eastern Europe (Engel 2004; Ashwin 2000, 2006). It remains to be seen whether this model continues to exist in case of post-Soviet 'skilled' women migrants.

Today state involvement in constructing gender roles market relations has declined and market relations media play a crucial role. Contradictory gender discourses have developed (Kay 2007; Carlback 2007: 85-110). Old and new gender identities are found competing (Tartakovskaya 2000). Among most common new gender identities are 'housewives', 'Barbie', 'successful women' and 'businesswomen' which can co-exist or change each other over time. Women's employment remains high, though ideologies and the market both 'seem to stand in the way of a transition to a housewife model' (Morrel et al: 18). Likewise, women are expected to sustain the 'working mother' contract but without state support as in the soviet past. 'It is hard to predict how these women will negotiate their personal and work lives in future' because 'the desirability of women combining several roles persists' (Ashwin et al. 2006, p. 130). International migration can represent a strategy for escaping post-Soviet gender order.

Kosygina has applied the 'gender order' approach in migration research, analysing forced migration from ex-Soviet countries to Russia. Migrants tend to move to places where they have social networks. However, despite having higher levels of education than locals they usually experience 'a drop in professional statuses. Gender assumptions complicate adaptation to the Russian labour market.' More generally women are seen by employers as 'less productive and less reliable workers', since they are perceived primarily as responsible for private sphere. Gendered assumptions shape employment strategies for both local and migrant women. Kosygina concludes that women migrants are 'doubly disadvantaged'. They are discriminated against on the base of gender (as well as local women) and migratory status (as well as male migrants) (Kosygina 2007). It raises the questions whether migration does indeed offer an escape route and whether 'skilled' female migration to the West differs from this type of migration within the post-Soviet space.

2.5 Concluding remarks

The main gaps and limitations in mainstream migration studies are laid bare: 1) they are descriptive rather than explanatory; 2) most migration studies fail to explore *linkages* between three levels of migration: the micro-level (migrants' agency), meso-level (networks, class relations, habitus) and macro-level (global, EU and national structures and institutions) (Castles 2001, 2010); 3) 'skilled' women are particularly overlooked since many of them are coming through non-'skilled' migration routes (Kofman 2012); 4) work experiences of family migrants as well as of 'skilled', self-employed, de-skilled and re-skilled female migrants are largely unexplored; 5) the existing literature is predominantly focused on women migrants in 'female' jobs portraying them as passive victims rather than *strategising agents* (Raghuram 2008); 6) there are gaps in the study of migrants' social and occupational mobility (Kontos & Shinozaki 2010: 110-112) and more generally in exploring *social reproduction* from a class perspective in migration context.

Initial attempts to explain how family and class are related to social reproduction in a capitalist society can be found in classic works of Marx, 'Capital', and Engels, 'The origin of the family, the private property and the state' . In both works women's oppression in society has been recognized (Vogel 1983: 43-97), giving space for creative elaborations by later feminist Marxists. Over time different complex ways how social reproduction can be understood and studied have developed, which were influenced by *Capital* and/or *Origin* in one way or another. There are at least two bodies of literature which had a significant impact on understanding that social reproduction as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, conceptualising the key findings of this thesis and formulating its key arguments. One is on social reproduction developed mainly with a focus on cultural mechanisms creating, sustaining and transforming class within particular national contexts (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977; Bourdieu 1984, Bertaux & Thompson 1997; Savage et al. 1992; Skeggs 1997, 2004; Savage 2000; Savage et al. 2013). Another one is on social reproduction theorised within gendered migration studies with a particular focus on different forms of reproductive labour (Truong 1996; Kofman et al. 2000; Locke et al. 2013; Raghuram 2012; Kofman & Raghuram 2005a, 2015).

The author of this thesis combined both for studying post-Soviet migration to the UK. This case turned out to be a unique and complex terrain for exploring continuity and change of

ideas and practices of social reproduction from class, family, generational and gender points of view. Overall, this thesis represents one of the first attempts to study empirically how production and reproduction worlds intertwine not only in the context of migration, but across time and space, challenging methodological nationalism (Wallerstein 1974; Wimmer & Glick-Schiller 2002, 2003; Weiss 2005) in an innovative way. Meanwhile, Gidden's understanding of time through prism of three temporalities at play, such as everyday life experience (cyclical *duree*), individual life span and 'historical time' or context (the longue *duree*) (Giddens 1984: 34-5, in Liversage 2009a) informed this study.

Having in mind abovementioned theoretical and methodological elaborations the author proposes a six-step approach of how social reproduction can be traced and analysed in migrants' lives: 1) through studying previous migration experiences in their families of origin, 2) through exploring migrants' families of origin from socio-economic, urban/rural, educational and occupational perspectives 3) through eliciting familial educational strategies and work-related values transmitted from parents to offspring who become international migrants 4) through examining families migrants create focusing on their partners' social, educational and occupational backgrounds 5) through studying the ways participants share household responsibilities with their partners as well as combine their familial and professional lives 6) through understanding to what extent participants sustain or challenge an 'original' gender order after migration. All three empirical chapters (Ch. 5, 6 and 7) follow the logic of this research practice. It has to be emphasised that staying focused on women's career trajectories (Liversage 2009a, 2009b; Jungwirth 2011) and studying the multi-dimensional impact family and migration had on them helped the author to discover social reproduction processes transcending national borders.

Finally, there is a need for a more balanced approach which does not privilege structural conditions or migrant's agency, exploring instead them as interconnected phenomena. The *social transformation* perspective in migration studies which links human mobility with broader societal processes can facilitate understanding the *what*, *how* and *why* of what is happening in contemporary societies (Castles 2010; Portes 2010; Amelina et al. 2016). For all these reasons, a combination of social transformation and social reproduction approaches (Locke et al. 2013; Kofman and Raghuram 2015) seems to be the most adequate analytical lenses for exploring post-Soviet out-migrations in general, and women professionals' mobility, in particular. Finally, a trans-border career trajectory approach should allow the researcher to understand/explain tendencies in post-Soviet women's professional lives

without reducing them to a myriad of diverse stories and working identities (Bourdieu et al. 2002; Nohl et al. 2009). This interdisciplinary study also adopts a critical view of methodological nationalism (Wimmer & Glick-Schiller 2003; Castles 2010; Amelina & Faist 2012), which seems to be particularly applicable in the post-Soviet case.

CHAPTER 3

INVISIBLE POST-SOVIET WOMEN PROFESSIONALS IN LONDON

The aim of this Chapter is to contextualise migration of post-Soviet women to the UK and London. First, the post-Soviet migration system is discussed. Second, the complexity of evolving migration system in the receiving country is considered looking at the interplay between the EU and national policies and practices. Third, competing discourses are presented on women migrants from CEE in Western Europe and the UK. Fourth, the changing nature of London's labour markets is analysed in connection with dependency on both labour and 'skilled' migrants. Finally, on the basis of existing research assumptions are outlined about post-Soviet women professionals in London.

3.1 The post-Soviet migration system?

A more complex picture of migration inflows has emerged in the last 20 years resulting from the breakdown of the East-West divide and the momentous transformations which have taken place in Central and Eastern Europe and the FSU. The socio-economic and political changes following the collapse of the socialist bloc have stimulated significant internal and international migration within and from transition countries (ICMPD, 2005). Privatisation, cuts to welfare state have produced unprecedented growth in unemployment and poverty rates, especially in rural areas (Haney 2003; OECD 2003). In this context, migration has become an effective survival strategy for many families. The collapse of the socialist bloc has also stimulated significant changes in CEE and FSU migration systems. (Molodikova 2008). It is also argued whether the post-Soviet system exists (Heleinak 2002; Brunarska 2014).

It is obvious that new types of mobility occurred or galvanised in the post-socialist region, namely, 'circular' and seasonal migration, 'skilled' and 'unskilled' migration to the West, intra-regional flows, flows from less developed countries, long-term and permanent migration, return migration, ethnic migration, single and family migration, marriage migration, legal and illegal migration. However, changes in the region are ambivalent and traumatic, bringing both benefits and losses. 'The 'cold-turkey' transformation from

communism to capitalism has left people feeling helpless and lost' (Richmond 2005: 27). However, against predictions, between 1990 and 1997 around 2.4 million migrants from CEE entered the EU (Castles and Miller 2003: 86), which is small compared to post-war period.

In regards to the FSU even recent data suggest that about 80% of the movements are taking part within post-Soviet space with around 50% of post-Soviet migrants going to Russia (Molovikova 2008). So, some men and women from post-Soviet space have moved to Western Europe as labour migrants, students, asylum seekers, and family-migrants. Between 1997 and 2003 migrant flows from the FSU grew eight-fold (Zlotnik 2005). Figures vary depending on a source. Economic factors are still considered the most significant reason for migration from the region. Transition from planned to market economy have produced unprecedented growth in unemployment and poverty rates, especially in rural areas (OECD 2003). In this context, for some migration became an effective survival strategy and an opportunity to improve life conditions. For the others ability to cross the border is about having a choice where and how to live and work.

The Enlargement in 2004 and 2007 has had a twofold impact on these processes. Firstly, citizens of New EU members have gained conditional rights to reside and work in the EU. Romanian and Bulgarian citizens in the UK can only work as self-employed until 2014. However, by 2006 the majority of migrants from New Members occupied low-skilled formal and informal jobs in hospitality, construction, 'agri-food' sector, care and domestic work. For most workers in New Members migration represents an 'exit strategy' at the background of cuts in welfare and growing social inequality (Meardi 2012). Secondly, the Western Newly Independent States (WNIS), Armenia, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia have become a borderland with flows of goods, people and capital (IOM February 2006). Despite reinforced migration restrictions, WNIS migration to the EU is increasing. New Members also have become both destination and transit countries for migrants from WNIS (Kazmierkiewitz 2009). 'Management' of irregular flows from WNIS/FSU is articulated as a significant challenge in contemporary Europe (IOM 2006 February: 9-11). Very little is known about migrants who are coming from WNIS through legal channels, including those who are getting into 'skilled' jobs.

The socio-economic and political changes in CEE/FSU have had a huge, and in many respects, negative impact on women. Research has highlighted the 'feminization of poverty'

at the background of reduction in key social guarantees (Morrell 2005; Ashwin 2000, 2006) as well as decline in labour force participation and political representation. Women are active in the labour market but face greater constraints than men do, facing discrimination, particularly in the new private sector, both as entrepreneurs and employees. Only a small group of career-oriented women have benefited from new opportunities (Chirikova 2001). However, post-Soviet women have become extremely active, designing different strategies for survival, seeking new jobs and trying to break the 'glass ceiling' (Khotkina 2001; Katz 2001). Post-Soviet women workers express their dissatisfaction; however rarely unite for resistance (Cretu 2006; Morrison et al. 2012). Migration could be also used by post-Soviet women as an exit strategy (Meardi 2012; Morrison et al. 2013, 2014; Alberti 2014; Sachetto & Andrijasevic 2016; Samaluk 2016)

3.2 The EU or British migration system?

In 1973 the UK joined the European Community (from 1993 onwards: the European Union). Within the EU a coordinated approach for its members in dealing with asylum and migration policies has been developing. However, the UK represents one of the four main European migration sub-systems after WWII. It is characterized by strong and decreasing migration ties with the Commonwealth countries, not joining the Schengen zone and recent creation of points-based system for non-EU migrants. (Entzinger et al 2008: 13-33). Since 1970s in the UK as well as in other Western European countries, and later Southern and Central European countries, restrictive immigration policies can be observed. From the late 1980s 'intra-EU migration and migration within the EEA is left out of the official national migration statistics' (ibid.: 27).

Official data suggest intra-EU migration is relatively low even today. Migration from Poland to the UK looks rather exceptional here. Polish nationality became most common non-British nationality in 2012. In the UK old migration flows, particularly from India, Pakistan and Republic of Ireland are coupled with new migration flows, particularly from Poland. Despite restrictive immigration policies the numbers of the UK residents born outside the UK or possessing non-British nationality grew between 2004 and 2012. By 2012 '1 in 8 (12.4%) of the usually resident population of the UK were born abroad whilst 1 in 13 (7.8%) had non-British nationality'. (ONS 2013)

Overall, since the end of Cold War migration flows have surged. North-West Europe appeared one of the main destinations despite the restrictive migration regimes. The British government planned to manage immigration flows for economic advantage without limiting immigration per se. 'In contrast to the state-based immigration control of the post-war period, the British government adopted a market-led approach to immigration reform' and Britain turned into 'a country of net immigration since the early 1990s' (Wills et al 2010: 11). The UK was one of the countries which opened its labour markets to migrants from New Members in order to ease labour shortages, mainly in agriculture and construction. Britain 'effectively closed its doors to new migration from the East'; however immigration has increased due to disconnections between immigration policies and business interests. (Wallace and Vincent 2007: 36). Since the early 2000s the UK is also competing globally for attracting the most talented migrants to fulfil shortages of skilled workers.

Under the Labour government between 1997 and 2010 at the background of tightening of immigration controls four main consequences for non-EU migrant workers can be identified: 1) limitation of legal ways of entry for 'low-skilled' non-EU immigrants; 2) selective admission of 'highly skilled' non-EU migrants; 3) access to work of international students (subject to change); 4) unlimited access to work for EEA family members and spouses of 'skilled' migrants. Consequently, 'managing' immigration approach resulted in a points-based immigration regime in 2008. It differentiated migrants as 'highly skilled' (Tier 1), 'skilled' (Tier 2), 'low skilled' (Tier 3), 'students' (Tier 4) and 'young and temporary workers' (Tier 5) (Home Office 2006). Under the Coalition government (since 2010 onwards) further toughening in Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 4 is taking place (Murray 2011: 27-28).

Citizenship and social inclusion became increasingly conditional on paid employment, 'while punitive policies are imposed on those who do not conform' (Kofman et al., 2000: 197). Migrants faced different terms of settlement and citizenship rights on the base of nationality, skills and gender. In fact, most Western receiving countries driven by the growth of knowledge economy put into practice largely hierarchical immigration regimes. Stratifications based on skills deepen inequality between 'skilled' and 'unskilled', and have particular negative consequences for women migrants (Kofman 2007).

Increasing illegal migration in Europe can be seen as 'a response' to the EU anti-migrant policies (Richmond: 2005). One of the consequences of new migration regime is that at least half a million irregular migrants live and work in the UK. Most of them are based in London (LSE 2009). Some of them regularised themselves through marriage or refugee status. Many are working in low-paid informal jobs in London. A law sanctioning employers hiring irregular migrants was introduced in 1996. However, only in 2007-2008 around 100 employers were fined for violation of immigration controls. Migrants from the FSU as non-EU citizens are likely to be found in irregular positions, though as white relatively educated 'Europeans' not at the very bottom of the labour markets (Wills et al. 2010). However, this study is focused on more or less privileged migrant professionals who are more likely to have the right to live and work in the UK and to be able to transfer their 'skills' post-migration.

3.3 Diversifying 'new women migrants' from CEE in Western Europe

Given the lack of studies on (women) migration from the FSU to the UK research on migration from New EU members to Western Europe could be helpful. The vast majority of migrants from the East are migrant workers, both regular and irregular. Among them 'the increasing autonomous migration of women in post-socialist Eastern Europe in particular' is recognised (Kontos & Shinozaki 2010: 83). Yet not all 'new women migrants' are labour migrants. After 1989 women migrants represent a particular, and yet fragmented group. Sztompka identifies four means of dealing with socio-cultural trauma in post-socialist region: innovation, rebellion, ritualism and retreat (Sztompka 2000). Innovation is the most constructive type of adaptation to a new reality; it includes emigration. The ethnographic study on female migration from Poland shows that half of interviewed women could be defined as 'migrants of new Polish trauma'. However almost all pointed out the economic factor as the fundamental reason for migration (Slany and Malek 2005).

The concept of 'youth drain' and 'brain waste' is applied to female migration from CEE given the prevalence of young migrants (Haug 2005: 207-208). It is also associated with risks, such as 'sex labour', trafficking, harassment which make younger women migrants more vulnerable. Migration can also be particularly beneficial to younger women, who are better at adapting to new realities (Kiblitskaya 2004; Slany & Malek 2005). Migration can bring economic independence, self-confidence and greater freedom to younger educated

women (Nohl et al. 2009). Younger women tend to use marriage with EU citizens as an 'efficient female strategy', though actual achievement of successful migration is dependent on finding the right partner (Slany 2005). Some researchers recently turned their attention to studying 'skilled' migration from CEE (Csedo 2008; Guth & Gill 2008; Liversage 2009). Very few studies are focused on 'skilled' women from post-socialist countries (Jungwirth 2011).

Dominant literature suggests that 'new female migrants' from CEE are often channelled into domestic services, hospitality, agriculture and 'sex industry'. They usually take the jobs left by local women in service sectors. They provide cheap, flexible and temporary labour force for the service sectors. However, from 1990s feminist migration researchers highlighted the importance of migrants' agency – the ways women migrants 'make choices and plans for the future of themselves and their families'(Anthias & Cederberg 2010: 24). This was a critique towards both neo-liberal paradigm focused on rational individual actions and Marxist paradigm with focus structural/collective basis for action.

Today social, cultural and political reasons for migration are studied together with economic ones. Equally the huge focus on domestic work and sex industry has been criticised. Moreover, the reproductive sphere covers other forms of employment – like teaching and health, in which many women migrants are involved (Kofman & Raghuram 2005). The authors are also calling for re-conceptualisation of reproductive sphere for marriage migrants, pointing out their unpaid work at home, 'brain waste' in a host country and highlighting the incorporation of their 'skills' into labour migration discourses.

Women migrants are more successful in finding jobs in private sectors, including the expanding service one. It is characterised by low levels of security and unionisation, flexibility, irregularity and sub-contracting. It is also easier to get into for migrants and it looks more attracting in terms of pay or flexibility. Service sector is divided into 'primary' secure well-paid and skilled jobs and 'secondary' insecure flexible low-paid and low-skilled jobs. Most women migrants are concentrated in the latter. (Anthias & Cederberg 2010: 38). 'Skilled' women migrants working in IT sector, academic sphere or health received most attention from the researchers.

To sum up, it seems that in most cases migrants often cannot utilise their 'skills', particularly women. The following structural constraints can partly explain this phenomenon: immigration rules, non-recognition of foreign qualifications, labour market segregation, occupational closure, lack of local networks, language 'skills', family duties, inefficient care provision, inability to transfer 'skills', de-valuation of 'female' 'skills' and professionals, etc. In this study the focus is on migrant agency. A particular attention is given to those who succeeded to enter 'skilled' jobs in London (sometimes after de-skilling) to uncover *how* they made it within existing structural conditions, which can both facilitate and impede (women) migrants' careers in London, *the unequal city* (Hamnett 2003).

3.4 The changing nature of London's labour markets and migrant workers

Global multicultural cities attract both the highest and lowest income earners, offering a variety of education and employment opportunities for local and migrant men and women. Among the most low-paid and low-skilled workers in global cities are women migrants from *Third world* and *Transition* countries, who are mainly recruited in care and service sectors (Marchand & Runyan 2000: 17). 'The fastest growing form of work for immigrant women' is 'domestic labour', which attracts women from different educational, professional and national backgrounds, often de-skilling them (Ackers 1998). Yet a tendency to recognise diversity in women migrants' experiences has grown popular during the last decade, questioning the hegemonic idea of women migrants as unskilled labour or family dependants (Kofman 2000, 2001; Passerini et al, 2007: 1-19). This research contributes to understanding what place 'new women migrants' from the FSU occupy in global cities.

London reflects the dramatic changes in global and British political economy from the late 1970s. London's labour markets are characterized by decline in manufacturing and growth in service-sector employment. In contrast to middle-income jobs in manufacturing, service employment polarizes high-paid and low-paid jobs creating sharper occupational and income hierarchies (Piggott 2008: 54). High paid sectors are represented by business, finance, insurance, real estate. Low-paid sectors cover domestics, care, hospitality, cleaning, catering, construction, food-processing and security work. Both high-wage and low-wage labour markets are expanding. However, wages for 'skilled' workers increased much faster.

Subsequently, London as other global cities, experiences widening gaps between rich and poor. The number of unemployed and 'working poor' are increasing. Massey called London 'a capital of neoliberalism'. This is where many neo-liberal ideas and practices were produced and exported to the rest of the world (Massey 2007: 64). Despite its economic growth by 2007, the city experienced 7% decline in employment rates for those without qualifications between 1997 and 2006. The twin processes of labour-market deregulation and increased international migration are the key explanation for this. The new divide in labour is also about divide between local inactive population and migrant workers. (Wills et at. 2010)

In contrast to the post-war period, we can observe high rates of unemployment in parallel with high levels of immigration. Many locals 'prefer' to claim benefits than to work while migrants are ready to take up jobs without social guarantees. The national minimum pay is not sufficient to attract local workers into these jobs (Wills et al. 2010). Despite that, the international reserve army of labour is viewed as a threat for jobs and resources. 'While employers are generally keen to proselytize the advantages of immigration . . . the majority of voting populace have a growing appetite for much stronger immigration controls' (ibid: 8). With growing availability of migrants' labour employers reduced quality and security in jobs.

London has also become one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Europe both 'in its transnational capitalist and subaltern classes', mainly because of inflows of migrants (Hanertz 1996; Favell 2009). As other global cities it increasingly relies on migrant workers. Today they represent 35% of employees in the city. London is characterized by 'super-diversity' being new home to migrants almost from all countries in the world (Vertovec 2007). Many of them work in low-paid low-skilled jobs. In fact, at least half of elementary jobs are occupied by migrant workers (Spence 2005). The majority of London's recent migrants are coming from developing countries (62%) or via asylum system (22%) while only 16% of migrants are coming from developed countries (Gordon and Whitehead 2007).

To sum up, during last 30 years London has been transformed into a 'neoliberal capital' turning into a global city with de-regulated labour markets and high dependence on migrant workers. By 2006 34% of migrants in London were coming from the EU countries and 6% from the rest of Europe. (Piggott 2008: 30). Post-Soviet migrants fit into the latter category. The city attracts/depends on both highly skilled and low skilled migrant workers. London's new migrant division of labour is the product of inter-connected actions of policy-makers,

employers and migrant workers. Employers influence de-regulation of labour markets and increase their appetite for migrants' workers especially from New EU members states (Wills et al. 2010: 28-58). They display increasing preference for EU rather than non-European migrants and white Europeans rather than locals. Subsequently, migrants and local communities are played off against each other (ibid: 17-20). It remains to be seen what position 'skilled' women migrants from the FSU occupy in London's labour markets.

3.5 Concluding remarks

On the basis of this Chapter some assumptions about post-Soviet women migrant professionals in London can be made. 1) Most of them enter the UK through different 'legal' modes of entry, particularly as students and marriage migrants or EEA family members. 2) 'Legal' entry guarantees access to formal jobs. 3) As white Orthodox Christians they are in a more favourable position and in British labour markets than some other migrants. 4) They are highly educated, but are not necessarily successful in entering jobs consistent with their educational levels and profiles. 5) Many of them are de-skilled after moving to the UK; however, over time some of them succeed in entering 'skilled' jobs. 6) London seems to provide excellent career opportunities for some of them while it appears to exploit some others as precarious workers. 7) These women find employment in a wide range of jobs and sectors of economy. 8) Some of them work in 'mixed' or masculinised occupations while others work in feminised ones. A question remains to be answered as to whether post-Soviet women professionals constrained by segregation on the basis of nationality and gender in London's labour markets are as well as whether they are discriminated against by employers and managers in the workplace, facing therefore a glass ceiling. This study will shed light on these issues and reveal to what extent the above mentioned assumptions stand correct in reality. In the next Chapter the research design is presented followed by a discussion of research practice covering the pre-fieldwork, fieldwork and post-fieldwork stages of carrying out qualitative research.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This Chapter is a product of engaging with qualitative methods literature, but also with research practice, learning and iterative process within and beyond the PhD programme. The author contributed to several research projects in Moldova and Russia between 2004 and 2012[1] getting invaluable experience in conducting fieldwork and interpreting data in the areas of sociology of work and migration. Studying migrants' working lives in London started within International Master programme at Glasgow University and continued within MSc + PhD programme at Middlesex University. 'Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe' and 'Gender in post-Soviet societies' (CEES, Glasgow University) were crucial for framing research within post-socialist changes. 'Qualitative Research Methods' and 'Research Design' module had a significant impact on designing this study while 'Work and Globalisation' module contributed to developing a critical view on changes in the world of work (Middlesex University Business School).

Multi-dimensional iteration facilitated the process of conceptualizing both findings and methodological underpinnings of this research. On the one hand, they were discussed with supervisors, colleagues and participants of over the course of a PhD. On the other, key findings and reflections on research practicalities of both the previous (see 4.1) and this research were disseminated at four workshops and four international conferences between 2011 and 2016.[2] The author also contributed in different roles to labour migration-focused seminars which expanded her knowledge on labour studies in the post-socialist region and beyond as well as the issues of ethics and power relations which occur in research with migrants and non-migrants from/in the region.[3] Meanwhile, a two slot panel '*Doing research with 'post-Soviet migrants': Theoretical and methodological reflections'* organized by the author within the 11th IMISCOE Annual Conference in 2014 produced fruitful discussions between emerging and established academics in the field across Europe. Finally, MPhil to PhD transfer report as well as presentation delivered to the transfer panel was crucial for conceptualizing initial findings and addressing the pre-examiner's critiques.

This Chapter consists of five parts. First, the impact of the previous study on design of this research is highlighted. Second, use of qualitative interviewing is justified. Third, reflections

on the fieldwork with a focus on selection criteria, engagement with participants and interviewing itself are presented. Fourth, the processes of thematic analysis and interpretation of data are summed up. Finally, both positional reflexivity and ethical issues occurred in this qualitative research is discussed. It has to be emphasised that this research is grounded into the previous one, a pioneering study on working lives of women from the FSU in London (Cretu 2010, 2011), which can be called a pilot study for this research.

4.1 Research design

This thesis is rooted in two Master research projects: 'Post-Soviet Women Migrants in the UK (London): Gender Identities Challenged?' (Glasgow University) and 'Post-Soviet women migrant workers in London: Diversity in jobs, strategies and trajectories' (Middlesex University). Data on women migrants' life and work experiences were collected in Summer 2009 for the former gender-focused study. They were used and re-interpreted for the latter labour-focused one. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with twelve post-Soviet women migrants, aged 23-40. They migrated from Moldova, Russia and Ukraine to the UK between 1992 and 2007. Gender identities were analysed through continuity and change in post-Soviet gender order in the context of migration. Migrant worker agency was analysed from three perspectives: jobs, strategies and trajectories (project). The data demonstrated the diversity and complexity in migrants' life stories and employment positions as well as labour market strategies and trajectories. More importantly, the previous study contradicted commonly-held assumptions about women migrants being relegated to 'low-paid low-skilled female jobs' and showed that conceptual distinction between labour migrants and marriage migrants is misleading.

Post-Soviet women migrants' life and work stories displayed differences as well as similarities. On the one hand, it seemed that women's stories were different. They entered the UK as students, seasonal workers, brides, EEA family members, *au pair*, or on 'visiting'/'tourist' visas. They were working in agriculture, care and service sectors of the economy, domestic and reproductive work as well as being involved in the business and 'ethnic economy'. Their employment positions were different in terms of type of jobs and pay as well as career progression and prospects. Some worked formally, others informally. Some women were working in 'female' jobs while other worked in 'mixed' or 'male' ones.

Some of them ‘succeeded’ in career-making, though not all of them could be called career-oriented. They belonged to different occupational categories and occupied different labour market positions. Differences in language skills and entitlements were recognized as well. However, almost all of them were active in employment and their differences were interpreted through de-regulation of work and migration, nationality and gender division in labour, and diversification of London’s labour markets.

On the other hand, similarities between interviewed women were also apparent. Most of them migrated as young single educated women with the aim to work and/or improve life conditions. In this sense they fitted famous Sztompka’s ‘new trauma migrants’ concept elaborated in the context of changes after socialism in Eastern Europe. All but one woman was employed at the time of the interview, working in private sectors of economy. All but one formalised workers had temporary contracts. All but one could be defined as ‘skilled’ on the basis of education and/or occupation in home countries or in the UK. All women had HE qualifications acquired from the region, however only four of them worked in ‘skilled’ jobs before moving to the UK. None of them entered the UK through ‘skilled’ migration routes. So, almost all of them were de-skilled upon arrival in the UK; some could not escape precarious jobs for years. Some women found positive prospects in their precarious flexible part-time jobs in terms of balancing work and family, getting local work experience, improving English and building networks. However, most of them were not satisfied with current employment positions, despite obvious progress. They expressed mixed feelings about life and work in London echoing the discourse of co-existence of feelings of ‘success’ and ‘suffering’, benefits and losses, inclusion and exclusion. All this opened a question about whether these similarities were due to common Soviet legacy and/or British migration subsystem.

All twelve interviewees had the right to live and work in the UK at the time of the interview. Two women were ‘undocumented’ for several years prior to marriages to British citizens. Some women exercised their rights as spouses of British and EU citizens while others came on student visas and or EU passports. However, it was found that the right to reside and work in the UK did not guarantee entrance into well-paid formal jobs. ‘Immigrant status’ seemed to transcend its formal definition. Half of the interviewees were channelled into particular *migrants’ jobs*, including those with EU/UK citizenship. They also were perceived as ‘passive victims’, ‘dependents’ or ‘non-professional’ by employers and locals. Some women

thought it is a natural destiny of (women) migrants to do low-paid low-skilled. However, some women were quite successful in career-making. They moved from de-skilled into skilled jobs over time. This is when I started to think about why educated women migrants with almost the same human capital reached quite diverse employment positions in London.

About half of them did progress in terms of occupation, career and pay despite being de-skilled upon arrival to the UK. Most of them postponed motherhood. They said that getting into 'better jobs' was one of most common reasons for that. Overall, most women had clear plans on how to act to fulfil their professional aspirations. Their life stories and labour trajectories suggested we do not have to treat women migrants as victims and appreciate instead their agency. Most post-Soviet educated women have moved to the UK on their own, making plans before migration. They tried to re-negotiate both occupations and 'immigrant status' in the UK with more or less success. Being active within and beyond work, they deployed a range of strategies to 'survive' or 'succeed' in London's labour markets. So, only half of the women moved from de-skilled jobs into 'skilled' while others could not get out of low-skilled low-paid jobs usually in informal sectors. Immigrant status, non-recognition of foreign qualifications, lack of local networks and language skills were identified as the main obstacles for career progress at the background of well-known structural disadvantages for women migrants.

To sum up, the previous study demonstrated that: 1) many women migrants who are not coming through labour or 'skilled' migration routes turn into 'invisible' workers 2) not all women migrants are channelled into de-skilled/low-paid/unskilled jobs after migration 3) diverging trends in women's employment positions should be recognised. The factors which facilitate or hamper transition from de-skilling/unskilled jobs into more skilled ones called for further research. Some post-Soviet women migrants could 'succeed' in career-making despite existing nationality and gender segregation. The natural question has followed: Who, how and why succeeded in London's labour markets? This is why the interest in studying life and work experiences of women professionals from the FSU in London occurred. This is when the decision was made to focus on women who had what is considered 'skilled' jobs in London (see 2.2 for a critique on the concept of 'skilled' in labour and migration studies) or those who considered themselves 'professionals'. Finally, the repeated interviews with five participants of the previous study in three years enriched this research and facilitated in

understanding how personal and professional lives develop over time and whether their participants' career aspirations and plans fulfilled.

From a methodological point of view migrants' performance in the labour markets was approached through trajectory lenses. Labour trajectories represented quite a wide spectrum of stories, however life strategising could be in most cases conceptualised either as 'surviving' or 'succeeding'. All of the highly educated women started with precarious low-skilled jobs in the UK, but over time they came to radically different labour market and social positions. A more in-depth investigation into the interplay between macro-level structures, meso-level processes and micro-level agency was needed to explain diversity in migrants' labour / career trajectories. The concept of trajectory itself in studying migrants' work experiences in public sphere needed further elaboration.

The MSc study showed that it is fruitful to study migrants' work experiences and last jobs as part of their labour trajectory and not as a static phenomenon. It is important to study trajectories and not just first or last jobs. (Cretu 2011) Labour / labour market / career trajectory I well developed in quantitative studies, but it needs further elaboration in qualitative labour and migration studies (see 2.2 for details). Several reasons for using a career trajectory approach in this research on the basis of the previous study have to be highlighted: 1) it connects work experiences *over time and space*; 2) it facilitates understanding current employment position as the result of work experiences before and after migration; 3) it allows for the recognition of factors and strategies which facilitate migrants' 'successful performance' in the labour markets as well as barriers which hamper transborder careers; 4) it helps to explain continuity and change in jobs, occupations, careers and employment.

4.2 Why qualitative interviewing?

Through critical analysis of secondary materials, mainly EU and UK emigration policy documents, regional reports, labour and/or gender-segregated data the structural aspects of migration from FSU to the UK were investigated. The macro-level picture of migration flows gives the context while only the grass-root perspective can reveal how migration is experienced at individual and group level. In-depth qualitative studies, pioneered by feminists, can highlight the individual motivations and strategies, hidden within statistics,

which are shaped by macro-structures (Slany & Gorny 2005: 119-120). Moreover, oral history 'provides a privileged ground for a multidisciplinary approach' (ibid.). But richness of data comes together with the challenge to combine different conceptual approaches for its analysis (see 2.5).

Women's narratives have already 'become a document of the contemporary phenomenon of migration in Europe' (Passerini et al 2007: p.5-6). Ethnographic open-ended interviews can better capture life and work experiences as well as opportunities and constraints migrant women encounter. The ways gender differences and inequalities are created in the case of migrant women can be revealed only with the use of qualitative research methods (Nohl et al. 2005). However, 'methods are not only useful tools for research. They produce the research results. Thus different methods produce the object of the research… differently.' (Jarvilluoma et al. 2009: 19). Clearly, qualitative researchers have different backgrounds, personalities and political views. Therefore, the same results cannot be re-produced. However, the researcher should try to be as critical and reflexive as possible in order to minimize the risks of bias inherent in the use of qualitative research. (see 4.5 for further discussion)

Methodology on gender and migration studies covers both qualitative and quantitative methods; however in this research preference is given to the latter mainly for six reasons: 1) In-depth qualitative studies can highlight work-related experiences and strategies shaped by macro-structures. 2) Many 'new' women migrants are 'invisible' in the labour markets (see 1.3) 3) The ways inequalities and gender differences are created in society in case of migrant women workers can be explored more in-depth 4) The research might empower women migrants giving them opportunity 'to be heard' and positioning them as central actors in migration. 5) The researcher's background facilitated access to post-Soviet women migrants. 6) Involvement in qualitative research on labour issues and working lives in the post-Soviet region 'prepared' the researcher to work with 'our' migrants ethically and sensitively. Therefore, the main research consists of semi-structured in-depth interviews.

Power relations between 'the researcher' and 'the researched' have already attracted attention of the researchers across qualitative and particularly feminist studies. Over the last decade the issue of positional reflexivity in research was addressed in migration studies (Ganga & Scott 2006; Gray 2008; Malyutina 2015b; Pechurina 2015). It can be added that the interviewer is responsible for conducting the interview ethically and sensitively what also depends on

researchers' personal values and experience in doing fieldwork. Open-ended interviewing contributes to the *conversation* form of interview, which reduces unequal power relations between interviewer and interviewee. (Ilin 2006: 147-222). The semi-structured form of interviewing aslo facilitates a rather free-flowing conversation without losing the research focus (trans-border career trajectories here). It gives informants opportunities to express their own views and share their subjective experiences.

This method also allows a degree of flexibility in the 'disordering' of existing interview structures and embracing new themes (Britvina & Kiblitskaya 2004) More importantly, in-depth semi-structured interviews allow doing research 'with' interviewees and not 'on' them. Participants contribute to co-production of knowledge at certain stages, however, 'a desire to democratise the research process' (Karniel-Miller et al 2009) faces the reality when the key decisions on *what* and *how* to write about are taken or have to be taken by researchers. Therefore power relations cannot be equal between 'the researcher' and 'the researched', but power distance can be and should be minimised in research practice (see 4.5 for the ways in was done in this study).

To conclude, many issues have to be dealt with in 'doing qualitative research' which can be roughly divided into three stages – pre-fieldwork, fieldwork and post-fieldwork. At the same time, doing ethical and sensitive research is part of both good 'research practice' and established 'research regulations' which co-exist in complex and sometimes contradictory relations (Gullemin & Gilam 2004; Sultana 2007) Therefore pre-fieldwork concerns should also cover the issues of representativeness/fairness and assumptions prior the study, but also transparency and informed consent. Before starting the fieldwork the principles of transparency and informed consent should be put in practice. The interviewees have to be informed on the purposes of research, the nature of their involvement and rights in the research, who is sponsoring the research and that their participation is voluntary, how the research outcomes will be disseminated and how their anonymity will be kept.

Fieldwork practicalities involve the issues of power relations between the 'researcher' and 'the researched', the form of interview, flexibility, dress code, language, emotional involvement and safety, but also of signing the inform consent or agreeing with it verbally. Post-fieldwork is connected with transcribing, data analysis, but also with the questions of anonymity of participants, confidentiality of data, power relations on the level of writing,

publishing and disseminating findings. Anonymity of participants and confidentiality of data should be guaranteed. They ways unequal power relations in knowledge production were minimised are fully discussed in 4.5. The next two sections are dedicated to practices of fieldwork and working with data.

4.3 From identifying and engaging with participants into interviewing

The search for informants was limited in three respects: new women migrants from the FSU, global city, and 'skilled'/'professionals'. First, the research focused on 'new women migrants', who migrated to the UK after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Kopnina 2005) to delineate them from political refugees of the Soviet period. Second, only migrants working in London were considered. The global city and its surroundings is also the main point of destination for post-Soviet migrants (IOM a) b) c) 2008). Third, so called 'professionals' were eligible for the research. When the research was designed a concept of 'skilled migrants' was used, however, it proved to be a contradictory and changing over time and space construct for both 'the researcher' (see 2.2) and 'the researched'. During the fieldwork the decision was made to call participants 'professionals', mainly because they called themselves so. The nature of the job of was significant in identifying potential participants; however, they were the final point of address in this issue. The study was presented to them in short as a 'research with women professionals from the FSU in London'. Between March 2012 and April 2014 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 35 participants. Pre-fieldwork considerations also covered the issue of representativeness and fairness.

A balanced approach was taken in terms of informants' country of birth: Belorussia (3), Kazakhstan (5), Moldova (5), Russia (15) and Ukraine (7). It reflects the fact that in absolute terms most migrants are coming from Russia (IOM 2008). These countries are also among the main post-Soviet countries 'sending migrants' to the West (ILO 2006). The fact that most interviewees are 25-40 years old is consistent with IOM statistical data, but also with the 'youth drain' concept in relation to women's migration from the region (Haug 2005). It has to be emphasised that the first wave of interviews was conducted with 24 participants. Additional interviews were conducted with nine women mainly for three reasons: 1) to make sure that findings on similarities in participants' socio-economic backgrounds were solid 2) to

see whether another post-Soviet country (Kazakhstan here) would contradict the key findings 3) to improve representation of 'non-Russian' participants (not Russian citizens).

It has to be emphasised that this is neither an 'ethnicity-driven' nor 'identity-focused' study. Limited data in these respects suggest that for some participants ethnicity was an important platform for identifications while others presented themselves as 'ethnically mixed' or 'Russian-speaking'. Space-related self-identifications as 'from the FSU', 'Soviet', 'Moscovite', 'from X country or city' and so on seem to be more significant for those who took part in this study. Many of them mentioned something like 'nu ty je znaeshi kak u nas' ('you know how it is in our countries') or 'u nas v byvshem Soyuze' ('in our ex-SU') within and beyond the interviews. It is not surprising that some of them were met at post-Soviet or Russian-speaking events or parties in London. Finally, reflecting on *who* and *why* agreed to take part in the study facilitates understanding them and the social reality behind them. There were two cases of refusal to be 'researched'; reasons are unknown.

The engagement process was time-consuming as well as interviewing itself. I used on-line sourcing (www.odnoklassniki.ru), 'spotting here and now', as well as my personal networks and snowballing technique to identify respondents. Virtual spaces are crucial for migrants in order to keep in touch with their families and friends in the region and also with other migrants. 'Odnoklassniki' [schoolmates] transcends its name: it has become an online meeting-place for millions of post-Soviet people who live across the globe. As a member of 'Lyubimyi London' group I contacted about 50 potential interviewees and received positive responses from some of them. In practice seven interviewees were recruited in virtual way, included three who had taken part in the previous study. Six interviewees were found thanks to my personal pre-migration and post-migration schoolmates, friends and colleagues; that includes two women from my initial study. Five women were identified as the result of 'snowballing' effect. For a variety of reasons interviewees were interested in participating in the research; however did not want or could not recruit other participants.

About half of the interviewees were approached at post-Soviet and other events in London ('spotting here and now'). Among them: EBRD screenings of CEE films, *Chto? Gde? Kogda?* intellectual game, Ukrainian picnic, birthday and house-warming parties, cultural evenings at *Rossotrudnichestvo* as well as anti-cut events, film-making workshops, flamenco courses, two *Circle de Lux* picnics. When I learnt that potential interviews were doing

'skilled' jobs I asked them whether they could take part in my research. Almost all agreed and we exchanged contact details. They were added to friends at www.facebook.com and contacted later. In two cases I was introduced by participants to potential interviewees at these events and they agreed to take part in the study. This identification is part of both 'spotting here and now' and snowballing technique. Study shows that interviewees went smoother with interviewees who were approached at different events.

The ethical form was filled out and signed by supervisors. Interviewees agreed to take part upon offer of full anonymity and confidentiality of data. In most cases women themselves came up with pseudonyms; in three cases they preferred to keep their names. According to the principle of informed consent, they were informed on the purposes and affiliation of the research, the nature of their involvement and the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. This helped with establishing trust but also in avoiding misunderstandings during and after interviews. Respondents were informed that the research was neither intended to provide them with material compensation for participation nor to formally consult them about their rights as migrants in the UK. Potential informants were also aware about my personal interest in conducting this research. While diversity in educational and professional backgrounds as well as in personal circumstances has been successfully pursued, research saturation remains unachievable in terms of fully representing the whole variety of professional identities and labour histories.

The main limitations of this research relate to (self-)selection of participants and the key language used in the fieldwork. Since the researcher knows Russian, Ukrainian, and Moldovan, migrants who speak other languages were rather cut off from the research. The use of English was considered but never used. All interviews were conducted in Russian since all participants spoke it as the first or second language or were bilingual (6 cases). So, they also found it easy and comfortable to speak Russian during interviews. Both a Moldovan-speaking and a Ukrainian-speaking participant suggested switching to Russian when they realised that their Russian is better than my Moldovan and Ukrainian. Russian is still the most spoken language among post-Soviet people within the region and beyond it. I would also suggest that most migrant professional migrants from the FSU know it. More importantly, they also use it as the asset for work or as a means for communication between post-Soviet or Russian-speaking migrants in London. Migrants from Baltic countries are not an exception (King et al 2004: 29). In fact, this study could benefit from including migrants

from one of the Baltic countries. It would complicate analysis, but it would also give us a better understanding whether findings on career trajectories of women professionals from post-Soviet New EU member countries would differ from findings on non-EU women migrants from the FSU.

Since the research methodology subscribes to a participatory approach informants were considered active participants in the fieldwork and interviews were carried out as a dialogue between equals. (Jarvilluoma et al. 2003) Semi-structured interviews were 'structured' by the researcher but they were usually 'de-structured' by the interviewees bringing up new topics as well as challenging the order of questions. I tried to conduct interviews in interactive way, adapting the interview guide to the flow of informants' replies. However, if the boundaries of 'outsider' and 'insider' are blurred in a research fieldwork, it can become a limitation. In that case many things are understood by participants without verbalisation or they pass unconscious. The reflexivity approach is more than in need here (see 4.5). Participant observation during identifying process and elements of biographical methods during interviewing occurred in ethnographic fieldwork 'naturally', however, they are not part of research design for this study.

An interview guide was first elaborated for semi-structured interviews (see App. I). However, it was 'heavily used' only for the first nine interviews. As it happens in qualitative research practice it was changing during fieldwork: some topics were dropped, others emerged. The interview consisted of three parts: collecting general data on the informant, the interview itself and the research feedback. It allowed informants to distinguish between 'the interviewing' and 'other things'. The general data allowed the researcher to get into the context of a particular story, to find out sensitive issues and 'pleasant topics' as well as 'unique' or 'contradictory' data. This is the time when the decision about 'where to start the interview' was made. The research part consisted of four inter-related sections: 'work practices', 'work-related strategies', 'workplace relations', 'work-life balance'. They reflected four initial research questions, one of which was dropped and the other three were modified during the processes of fieldwork, interpretation of data and writing the thesis.

The research feedback is important for ethical, practical and political considerations. It gives participants the opportunity to voice their thoughts and feelings about the interview (Ilin 2006: 147-145). Sometimes they can give good practical advices on how to improve

'interviewing' and add issues (about their working lives here) which they think are important and were not addressed. Both general data and research feedbacks were collected before the interview and written by hand. All interviews but two were recorded. One interview was conducted via *skype* with a migrant who moved to Jakarta. It proved to be a very hard one. Another participant preferred not to be recorded. Most interviews took 2 hours, some lasted for 3 hours. Three shortest interviewees took place at lunch time or after participants' working days. Usually interviewees were conducted in cafes. Sometimes interviewees took place in parks (2) or participants' homes (4). Sixteen women were interviewed once while eleven women the other half was interviewed twice. Six participants were interviewed three times, including three participants of 'the pilot study'.

The research is enriched with a longitudinal perspective which is in deficit in migration studies (Waters 2011). Twelve women migrants participated in the MSc research project the fieldwork for which was carried out in summer 2009. The repeated interviews were conducted with five of these women during Summer 2013. Interviewing available and eligible participants from the previous study four years later helped to understand developments in their lives, changing views and feelings about living in London as well as to establish whether their career plans fulfilled over time. The longitudinal perspective also facilitates the development of 'trans-border career trajectory' approach in migration studies. Studying *the same* participants *over time* also contributes to the debates on the role of 'life cycle' in migrants' lives (Kobayashi & Preston 2007; Bailey 2009), citizenship and integration issues in long-term migration, and on 'middling transnationals' in particular (Conradson & Latham 2005; Favell 2008; Parutis 2011).

Informants were able to refuse answering any question during interviewing, though in practice it happened just several times. It is important to identify sensitive issues and deal them with tact. Some informants displayed unwillingness to speak openly about the following issues: informal and precarious nature of work, incomes and expenditures, reasons for changing jobs, relationships with partners. Yet, the 'why' questions are important for revealing interviewees' representations and interpretations (Why do you think, feel, behave, do something in this way?) They also involve migrants into contributing to answering the research questions. However, they were found difficult to work with. It requires a good level of trust, participants' ability to conceptualize why something is happening, and researchers' ability 'to guide' participants into that direction. The latter develops mainly through

fieldwork experience and understanding that sometimes a huge gap lies between what researchers want to know and what participants want to tell. I found myself confronting questions such as: How close should 'the researcher' become to the 'researched'? What is the line which I cannot pass in order to do research properly? Harnessing one's psychological resources has proved crucial to avoid embarrassment to either the research or participants.

Good mood and easy-going conversation facilitates the openness of informants. It is not about 'putting questions and waiting for answers': the interviewer has to talk about his/her own feelings and experiences too. In fact, sharing my personal experiences of living in the UK proved crucial for establishing dialogue with interviewees. Half of them considered themselves 'Londoners' as the researcher. Yet, contrasting researcher's own experiences with the informant's has proved to encourage interviewees to clarify their views. The beginning and the end of interviews were crucial. The research was not conducted from the first minutes of meeting. I was not in rush trying instead to understand the interviewee's mood and sense of humour, worldview and political views, attitudes to the UK and the Soviet past, and finally social position and hobbies. Therefore, when there was an opportunity, I spent with participants some time before or after interviews without 'interviewing' or recording them.

Last but not least, interviewees were approached as potential friends. It generated natural conversations about living, studying and working in London. It was crucial to stimulate their interest for further research. Practically the very first interview had a huge impact whether we would meet again for research again or as friends. If I felt that we would never meet again, I gave thanks and asked if I could be helpful in any way. Each interview meant a possibility to meet a new friend. In reality friendship occurred with those who are closer to the researcher in terms of political views, attitudes to the Soviet past and age as it happens in real life. In contrast to relevant studies 'the researcher' became friends with some of the 'researched' post-fieldwork (Malyutina 2012). The natural question which occurred when friendship relationships were built with some participants and I had to interview them for the second or third time: Can my friends be objects in my research? Is it ethical?

I do not think that it is possible to eliminate completely power relations between 'the researcher' and 'the researcher', though we have to minimize them as far as we can. The interviewing is not a natural event: the researcher organizes the meeting for talking about certain things; however there are a number of ways to make it less artificial. It is good to be dressed according to place and time of the day and participant's social status if known,

however, it is crucial for the researcher not to look 'formal' and not to conduct interviewee 'formally', but instead to try to create a friendly context. In fact, 'artificial reducing' significance of the research had a good impact on participants, most of whom were quite relaxed during interviewees. Post-Soviet backgrounds proved to be a fruitful platform for both engaging with participants and interviewing them. (see further discussion on positionality and power relations in research in 4.5)

4.4 Thematic analysis and interpretation of data

Most interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcribing process took about 8 months; as the result 400K words were produced in Russian. Translated parts of transcripts count for about 80K words. One naturally flowing transcript excerpt was translated into English to demonstrate an attempt to conduct interviews in accordance with mentioned above principles. It also shows the complexity and inter-connectedness of migration, family and career dimensions in participants' lives (see App. II). It has to be empathised that the author worked mainly with the hard copies of the transcripts in Russian.

Thematic analysis was used mainly for three reasons: 1) it eased work on rich but fragmented data; 2) it fits the research questions and the aims of the research; 3) it helped to reveal similarities and differences in participants' life and work experiences. Different approaches to thematic analysis are used across qualitative studies. In this work, analysis was taken through six phases: initial familiarizing with data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes and looking for emerging themes, working on themes, selecting extracts related to the research question. (Braun & Clarke 2006). The analysis of narratives involves coding data according to both dominant and emerged themes and then comparing them. Empirical chapters reflect designed and emerged themes. Some data were codified in in-vivo tradition to ease the process of search for particular parts of interviews and to share knowledge production with participants. (Ilin 2006: 206-222).

Thematic analysis allows us to find out similarities and differences across data. This is consistent with the aim of relating singular stories with macro-level processes. Participants' life stories and careers do not just reflect the social reality of a particular group in contemporary society, namely non-EU foreign migrant workers in Western Europe, if to be

more precise, post-Soviet women professionals in London. Since one of the aims of this study is to discover the reality of structures and institutions framing trans-border career trajectories I had to help 'the researched' to deliver up their truth (Bourdieu 2002: 621). Social position of 'the researched', but also of 'the researcher' is revealed through this truth. (see Conclusions). Roughly speaking, the aim was not 'to see' diversity in participants' life stories and labour histories (as in the previous study), but to 'to trace' similarities in their career trajectories which are shaped by broader societal process.

To sum up, '[a]gainst the old distinction made by Wilhelm Dilthey, we must posit that *understanding and explaining are one*' (ibid.: 613). D*ocumentary interpretation* approach helped avoiding writing individual biographies when dealing with transcripts (Nohl et al: 2009). So, I saw each participant's story as unique but general for a particular group of migrants from the FSU. 'Documentary interpretation of narrative interviews… does not aim the single case, but based on the comparison of different cases, intends to understand general orientations and experiences' (ibid: 2009: 39). Migrants' life stories and career trajectories are understood as embedded into broader societal processes in the context of particular space and time what is exemplified in the empirical part of the thesis.

Interview strategy intended to explore complex relationships between migration processes, family lives and career trajectories in the case of a particular social group. Dominant themes were generated on the basis of the previous study, but also were defined in accordance to the research questions: *trans-border employment histories, changing feelings about life and work in the UK, comparing life in the region and the UK, linking education and occupation, labour mobility, workplace experiences, relations and values at workplace, attitudes to work, work expectations, gendered employment, satisfaction at work, typical working day, de-skilling, postponing and planning motherhood, household duties, family and friendship, short-term tactics and long-term strategies, life and careers plans.*

The following themes emerged during the fieldwork: *urban origin, pre-UK mobility, family of origin, family of creation, parents and partners' backgrounds, Soviet knowledge workers, dual career family, educational strategy, post-Soviet identity and resources, education across borders, non-material goods at workplace, looking for good 'kollektiv' in London, re-skilling, multilingualism, diversity at workplace, Russian-speaking businesses, hobbies and lifestyle in London, enriching cultural capital, 'middling' precariat, looking for professional self,*

'relaxed' careers, 'prestigious' jobs, 'the golden mean' between family and work, class in the region and the UK. Not all of the 'old' and 'new' themes were addressed in empirical chapters for time and space reasons.

Career trajectory sketches were created almost for all participants. The purpose of doing so was to understand better the connections between different stages of trans-border careers beyond data on 'the first' and 'the last job' in the region and in the UK. These data were collected 'just before' interviewing (see Table 2). Four examples of working with data with the focus on career trajectories were chosen to demonstrate how thematic analysis was conducted in practice as well as how the dominant themes are accompanied by the emerged ones (see App. III).

4.5 Positional reflexivity and ethics

A good qualitative research has to be reflexive and ethical at all stages, from pre-study assumptions to data interpretation (Goode 1996, Gullemin & Gilam 2004; Hopkins 2007; Sultana 2007). However, there should be a balanced approach to the use of reflexivity if the post-modern or self-centred turn is to be avoided. One of the ways of doing so is connected with putting reflexivity into wider societal processes and recognising researchers' public impact. (Kobayashi 2003, 2010; Burawoy 2004) 'In both research and politics, one has to guard against those disciplinary forces that insist on particular narrations of the self and the individualistic self-telling that marks contemporary popular culture.' (Gray 2008: 942). We are constructing, deconstructing and re-constructing the social reality through the research. It is not possible to stay neutral in research, however, this does not mean prioritising the researcher's own thoughts, feelings and experiences over 'the researched' ones (Ramazanoglu & Holland 2009).

In order to clarify this is not a reflexivity study. Reflexivity is used in this work as a supplementary method to the central one which is qualitative interviewing. Reflexivity dimension might help the researcher to be more analytical and self-critical about the research conducted and to crystallise the researcher's positionality embedded in social reality. It also allows identifying the strengths and limitations of doing research with post-Soviet women migrants by one of them. Is the researcher 'insider', 'outsider' or both? (Mullings 1999;

Ganga & Scott 2006; Dwyer & Buckle 2009) Moreover, we have to put our research into the context of established academic structure and mainstream knowledge (McDowel 1992; England 1994; Rose 1997). Finally, we also have to distinguish between research regulations and research practice (Gullemin & Gilam 2004; Sulatan 2007) and our attitudes to them.

The questions of *what, how* and *why* I am doing as a researcher are both ethical and political. (Sultana 2007) However, on the one hand, what is ethical for one researcher might be unethical for the other; what is ethical in one country or cultural context can be considered unethical in another one. On the other, the researcher's positionality is understood in this study as relational and changing during the research. Therefore, reflecting on my positionality before, during and after the fieldwork practices exceeds the scope of institutionalised research ethics forms. Moreover, 'the detached, disembodied and tick-box approach adopted by many ethics committees often renders absent the positionalities of the researchers, downplaying the significance of the researchers' life experiences, biographies and complex identities.' (Hopkins 2007: 387)

Positional reflexivity caught the attention of feminist researchers first (Ziemer & Popov 2014), but it can be stated that today this approach is used across social sciences and humanities. The issues of confidentiality and anonymity which are of particular importance in a qualitative research are rooted in complex and sometimes contradictory ideas of practices of doing research ethically (Giordano et al. 2007; Vaino 2012). Therefore, in reality the whole variety of reflexivity and ethics issues are rarely addressed at full by social researchers. Recent reflections on working with migrants from CEE (Csedo 2009; Romocea 2013) and the FSU (Pechurina 2014; Malyutina 2015b) look promising. Complexities of 'ethical decision making at different stages of research' (Pechurina 2014) and 'women interviewing women' (Riessman 1987) also in migration context (Malyutina 2015b) informed this study. To sum up, in most cases power relations during fieldwork can be described as 'balanced'.

However, I am aware that I am not just a researcher; I am part of the research process. Each choice, from the research topic to knowledge production, is loaded with my understandings of reality. Such tactics as changing interview guide, mutual learning, research feedback were used in order to achieve more or less balanced power relations during fieldwork. The more the researcher de-mystifies herself/himself the higher are chances to get constructive criticisms and to become more efficient in building relationships within future fieldwork

(Bourdieu 1992: 217-260). Therefore, reflecting on both power relations and difficulties during fieldwork are crucial for conducting ethical research. Even when power relations between the 'researcher' and 'the researched' are equally distributed during the fieldwork, the power over the research from design to dissemination belongs to the researcher.

If to follow sociological reflexivity, both relations between 'the researcher' and 'the researched' and the object of study should be objectified. (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992) The researcher's biographical connection to the topic and participants is obvious: 1) the researcher originates from Moldova, one of the top emigrant countries as well as one of post-Soviet countries 2) researcher's post-Soviet identity had an impact on topic and research design (see below) 3) a woman migrant from the FSU is doing research with women migrants from the FSU. There is an emotional element in this study which intensifies in migration context. At the same time researchers' emotions or feelings are overlooked in the practice of reflexivity in both migration and post-Soviet studies with some exceptions (Gray 2008; Garifzanova 2010; Kay and Oldfield 2011; Schimpfossl 2014). The common Soviet heritage eased the processes of engaging, interviewing and interpreting data. However, some issues remained unexplained by participants who believed in my understanding of 'obvious' things, particularly in relation to socio-economic and political realities, but also everyday lives, in 'our' region.

The PhD title suggests the author follows post-Soviet scholarship which prioritises commonalities inherited from Soviet past over differences based on nationality/ethnicity during and after socialism (Buckley 1997; Ashwin 2000, 2006; Kay 2006). The author identifies herself as 'post-Soviet' first of all. It reflects her background as an ethnically mixed Russian-speaking woman from Moldova. Disparity between language, ethnicity and country of birth is a well-known feature from Soviet times when mismatch between territorial-political and ethno-cultural modes of nationhood was institutionalised. At least one fourth of Soviet population faced that (Brubaker 1994). More recent estimates suggest that about half of the populations of the Soviet Republics lived outside their places of origin by 1991 (Heleniak 2002). Perhaps, it can be never established precisely.

It was not the subject of this study, but it can be stated that at least one third of participants fit this 'mismatch'; some of them simply were not asked about their backgrounds, particularly at the initial stages of this research. I also suppose that this 'mismatch' might have a huge

impact on migrations within and from the post-Soviet space. My background definitely facilitated the openness of participants in the research who often used the idea of *nashi ('ours'*) meaning migrants from the FSU or Russian-speakers. But the term 'post-Soviet' was rarely used during fieldwork, since some interviewees could find it inappropriate for nationalist feelings or anti-Soviet attitudes. Therefore, I had to be particularly accurate with analysing and representing views and findings which contradicted my understandings and feelings. The final title indicates 'post-Soviet women professionals' and not 'women professionals from the post-Soviet space' since the former is shorter; however, it would be more appropriate to use the former in the title. Both variants are used throughout this thesis.

The distinction between 'the researcher' and 'the researched' should be also made. It can be achieved through identifying similarities and differences between 'the researcher' and 'the researched'. Similarities reduce the distance between 'me' and 'them'. However, differences can be threatening as well as fruitful for the research. 'When a young physicist questions another young physicist (or an actor another actor, an unemployed worker another unemployed worker, etc.) <…> their questions spring from their dispositions, objectively attuned to those of the respondent' (Bourdieu 2002: 611). In this study similarities between 'me' and 'them' are based on gender, educational, migratory and post-Soviet backgrounds. The basis of differences lies in age, sexuality, nationality and professional backgrounds. In this sense, the researcher is both 'insider' and 'outsider' (Mullings 1999).

'Professional backgrounds' is particularly important for this study. First, I represented myself as a PhD student, not as a professional researcher. It made interviewees feel more relaxed during interviews and not lower in social terms. The relationships between 'me' and 'them' can be described as 'student-professional' in short. Second, I personally was very interested in studying trans-border career trajectories and discovering societal processes behind them. I always felt as a learning 'outsider' with each interviewee. Third, interviewees were approached as experts in their lives and professionals in their fields. Participatory ethics used in this study means doing research ***with***, not ***on*** participants. (Jarvilluoma et al. 2003; Sultana 2007; Karnieli-Miller 2009) As a result most of them were enthusiastic to share their life and work experiences with mw. Fourth, encouraging them for research participation through identifying them as representatives of women professionals from the FSU in London proved to work better than politicising them as women, migrants or workers, in contrast to some other groups of migrants (Kofman & Raghuram 2015: 177-179). Low level of resistance

among working women in the post-Soviet workplaces (Cretu 2006) can partly explain this phenomenon, however there is also a 'classed' explanation for this (see 8.3 in Conclusions).

We also have to reflect on the knowledge production process and clarify our understanding of participants' role in it. Knowledge production is itself 'embedded within broader social relations' (Sultana 2007: 382). I follow tradition of doing research *with* participants and not *about* or *on them* and therefore I treat participants as collaborators in knowledge production. At the same time I am aware that the power over the research from design to dissemination belongs to the 'researcher'. To minimise unequal power relations between 'the researcher' and 'the researched' at a knowledge production stage several strategies are used.

Initial findings were discussed with those participants who expressed interest in learning about them. In the main body of empirical chapters a priority is given to participants' accounts while the key findings are related to relevant literature at the end of each of them. Participants' pseudonyms are written in bold to empower them as collaborators for knowledge production, but also to stress that real people agreed to share their life stories and took part in this research without asking anything in return. Finally, all participants will be asked via e-mail if they would like to read the final version of the thesis. And if some of them would prefer to withdraw from this study their data and narrations will not appear in publications on the basis of this research.

Finally, I should apologize for any misunderstanding of participants' accounts, which pass at least the levels of interpretation: participants', researchers' and readers' ones. The limits of interpretation were put in short: 'Should we as researchers wave the flag of enlightenment and declare that our reading of the situation is the right one?' (Jarvilluoma et al. 2007: 40) Therefore I think that ethically and conceptually this study will benefit from sharing the findings with the participants before publishing. Clearly, 'findings will always be interpretative and partial, yet telling of stories that may otherwise not be told, and revealing broader patterns that may or may not be stable over time and space' (Sultana 2007: 382).

CHAPTER 5

MIGRATION PROCESSES: CONTEXTUALISING CAREERS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on migration processes which contextualise transborder career trajectories. The assumption is that the ways, reasons and practices of moving and settling and entitlements exercised by migrants play a crucial role in their professional lives. Migration itself is conceptualised as a complex societal multi-level process. Often migration research is still static focusing on one of the aspects or stages of migration from decision-making about migration to issues of integration or return. It is suggested to explore migration it as an on-going process which connects its different parts in a time-space perspective.

The aim of this chapter is to consider the impact of migration processes on transborder career trajectories. The key argument is that pre-UK migratory experiences, in-between-cities mobility, gradual moving to the UK, 'privileged' modes of entry and entitlements in the UK coupled with a tendency towards settling in 'good' areas, buying properties and acquiring dual citizenship ease migrants' integration and increase their career opportunities in a host country. Meanwhile, 1991, a year of disintegration of USSR, is interpreted as a turning point in participants' and their families lives. International migration was not controlled by state as in the Soviet period. Therefore migration to the UK reflects one of the regional migration trends, migration to the 'West' (see 1.1 and Ch. 3 for more details).

This chapter consists of four parts followed by discussion. First, participants' pre-UK mobility experiences and the nature of moving to the UK are examined. The next section explores how and why they move to the UK and whether they feel the UK/London as their home. Then the socio-economic reality migrants live in is explored through analysis of relevant narrations and data on location, citizenship and homeownership in the UK/London. Most of the themes presented in this chapter emerged during this research. Some are new; others have just started to attract attention across social sciences. Findings of this chapter are put together and related to existing literature in the field in the final part of it.

5.2 In-between-cities mobility within and out of the FSU

Empirical migration studies are often focused on migrants' experiences in host societies while their previous mobility remains usually vastly unexplored. The latter includes internal and regional migration, migration to third countries, travelling, seasonal work, and studying abroad. It is assumed that a person who experienced migration at earlier stages in life might find it easier to adapt to a new society. Additionally, place of origin is often reduced to a region or country data. Therefore the aims of this section are: 1) to establish whether participants had any pre-UK migratory experiences and what was their nature 2) to identify their places of origin from an urban/rural and capital/non-capital perspective 3) to reveal whether their migration to the UK was a one off event or rather a gradual process 4) to understand whether it is part of family migration. The process of migration itself might have different stages and include re-migration. The latter is understood here as part of gradual moving to the UK. The concept of 'in-between-cities' mobility is introduced to emphasise the nature of migration from post-Soviet cities to London, to reflect smoothness of this process and to point out that it is as important as 'mobility between countries' .

Mobility in families of origin

The vast majority of interviewees (28 out of 33) engaged with mobility before moving to the UK. It was experienced at different ages, with different purposes and at different scales (internal, intra-regional, and international). Mobility as a concept is not a new phenomenon in the post-Soviet space. Meanwhile, the Soviet migration system was characterised by low international mobility and quite high internal one. The internal migration across included diverse forms of mobility between and within fifteen Soviet Republics: voluntary and forced migration, education- and employment-related migration, travelling and visiting, seasonal work, health-related migration, marriage migration and 'raspredeleniye' (Soviet type of 'young specialists' allocation). The latter is well exemplified here:

My mum worked as a nurse in children's hospital first [Soviet Ukraine]. Then she was allocated to Calarasi [Soviet Moldavia] where she re-skilled as a physiotherapist… She worked there at clinic. That's where she met my father [smiling] ***(Ada)***

Migrants' stories show that understanding of migration can precede migratory practices as well as shape imagination about migration as an option or a life scenario. So, migration as a

process can be learned; knowledge about it can be transmitted within family and beyond it. Therefore some migration scenarios can be interpreted as the continuation of their families' mobility histories. The theme of family of origin migration appeared in different contexts during interviews. In some cases it can be traced down to participants' grandparents:

My father's father was a military, though he was mostly doing research… He is a chemist-biologist by specialisation… They were moving a lot. Being of pre-pensioner age he was sent to a place with softer climate after all those northern places. There was the Soviet Union yet, he had to follow health recommendations. This is how they moved to north-eastern Ukraine. My father was playing in a football team of Poltava oblast' [Soviet Ukraine]. And my mum came to Poltava once again [from Soviet Russia] for holidays with her friend visiting her grandma. They met there. ***(Eva)***

The whole family moved in the 30s to Sverdlovskaya oblast' [Soviet Russia] and lived there for long. They could survive there… My father applied to Zootechnical Institute in Alma-Ata [Soviet Kazakhstan] from there… In the 70s. And after 'raspredeleniya' he had to come back. This is where he met my mum and they went back together… We all were born there [Russia today], all four children. I think I was about five years old when we came back to [Soviet] Kazakhstan… ***(Leila)***

All three accounts uncover different forms of mobility existing in the Soviet Union and the ways they intertwined. Not all women were asked about mobility in their families of origin, particularly on the early stage of the fieldwork. Therefore it can be stated that at least one third of the participants moved with their families of origin at young age in the Soviet or post-Soviet times. Yet, two participants mentioned that they were descendants of victims of forced migration under Stalin. So, 'migration' is not considered as something extraordinary from the start. However, first migrations are not necessarily positive experiences and can push for subsequent migration out of the region. It is particularly true for participants who grew up in one places and then moved to other ones as teenagers with their families post-1991, but 'could not fit' (***Noa***).[4]:

I decided that I would migrate when I was a child; it was my dream. I always knew I would leave, but I didn't know where to. I got advice at an agency to migrate to the UK… First I thought about Norway or France, but they told me that it would be better to move here. It would be easier to stay, easier to find a job. Back then I didn't know anything, I didn't ask anything. The main thing was to leave! ***(Jane)***

Post-1991 migrations include those who experienced migration at young age in Soviet times and those who did not. Meanwhile, twelve women moved to bigger cities or capitals for education or work purposes on their own before or after 1991. Six of them followed their parents in moving from smaller cities to the capitals post-1991. This is quite typical for many regions and countries in the world; however, a regional specifics has to be acknowledged.[5]

Additionally, five women moved internationally (Angola, Israel, South Korea, the USA) prior to migration to the UK, mainly with their families as part of post-Soviet Jewish emigration in the 1990s or on their own on 'Work and travel' programmes in the 2000s.[6]

Urban origin and moving between cities

So, the vast majority of participants experienced mobility in one form or another before moving to the UK. Yet, there is one very important common feature among these experiences. Despite the fact that migration was practiced on a national, regional or international scale participants moved between cities. Therefore it can be called 'in-between-cities' mobility. From this point of view London can be seen as continuation of this form of mobility on an international level. London is not necessarily the first or the last point of destination among this group of migrants.

Data show that we are primarily dealing with migration from post-Soviet capitals or large urban centres. As a matter of fact all participants moved to London from big cities. It includes those who migrated to large cities or capitals in the region first. 'In-between-cities' migration does not seem to be such a radical change as it could be in the case of rural-to-urban mobility either on internal or international scale. Urban origin can partly explain why most interviewees' were 'not impressed' by London as a city and underwent smooth integration. ***Vera*** who moved from Kyiv to London for educational purposes even put migrants and locals on the same scale and divided both on the basis of place of origin:

Here there are people who think that they don't deserve something better… It's hard in this country. It's easier for such an immigrant as me. Perhaps it's harder for some other immigrant who came from a small place. I think it's much easier for the immigrant who came from Moscow, Leningrad or Minsk… We are kind of more European. And those who come from a small town in England, it's very hard to live here, to cope with everything, unless they have fangs… It's about lifestyle, dynamics, knowing how everything works…

We also have to bear in mind that rural and urban spaces in post-Soviet region differ substantially on many criteria. Both rural areas and smaller cities might not have enough resources, mechanisms and channels leading to international migration. Only three interviewees originate from 'semi-urban' settlements with populations above 10 000; they also moved to bigger cities or capitals 'there' first. It means that even in these cases the process of adaptation to urban lifestyles took place in the region. Therefore, it can be stated

that capitals and big cities serve as a bridge to international migration and it seems that they are the key places connecting the post-Soviet space to other parts of the world.

Mobility between capitals has to be acknowledged (see Table 1). One third of the participants had always lived in the post-Soviet capitals. Some others moved to the capitals later in their lives. Overall, the majority of participants moved to London from these capital cities: Moscow, Astana, Chisinau, Kyiv and Minsk (from most to least common). Ten of them moved from Moscow, including four Muscovites. Several non-Russian citizens moved to Moscow first, mainly for education and work purposes. So, Moscow is a significant point of departure not only for Russia. It could be called the top 'sending city' connecting the region with London. However, all post-Soviet capitals can be seen as key departure cities for professionals from post-Soviet Eurasia.

Meanwhile, about half of the participants originate from the cities of second and third importance or regional capitals: Almaty, Beltsy, Borisov, Chelyabinsk, Donetsk, Kemerovo, Mogilev, Perm', Saint Petersburg, Sumy, Volgograd and others. These are big cities with vibrant cultural lives and developed infrastructure as well as strong industrial and University traditions. They are also inhabited by people of different backgrounds and have their own migrants. Most women moved to the capitals from these cities first. Only in six cases migration to the UK/London passed the capital. It suggests that this trend also exists, but on a smaller scale. Moreover, when further migrations or return to home countries were considered, participants could see themselves only in big cities or capitals. It includes those who migrated from non-capital cities. ***Inna*** moved with her husband from Donetsk[7]:

Yes, we could move somewhere, maybe for a couple of years… To the USA or China, but England is better for living. I think it's better to live either here or in Ukraine, since everything is common to you… Either London or Kyiv… How to develop further? Perhaps in another country, since we reached the limit already. In order to move forward we could make it in another country with experience from here.

Other women also shared the idea of living in third countries for short periods of time. It remains to be seen whether moving to the UK was a one off event or a longer process.

Gradual moving to the UK / London

Some participants stayed or lived in the UK for shorter or longer periods before moving on a more permanent basis. In seven cases participants initially came as guests or tourists,

language learners or company trainees. ***Ella***'s case is unique in that sense that she came for the first time to the UK as a guide for students who came to study English. Additionally, in other five cases 'living in-between' two cities took up to two years before settling in the UK. Sooner or later the decision where to live has to take place:

I worked in PwC as a banking auditor from '98 to 2001. Then I took a career break and came… actually I was visiting my future husband in England before that. So I took a career break in Kyiv, since I wasn't sure whether I would like to live in England. I didn't like it very much; I don't like it very much even now. So I came, explored things and decided to stay and try. In 2003 I started to work in the same company here, but it wasn't a transfer from Kyiv to England… My husband was born in Cyprus, he came to study in the Soviet Union [Kyiv] in '89, but we met in 91. He moved to the UK in '95… Well, I didn't want to move at first, but we kept our relationships. So we both moved back and forth until 2003. This is when I moved completely. ***(Karina)***

I visited my [older] daughter in 2005, she was studying here [for BA degree]. I fell in love with the place. I still love it with some changes… I can say that in Kazakhstan I was limited by country's mentality. As I say to my relatives: 'You've got too tight embraces. I love you, but please don't embrace me that strong'. I don't mean psychically; they are caring about you too much. So I enjoyed being here, I came back again. Then I lived here for a month or so. After that my little daughter went to school here and I moved with her. ***(Leila)***

Yet, four cases of 're-migration' are identified.[8] They are conceptualised as such since the long-term strategy was to settle in the UK even if participants came as 'seasonal workers' or 'students'. For all these reasons it is not always easy to establish year of 'entry' and subsequently what to consider as 'mode of entry'. The reasons for return to the UK, re-migration and 'living in-between' two cities are complex covering such spheres of life as education, family and work. We can say that migration is not a one off event for these migrants. In some cases it takes several years to stabilize in a host country or to make a decision about return. ***Olesya*** told a story about her best friend who returned home while she moved to London:

Vika liked England so much that during her first year here almost every week someone was visiting her. When she invited me she had the last interview… I was finishing my PhD [in the USA]. So I had to look for a job any rate. When I was visiting her she was desperate since she was offered a job and couldn't make a choice: she didn't want to refuse such a good offer and she didn't want to live here forever… She is unique in thinking she couldn't live and work anywhere but Moscow. Even if it's chaos, fire or plague there is nothing better than her hometown… Yes, eventually she decided to go back after two years of working here…

London seems to be a place of high turnover; we can always find some stories of coming or leaving migrants in participants' accounts. The gradual nature of moving demonstrate that these women know where they are coming back to, why and what to expect. They are

strategic. Some succeeded in building networks and improving their English during the initial stay in the UK. Yet, studying or working in the UK can lead to family creation (see Chapter 7). To sum up, about half of the participants moved to the UK gradually. In most cases it lasted from one to two years. The 'privileged' nature of gradual moving has to be acknowledged as well. Visiting the country or someone in the UK, studying the language, re-migration and living between two cities definitely require financial resources. Meanwhile, social ties built serve as an additional incentive for returning to the UK. Decision-making about migration is a process in which other people also take part. They are not necessarily the closest ones and they do not necessarily help in the moving process but they can give an additional stimulus for migration.

Family related migration?

To have a more complete picture of participants' families of origin, it is worth seeing whether their parents and siblings live in the FSU. Eight of them are the only children in their families. With five exceptions (Israel, Poland, the USA, the UK) migrants' parents live in the region. Meanwhile, their siblings are more likely to live abroad (12 cases). The UK (5 cases) and the USA (3 cases) seem to be the key destination countries for them. Germany, Israel, France, Norway and South Africa were mentioned as well. It can be stated that younger generations are more likely to migrate from the FSU and they prefer to live in the 'West'.

It is clear that participants did not follow their parents in migration to the UK, however we have to pay attention to siblings' migration to the UK. Available data suggest that the reasons for international migration and the ways migrants' siblings entered destination countries may differ from those of interviewees, but in most cases they do not exceed work-related, educational or relationship reasons for migration and related modes of entry. It is also true for participants and their siblings who moved to the UK/London. The fact that one family member lived in the UK might have had an impact on decision-making about migration. Only one case of typical 'children following parents' in migration to the UK is found; however the mode of entry (student visa) varied from a real motivation. At the same time, 'following partners migration', 'siblings migration' and 'parents following children' seem to be more typical forms of family-related migration for this group of migrants.[9] In the next section we will see whether and how the UK/London turns into a new home for them.

5.3 'Londongrad': A new home for post-Soviet migrants?

This section explores migrants' accounts on how and why they moved to the UK and whether they felt London as their new home. The aim of this section is to understand whether migrants' expectations about living in the UK matched the reality of post-migration. It should also reveal what migrants appreciate in living in London and whether their views changed over time. Therefore, their pre-migration expectations and initial impressions about life in the UK/London are contrasted with the latter 'stabilizing' feelings and thoughts about new home. Modes of entry are interpreted as 'official' data contextualising migrants' life and work experiences since often they lead to a particular set of entitlements. 'Londongrad' is a popular nickname for London among migrants from the post-Soviet space.

Modes of entry

Most participants entered the UK as students, family-related migrants and work visa holders between 1999 and 2011. In ten cases migrants entered as 'family-related': marriage (5), following partners (4), following parents (1). Only five women came on work permit visas, including two primary migrants. Two women came on 'tourist' visas and stayed for several years as 'undocumented'. One woman came on a 'tourist' visa with her family and asked for asylum. So, mode of entry can be at odds with expressed motives of migration[10]. One third of women moved during 2007-8, the year of the financial crisis. ***Kate***, game designer, who was looking for a job at the time of interview, explained how the decision to come to the UK for studying was made in the context of on-going crisis:

When I finished my MA in Graphic Design, it was crisis time and that was the right time for doing something. I understood that I couldn't do anything in Ukraine for the next 1-2 years. The event industry is one of the first suffering from crisis, companies would do less corporate parties… So I saw that in the nearest future I wouldn't have career growth at least. I had to react fast… I applied to two Universities. I was also accepted in Spain, but I realised that I could always move from the UK to Spain… Britain is the first in the University ranking. I had worked for 6 years, so I knew what was Japanese design, what was an American one… And I heard good things about University I studied at.

In fact, almost half of the participants entered the UK for education purposes; it includes those who came for English courses (4 cases). Half of them 'came to study' for postgraduate

degrees. (see further discussion on educational strategies in 6.3 and 'settling' plans as part of multi-facet strategy in 8.3). Their 'visa histories' reflect changing British immigration regimes and policies. Some of them were interviewed when they exercised 2-year post-study visa rights while others had 3-year work permits which they received after the post-study ones. Available data show that migrants could afford education in the UK as the result of support from parents or partner, own sources, scholarship, loans or public funding (1 case). Often a combination of these assets and opportunities was used.

Information on the mode of entry gives very little for analysis and can be misleading. First, migrants can move for the first time with one intention and come back with another as re-migration stories show. Second, some are moving back and forward and it is not clear what to count as a 'mode of entry' as the cases of respondents 'living between the two cities' show. Third, 'migrant status' can change within the UK for different reasons. For instance, Kira, one of two participants who entered the UK as a skilled migrant dependent with the right to work in the UK stayed as a postgraduate student while her partner returned to Saint Petersburg after the divorce. She also exercised post-study visa rights and was interviewed when she had a work permit. Yet, those who came for studying or working might marry EU/UK citizens and stay as EEA family members[11]. So, both 'migrant status' and acquired entitlements are changing over time without following necessarily a single and clear path.

Motivations for migration

Considering motivations for migration and modes of entry to the UK participants can be categorised as 'romantic', 'following', 'strategic' or 'opportunist'. 'Romantic' are those who were dreaming about the UK/London from young age or those who fell in love with it after first visiting. Those who followed their partners or family members in migration project are defined as 'following'. Cases when migration to the UK was the result of careful planning are conceptualised as 'strategic'. 'Opportunist' cases cover those whose migration seems to be primarily dictated by chance:

An acquaintance of mine opened a private school [in Volgograd, Russia]. They offered me to study in the UK as part of training. I was studying the language. I had to return to teach English in that private school… No, I didn't want to return and started to look for a job… We met at that company [with first husband]. ***(Veronica)***

I came with my husband. He was offered a job here; their company had a filial in London… My ex-husband returned to Russia and I decided to stay here… In order to stay I had to study full-time. I was planning to study part-time first, and then I was transferred. And I was working in library part-time. ***(Kira)***

…At the same time I sent my CV to this company [British company in Chisinau]. They offered little money, but they said they would send personnel to the UK. I didn't want to migrate, but I liked that feeling that I could live in this country not as a tourist, that I could explore it. I didn't succeed in three months. I worked there for two years and then I got this contract and came here… I asked my husband to try to get a job in the same company; he is a very good IT specialist. He told them that he would work only if they would transfer him to the UK. He worked there just for three months doing his best and the opportunity opened up… I was dreaming about England since 2nd year at school. I wanted to visit it, since our teacher told us a lot about England. All ten years. So we could find Soho or City on the map… It's 70% that we'll stay here. Political situation is not good in Moldova what can have an impact on international companies. They don't like instability, it's not clear what can happen. Many countries close their borders and we wouldn't like to stay isolated in Moldova. ***(Diana)***

As we can see in reality these categories and reasons for migration often overlap and come together in decision-making and settling process. ***Nika*** came to the UK as part of her company training and stayed after she found a job and met her future husband. ***Kira***'s story shows transition from 'following' to 'strategic' category after her ex-husband returned to Russia. We can also see how 'romantic' attitudes to the UK from childhood preceded 'strategic' planning for migration in ***Diana***'s case. More importantly, a desire to 'live in this country not as a tourist' which was repeated by other women is crucial for understanding their long-term plans from the start.

As we know some migrants were struggling with the decision to move on a permanent basis. Some of them initially had traumatic migratory experiences, particularly if they had good posts in the region and were de-skilled in the UK. ***Alexa*** followed her husband, an American citizen, who lived in Moscow for some period. They met at one of the trainings she led:

He moved to the UK. We split, then again together, and then split, you know that. Honestly, I didn't want to move, I didn't see myself in England, in any country. I always liked Europe, it's great, but the idea that I worked at MGU, I run training programmes with such companies as 'Russkii Aliuminii', 'Rosbank', 'Lukoil' and so on. What I will be doing there? And then I thought my Candidate's dissertation would mean nothing there. So I didn't come with that idea: 'Oh, England I've been always dreaming about it!' I came with thoughts – why did I make it?' But he told me: 'I can move to Russia. Let's see how it goes; if you feel bad we'll return'. This idea warmed me. I still have good relationships at my workplace there [in Moscow]. I've got friends there. And I was told at my company that I could return. We are still doing some projects together.

It is crucial to explore how migrants feel themselves in a host society since it influences their decision on settling, return or moving to a third country in the long-term perspective.

Feelings in a host society

Migrants' feelings of self and belonging are multi-faceted. They are also changing over time what is particularly obvious in the cases of longitudinal interviews.[12] During her first interview (2009) ***Zoriana*** shared her enthusiasm about life in London: 'London is a city of great opportunities! It's for the young and energetic, you are in permanent rush. Smaller cities are for families with children, rest for your soul during two-three days...' At the second interview she complained (2013): '…We feel oppressed by London's dynamics; we are a family now, six years already and I think we want to calm down, to have children. But so far we cannot afford it; we need our own place, stable jobs… We started to look for a house…' Despite changing attitudes to the UK/London, several trends in migrants' feelings and thoughts 'here' are identified.

Overall, interviewees were rather positive about living in the UK/London. However we have to bear in mind that those who agreed to be interviewed are those who could stay in the UK and integrate successfully. They could cope with living in the UK or adapt to it and finally they liked living in the UK/London. As ***Sofronik*** put it through one of returnee's stories:

The main difficulty is to switch from our culture to English culture. One of my acquaintances never liked London… She is also from Russia. She came here, lived here, studied here and didn't want to stay. You really have to understand whether you would like to stay here or not.

Over time in most cases a more realistic evaluation replaces initial enthusiasm about the UK/London and knowledge of unequal and divided place and society begin to show:

The first impressions about the whole beauty, museums, kind people went through metamorphose. Let's say the love is still there, but… some kind of naivety has gone. Everything is getting serious and pretty clear. ***(Leila)***

It's always like that, you come to any new city and you want to see many things, you are full of impressions, new ideas and inspiration. But over time you are tired of all that. Then there is a big issue of money… You have to earn 35-40K before tax to live decent in London. 30K each is also OK, if you are a couple. ***(Kate)***

By the time of interviews, participants lived in the UK/London for two years at least. Some of them had stayed up to fifteen years. So do they feel themselves at home? Despite most of them being integrated in British society and relatively 'privileged' in contrast to other migrants very few perceived the UK/London as their home. ***Sveta*** captured this feeling very

well: ‘I love England, there are many good things here but I don’t feel at home, feeling somehow as a guest’. Many would second that.

No respondent defined herself as ‘local’, which is itself a contested concept. It is well exemplified here: ‘Now I am more local here than there, but I’ve never fit Belorussia, our realities. I cannot say I am ‘britanized’, but I fit very well here, maybe it’s about my character.’ (***Zina***) However, they also did not seem to regret about not ‘being local’. Their feelings vary from being ‘almost local’ to ‘why should I play local’. Here are two sisters’ accounts which connect feelings of belonging with citizenship and employment:

I’ve adapted, but I know where I came from, so I know my place. I cannot say I’m absorbed, that I am part of the system, that I am English. Yes, I will get the passport; I will be a citizen of this country. Perhaps it will increase my opportunities, my freedom, but it doesn’t mean I will become British-British. ***(Alice)***

I fit: if you like your work, you are integrating faster. Some people cannot adapt for ten years… I don’t feel myself as a migrant. I feel as a migrant only because of my accent. I miss my home country, but it’s good here… When someone asks me where I am from, I say that I am from London, I am a Londoner. It’s kind of stupid to call yourself British, since I am not British... I am British just formally. When you talk with an accent and people ask ‘Where are you from?’ I’ll never say that I am English; I’d say that I am from Moldova. ***(Ada)***

Some migrants feel as ‘Londoners’ revealing different layers of self-identification and possible tensions between citizenship, country of origin and city of residence. The idea of feeling ‘comfortable’ in a ‘global city’ was expressed by many participants: ‘At any rate it’s much more comfortable in London than in Nottingham or elsewhere, it’s a global city with half of inhabitants from the entire world’ (***Vera***). There is probably nothing unique in all these accounts and they could be shared by other migrants in the UK or another host country. However, feeling at home/not at home/in between or feeling oneself ‘migrant’/‘local’ are important constructs which influence and influenced by different aspects of life.

To sum up, complex nature of how and why migrants moved to the UK is reaffirmed by the data on modes of entry and other findings (see 5.2). Moving as a process can be the result of long-term planning as well as a sudden decision facilitated or ‘pushed by’ partners, family members, friends, companies and agencies. It can be full of uncertainty and contradictions even in cases of ‘privileged’ migration. And what is significant is how student/professional and personal/familial motives are intertwined from the very idea of emigration. Most women shared an idea of being integrated, but still feeling as ‘migrants’, ‘foreigners’ or ‘guests’ in the UK. Connection with the ‘global city’ or ‘Londongrad’ seems to be more relevant for

them than connection with the country. Yet, feelings about living in a particular place are shaped by the reality of socio-economic conditions. As ***Roza*** put it: 'It's not about living here or there, it's about *how* you live, *where* exactly, *what* area or street, *what* you are renting or *what* you can buy [italicised by O.C.].' In the next section data and relevant narrations on location, homeownership and citizenship are analysed.

5.4 Settling down: Residential areas, homeownership and dual citizenship

Ideas and practices of residing in particular areas, homeownership and dual citizenship are conceptualised as part of settling process in the UK. The spatial dimension is significant for understanding migrants' social positions and lifestyles which interplay with their careers (see Ch. 7 for details). Homeownership, another emergent theme, is an important building block of the settling process. It is also one of the key identifiers of someone's social position. Yet, owning a property per se says very little about the owner(s); *what*, *where* and *why* gives more for analysis. Meanwhile, citizenship is understood here as the outcome of rights and entitlements migrants can exercise, but also as one of migrants' assets which might increase their career opportunities. Therefore, this section aims to put together data on participants' residential areas, homeownership and citizenship with the relevant accounts on these issues to reveal their preferences of location as well as their understanding of 'homeownership' and dual citizenship.

'Location, location, location'

First, we have to see 'where' migrants live (see data on areas of residence in Table 1). The vast majority of them (31 out of 35) reside in the following London boroughs: City of Westminster (7), Barnet (3), Kensington and Chelsea (3), Brent (2), Croydon (2), Islington (2), Tower Hamlets (2), Camden (1), Greenwich (1), Haringey (1), Kingston (1), Lewisham (1), Newham (1), Southwark (1) and Wandsworth (1). It has to be emphasised that all participants work in London (one of selection criteria) which might have a big impact on a decision of where to live. They are ready 'to sacrifice certain things to live within London's tube map' (***Margo***). In fact, half of the participants resided in central areas in London which are expensive places for living. Post-doctoral fellow ***Olesya*** explained her choice of location:

When I came, I thought I am not for long here, let's say for four years… To live 4-5 years somewhere in the suburb, from where you can hardly get anywhere on weekends, it's not worthy. I am not for long here. It's more expensive, but I settled in such a place from where it is convenient to get somewhere and see London, see England, travel to Europe… Before that my friend rented a flat in South Kensington and we lived there for a month looking for a new flat. We moved shortly. We rented a two-bedroom flat at the first floor. When she left I moved to a studio-flat in the same building. ***(Olesya, single, rented studio-flat, Pimlico, London)***

These women who originate from post-Soviet cities and capitals prefer to live in London. In fact, very few would like to live outside London. They also declared to do so mainly because it is more affordable than living in the capital. Yet, several women saw moving to the countryside as a British habit which might happen later in their lives, particularly when they plan to have children. At the time of first interviews just four women lived outside London commuting to work from Horsham (moved to Reading), Luton, St Albans (moved to Edgware, London) and Wendover. It seems that married women are more likely to live outside London. However they were planning to move either to London or to some 'small beautiful city' as put by Karina who lives with her family in Luton. She also emphasised that 'if to live in London only in the centre'. Moving to a new place is negotiated in these families and can happen primarily thanks to these women who insist on it.[13]

So, most interviewees were settled in London by the time of interview. For them there was nothing unusual in living either in the capital or in one of its good areas in London. As Kate put it: 'You see I lived in Kiev in the city centre in a normal flat, I went to a good school…' More generally, Roza who originated from Moldova justified a preference to live in the capital through a famous saying: 'As we say Moscow is not Russia' [smiling in such a way when the interlocutor should know what it means]. Perhaps this could be relevant to any capital and country in the world, but in the post-/Soviet space it has a particular meaning due to the fact that political and economic power is disproportionally concentrated in post-Soviet capitals. London could be perceived similarly, particularly in its neo-liberal epoch. London is also seen as a 'quiet' (***Alexa***) or 'not crazy like Moscow' (***Jane***) city:

I'd like to live in the same area where I live now. But I will have to work, work and work for that… I like it because it's central. You can go anywhere on foot. I go by foot to my work. I like that there is a park nearby [Hyde Park]. It seems central, but every morning you awake and hear the birds singing. ***(Yesenina, divorced, owned 1br flat, Paddington, London)***

After divorce Yesenina moved from her husband's studio into a 1-bedroom flat which she owned with her brother in the same area. Other stories also demonstrate persistence in

migrants' preferences for particular locations in London. Having work within a walking distance from home represents one of work-related values. Moreover, some 'settled' women prefer not to look for a new job in order not to change location or travel for longer to a new workplace. To have a more complete picture we have to see whether participants live in rented or owned properties.

Towards homeownership

This study shows that about half of the participants live in their own homes (see Table 1). Usually these nuclear families have mortgages. In half of these cases participants share equally mortgage responsibilities with their partners. The other half is mainly responsible for paying the bills while their partners are primarily responsible for paying off the debts. There are 'other' cases as well. Four women bought their properties on their own what is particularly important from a gender perspective.[14] Yet, several women live in their own homes in 'good' areas thanks to their ex-partners or with support from their parents. To buy a property in London or its surroundings results not simply from economic affluence. It seems to interplay with career and citizenship plans. Arts cataloguer ***Annet*** explained:

My father likes very much the idea of me working in an action house, he respects me for that and now he'd like to buy me a flat as a present. When I went to Moscow I passionately talked about my work, how I love it. That I'd like to stay here at least for four years, since I could apply for passport after that, it's logic to wait until then. So, I decomposed my five-year plan, that I see myself with this action house… It would be great to live in this area, but I don't know my budget yet… So it's clear I live thanks to my father as well, but we both understand that if I'd have to live on my own I wouldn't be lost, I wouldn't go astray. ***(Annet, single, sharing flat, Notting Hill, London)***

Another half of women lived in rented places. The study shows that singles, unmarried couples and couples without children are more likely to live in rental properties. Some of them stressed that they would like to buy a property in the future. Several women expressed a desire to bring their parents to the UK (particularly, if their mothers are alone) and buy for them properties. It also reflects their long-term plans for living in the UK. At the time of third interview ***Zoriana*** with her husband were in the process of buying a two-bedroom house in Lewisham: 'We couldn't find anything for 200K in North London'. This phrase pinpoints the mental map of participants who put themselves into 'better' areas they cannot afford.

Overall, owning a property is not considered as something extraordinary by most interviewees, even if it is about a property in London, one of the most expensive cities in the world. They all lived in owned properties with their families of origin in the FSU.[15] Those who are the only children in their families (8 cases) might feel more secure in terms of future homeownership. Although owning a property in their home or third countries is a rare phenomenon among this group of migrants, in five cases it became an additional source of income for covering some expenses in London or converted into other forms of capital.

Towards dual citizenship

Entitlements also shape migrants' feelings and integration in a host society. In terms of citizenship two main patterns are found: living with original passports and having dual citizenship. Ten participants possessed citizenship from their countries of origin, including two participants who applied for British passports by the time of interview. They exercised either EEA family members' rights or stayed on work permit visas. Citizenship is a subject to change over time. Those who exercised EEA family member rights are more likely to become EU citizens.

By the time of interview about half of the participants had dual citizenship. They possessed passports from the countries of origin and British (11) or European passport (6). In most cases British citizenship was granted as the result of marriage to a British citizen (9). In 'other' cases it was the outcome of eleven year period in the UK (1) and refugee status (1). Four women obtained Bulgarian (2), German and Italian passports respectively as spouses. Those who resided in the UK for longer periods are more likely to possess the EU or UK passports on the basis of marriage to the EU/UK citizen. However, the other mechanisms facilitating the right to live and work in the UK were also found. Two women have Polish and Romanian passports for other reasons.[16] Both women who have non-EU country citizenship (Israel, the USA)[17] moved to the UK on work permit visas.[18]

The right to live and work within the EU are of particular importance for non-EU migrants. It is crucial that all participants had the right to reside and work in the UK. Therefore it is important to realize the effect of being 'undocumented' in the UK (2 cases)[19]. These stories are crucial for understanding what undocumented migrants' lives are in comparison with those who are 'privileged' enough to have the right to live and work in the UK:

I finished University and was teaching Spanish for two years at the same University [Chisinau]. My salary was tiny [100$], there was chaos in the country. I decided to try something bigger – going abroad – for better life! I had friends in Italy and was about to leave for there. However one evening my friend from London called me. She is married to an English man. She said that she had a babysitting work for me. I left in three weeks… On a tourist visa, it wasn't easy to get it, I had to play a role of a business woman [in Romania]… I stayed illegally for four years [in the UK]. I couldn't go home if something would happen to my family. I couldn't go to NHS here, I could use only private clinic, but earning 50 pounds per week you couldn't save much. I couldn't call to police either. I had to stay quiet. A beautiful prison [smiling]… We married after 2 year relationships. Happy end! [laughing] The main thing now is my health, both physical and psychological. ***(Alice, married, 2br owned flat, Hendon, London)***

This story sounds like a fairy tale, but it is a true story. ***Alice*** came to the UK in 2003 on a tourist visa and re-entered on a marriage visa in 2008. Her labour history clearly demonstrates the narrow opportunities for work for 'undocumented' women migrants. She worked in care sector informally for four years starting as a nanny at her friend's house. This fact opens up a theme of one group of migrants exploiting the other group of migrants as well as eternal gender division of labour. However, ***Alice*** is grateful to her friend who also originates from Moldova. From her perspective she lives in a great city with endless career opportunities. She exclaimed at some point during interview: 'I love London and London loves me!' She changed her 'migrant status' after marrying a British citizen, but she emphasised: 'I could marry for documents, but I was looking for a man for life and family.'

It seemed that she was happily married to a local journalist. They lived in Hendon in his owned two bedrooms flat near a park. It is fruitful to compare ***Alice***'s life story with her sisters' one with a focus on entailments and its consequences for career entry. ***Ada***, one of the first participants of this study, lived with her partner in the same city (Canary Wharf, 2 bedrooms flat). She came to London on a visiting visa and then re-entered on a marriage one. ***Ada***'s career entry in the UK differs substantially from her sister's one. She started to work as a customer manager assistant in a retail company in half a year after moving to London. Meanwhile, ***Alice***'s career opportunities increased after she acquired the right to live and work in the UK. Sisters seemed to be settled in London. They were dreaming about bringing their parents to the UK and buying for them a house outside London. Sisters' life scenarios and value system seem to support the key arguments delivered here. Interconnection between migration, family and careers is discussed further in the following Chapters.

To sum up key findings of this section, location is important for these migrants. Most prefer and can afford living in 'good' or relatively good areas in London. Yet, a clear tendency

towards homeownership and dual citizenship is found. It leaves little doubts about these women settling in the UK, but also their integration across particular social lines. It is not surprising that only several migrants considered return scenarios for family-, work-related and lifestyle reasons while some others suggested they could live in the region for some periods being based in the UK. In fact short after the interview ***Karina*** who missed her family and friends was offered a good position t in Kiev (auditing, company transferee) and planned to return 'for two years at least'. Meanwhile, ***Leila*** (entrepreneur / international education agency) who said that she did not want 'to get old in the UK' returned to Astana for several reasons, including care about her mother.

Overall, participants keep relationships with their families, friends and colleagues in the region and visit their countries of origin regularly; however the idea of a return is definitely least preferred among this group of migrants with several exceptions. Work-related reasons were mentioned; however, family and 'visa issue' were listed as the main would-be reason for return. They know why they are settling on Albion. It is perceived as 'the civilised West' (***Kate***) in the first place:

If I am fired now I'd have to go back to Russia. But I'm not afraid of it. I wouldn't like it happen; I had lot of things in my life. And I'd take it offensive… To Moscow, I don't want to go back to Piter [Saint Petersburg] and definitely not to Kemerovo. To Moscow because… it would be easier to find a job, I would be more in demand. Maybe Piter, but I'd keep Piter as a second option… The weather is also not pleasant there. And in Moscow I'd have more opportunities to find a job in an international company, where they would need my English, Russian and work experience from abroad. Needed more than in Piter… Any rate I feel myself more secure in Europe and that is important to me. Not as much financially, but like a human. In Russia everything is against a human, and here in most cases everything is made for a human. ***(Kira, divorced, owned 1 br flat, Beckton, London)***

At the same time this account relates to one of the key arguments developed in this chapter, namely in-between-city mobility. It can be traced in narrations on possible return and onward migration scenarios.

5.5 Summary and discussion

In the case of migration of professionals from the FSU to the UK we are primarily dealing with migration from post-Soviet capitals or big cities. The concept of 'in-between-city' mobility proved to be a useful concept for understanding this group of migrants. The global city is attractive for different groups of migrants for all sorts of reasons. Yet, a regional

specifics has to be acknowledged. Migrants from the post-Soviet space look at London through 'Moscow is not Russia' lenses. The rest is considered as province. Therefore London, not the rest of the UK, became a new home for most migrants from the FSU (IOM 2007 a), b), c)). London turned into one of the most attractive destinations in their 'mental maps' (Fuller & Chapman 1974; Morrison & Sacchetto 2014).

This group of migrants originate from urban places with several exceptions. The urban origin could be interpreted as 'urban habitus' in Bourdieu's terms and studied as such across borders. Urban origin is one of platforms for self-identification and it is not surprising that many participants identified themselves with cities they lived in. It is also one of assets which helps migrants to integrate in a foreign urban place. From this perspective this group of migrants were adapting 'just' to another city; however, it does not mean that they did not have any problems integrating in British society. Perhaps, it is easier for them to adapt to London than for migrants of rural origin. With few exceptions urban/rural divide in migrant origin has been ignored in migration studies for too long (Rye 2011; Nowicka 2012).

In contrast to strict state population control and mass forced resettlement during Stalinism (Rahmonova-Swartz 2010) mobility in the last decades of USSR was predominantly family and labour related (Tishkov et al. 2005: 3). In post-Soviet times citizens of new independent states were 'free to move', however migration flows decreased to one third by 2002 against predictions (ibid.). Therefore, it is not surprising that this group of migrants experienced different forms of mobility in Soviet and post-Soviet periods, particularly with their families of origin. So, internal and intra-regional migration preceded international mobility (migration to the UK here). Study shows that the former is not necessarily easier and smoother as life experience. In many cases they moved from their cities of origin to capitals in the region first. It is another contribution to migration scholarship. These findings support theoretical elaborations calling for integration of internal and international migration for understanding better mobility, which has been overlooked so far. (Fitzgerald 2006; King 2010)

It can be suggested that both pre-UK mobility and urban origin ease the process of adaptation in a foreign country / city and have positive impact on labour market integration. Meanwhile, migrants themselves did not recognize this connection. Gradual moving to the UK, which incorporates visiting London first, living in-between-cities and re-migration, also contributes to smoother integration.

Another important issue is that the vast majority of participants entered the UK through 'non-skilled routes', predominantly on student and family-related visas. Entering through non-skilled routes leave many migrant workers 'invisible' for the analysis on both research and policy level what is particularly significant for women who are more likely to move to a host country as spouses (Kofman 2012). However, boundaries between labour migrants and family migrants are thin. For instance, those who migrate as family migrants can enter the labour markets in a host country. (Kofman and Raghuram 2005) In fact, half of the participants entered as family members or turned into ones after working or studying in the UK. Both 'student migrants' as well as 'migrant workers' can turn into 'family migrants' over time. Moving to any country also means entering its 'marriage market' what proves to be one of the main strategies for non-EU women migrants as will be unfolded in Chapter 7.

Overall, it is hard to differentiate between 'student migrants', 'migrant workers' and 'family migrants'. Those who entered the UK on student visas can work (formally and informally) during and/or after studies. Those who enter on work permit visas can continue their studies in the UK. The empirical data correlate with other studies demonstrating that classifications on the basis of motivation to migrate, migratory status and citizenship are becoming blurred (Tyuryukonova 2001; Kofman 2003). It can be added that, 'true' motivations for migration to the UK change over time and can be different from modes of entry. Yet, 'changing visa strategies' were adjusted to changing immigration regimes (Ho 2011).

However, all these classifications are almost meaningless without understanding the real consequences they have for migrants. The legal-political structures shape migrants' opportunities and practices of re-negotiating these structures dividing migrants into more and less privileged. This issue is particularly important when we are dealing with non-EU migrants in the EU/the UK. It can be suggested that representatives of this group of migrants who have the right to live and work in the UK are better integrated and have greater career opportunities than those who do not have that right (see Ch. 7 for further discussion). To a great extent 'settling' and integration processes are conditioned by entitlements.

Ideas and practices of dual citizenship and homeownership also reflect a tendency towards 'settling' in the UK among this group of migrants. Meanwhile, owning properties or planning to buy ones is not just about having the right and willing to live in the UK on a long-term basis. It also demonstrates these migrants' proprietary mentality, 'central to the formation of middle-class'. These practises give the owners simultaneously 'the right' to exclude

themselves from the others and to have access and entitlements of the middle-class (Skeggs 2004: 175). It seems that this group of migrants prefer to reside in 'good' areas in London. However, residential areas of migrants from the FSU have not yet attracted systematic attention of scholars (Maluyitina 2015). Yet, public attention is predominantly oriented towards the impact of post-Soviet oligarchs on house prices and the city itself (Bulough 2014; Malnick 2014).

Last but not least, such questions as 'why they move to the UK', 'how they migrate' and 'how they feel in the UK' cannot be reduced to a set of factors or variables. These are processes and not one off events. They connect different aspects of one's life and value system. Finally, from a family of origin perspective siblings' migration to the UK is more typical for this group of migrants than 'following parents' migration. Siblings' migration is an under-studied area if to move beyond studies on (family) networking strategies (Ryan 2008). However, in other cases participants' siblings migrated to other 'Western' countries. It can be stated that younger generations from the post-Soviet space are more likely to migrate than generation of their parents. And more importantly, they prefer to live in the 'West'.

Life strategising can be understood as embedded into the reality of hierarchy between countries and cities on a global scale. (Sassen 2001; Hamnett 2003; Massey 2007) Meanwhile personal accounts are influenced by collective imagination about life in sending and receiving countries, regions or cities. (Benson 2012) Moving to the UK is also the outcome of many factors to coincide and different forms of capital to inter-play (Bourdieu 1984, 1986). Therefore, it can be said that these migrants were 'privileged' enough to migrate to the UK and settle in relatively good areas in London.

CHAPTER 6

FAMILY PERSPECTIVES: CONSEQUENCES FOR CAREERS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on connections between family and working lives in a broad sense. It aims to explore the social background of participants' families of origin and their families of creation in order to uncover their multi-faceted impact on participants' careers. It is argued that dual career families of origin and of creation have a significant impact on participants' professional identities, work values, educational and career strategies. An innovative approach is proposed for understanding gendered migrants' careers here. It incorporates the role of both families of origin and families of creation into analysis of professional lives in general, and transborder career trajectories in particular. This Chapter consists of four parts. First, participants' families of origin are examined from educational, occupational and socio-economic perspectives. Second, the parental impact on participants in terms of educational aspirations, achievements and strategies across borders is explored. Third, participants' families of creation are studied with a focus on partners' backgrounds and their impact on women's integration and careers in the UK. The last section provides a summary of key findings and discussion of their implications for the relevant literature.

6.2 Families of origin: Daughters of the Soviet knowledge workers

In migration studies a families-of-origin perspective is often overlooked despite its benefits for understanding migrants' careers. It is assumed that parents can have a strong impact on career strategies and social positioning of migrants in a host country. Therefore migrants' families of origin are studied from the educational, occupational and socio-economic points of view which represent another emergent theme in this thesis. This section shows that putting family histories into the broader historical context (post-Soviet transformations here) enriches our understanding of offspring's career strategising. The events of Perestroika and the vicissitudes of the early 1990s represent the defining turning point for women's families of origin in socio-economic and professional terms. Here, the familial socio-economic

position is defined on the basis of offspring's relevant accounts. So, what kind of families do participants originate from?

Parents' educational and professional backgrounds

Findings indicate that the vast majority of participants come from urban dual-career families. The impact of the 'urbanity' factor has already been addressed in Chapter 6. Here we focus on the 'dual-career' dimension of the family of origin. Almost all participants were brought up in two-parent families (with two exceptions[20]), and see the dual-career family as the norm. Data on parents' backgrounds show that most participants had highly educated parents (see Table 2). In five cases one of the parents was highly educated. Another significant finding is that if one of parents is highly educated it is more likely to be the mother (with one exception[21]). Only in four cases none of the parents had a HE degree. However, they belonged to what were considered either strategic or autonomous professional groups in the USSR, such as military, drivers, miners, nurses, librarians, repairers or 'prodavtsy'[22]. Older participants are less likely to have highly educated parents. Sisters ***Ada*** and ***Alice***, the only participants who originate from a semi-rural place, emphasised that their parents were 'esteemed' professionals despite not having HE degrees. 'Esteem' in relation to occupation seems to have value for participants.

My father doesn't have a HE degree, he finished Road Transport College. He worked with grain, tried other things, but most of the time he worked as a driver. For the last five years he looked after a mill, managing its work. He always earned well, but he is 'relaxed' [in English] – East or West home is best… Although they live in a semi-rural place they are very cultured. Maybe the Soviet Union used to be like that. They are not intelligentsia, but they've got [pause] for example, there are peasants who worked with land, but others worked with people. My mum always worked with doctors… She re-skilled into a physiotherapist [from nurse]… she was always esteemed at work… She is in Italy now, basically doing the same, curing people, working as a nurse. The whole city knows her! ***(Ada, daughter of physiotherapist/nurse and driver/manager, PTU)*** [23]

However, in most cases at least one of parents was a highly educated 'spetsyialist' in the Soviet Union. They represented different groups of knowledge workers some of whom belonged to the so called 'Soviet intelligentsia'. Among their occupations the most common are the following: engineers, teachers, doctors, scientists, economists and creative workers. In fact, most of them worked either in the social reproduction sphere or engineering. The former is more typical for participants' mothers and the latter for their fathers. However, there are

also cases where mothers worked as engineers and fathers were employed as teachers. In the USSR, engineering covered many specialisations (seven in this study). The parents-engineers entered managerial positions straight after receiving HE degrees. Overall, almost all highly educated parents occupied senior positions by the time of interview.

Families of origin social positioning and Transition

The social positioning of families of origin emerges as one of the most sensitive topics for half of the participants. Often when asked to define their family in socio-economic terms they reflected on it in relation to 'before and after the 90s'. Despite traumatic experiences of the past, interviews flowed naturally since most of 'the researched' shared with 'the researcher' a commonality of experiences in relation to 'the collapse' of the USSR, 'the crazy 90s' and 'the stabilizing 2000s'.

Our family fell down drastically after the collapse, and then we got up of course. In Soviet times my parents were quite relaxed for the future psychologically. I remember when I was little there was a transition moment when we didn't have what to eat, when electricity was turned off and we studied to play piano under the candles. They turned off electricity alternating in a checkerboard pattern. You know, right? ***(Laura, daughter of engineer-ecologist/head of canteen, HE and mathematician/head of Cathedra, Candidate degree)***

Perestroika and the 1990s were a turning period for Soviet families in many respects. At least one third of participants experienced mobility at young age as the result of their parents being reallocated across USSR while others moved for educational or family creation purposes (see also 5.2). Yet, after 1991, one third of participants moved with their families to larger cities or provincial capitals on their own initiative. This group includes those who returned to their parents' 'homelands' after Soviet reallocation. As ***Leila*** pointed out: 'We moved a lot because my father was a Communist and they were sent to the places where there was deficit in 'spetsyalistov'. Other accounts also suggest that highly educated young spetsialisty had to become Communist party members after completing their education. However, having the Party cards did not mean that they joined the *nomenklatura* or Soviet elite:

I'd say my family is a middle class family in terms of education and other things, but it's hard to explain Soviet reality; basically if you didn't work in nomenklatura and didn't have connections, you were nobody. It was a strict division – either you are nomenklatura or nobody. ***(Zina, daughter of shoes designer, HE and repairer, PTU)***

Very few women claimed that their families of origin belonged to the 'middle class' like ***Zina***. In most cases they struggled to define their families' social position mainly due to the particular social structure of the Soviet society and its transformations following *Perestroika*. Yet, many of them shared the idea that in the region 'the middle class is very small'. 'The poor' is perceived as a much wider group in contrast to 'the West', and the UK in particular. Many of them used the concepts of 'normal' or 'neither poor nor rich' in relation to their families of origin. Half of the participants claimed that their families always used to be 'average' before and after 1991:

We always lived average, so we were neither poor nor rich, average; and we lived 'normalino.'[24]*... I cannot say we started to live better after Perestroika, only in some things, but it became worse in other respects…* ***(Noa, daughter of journalist and army officer, HE)***

A few families improved dramatically their socio-economic status during the 2000s, benefiting from Transition in economic terms. In five cases the participants' fathers became 'successful' businessmen and provided their daughters' education in the UK:

My father worked for the state in the Soviet Union, then he ran someone's business [in the 1990s], after that he opened his business, in 2006 I think… It's agricultural business, so he's got ten people in the office, employing about 500 people for seasonal work… My mum started off about a year ago, she has five employees now… It's in fitness sphere, it pays off slowly, just now she goes for zero and it's good that she is not in minus, after paying salaries and taxes… No, I'm not like them, they are both business-like, both are bosses, sometimes it was hard at home, but I've got organisational skills from them… They think that I have to do only business. Of course, they think that first it's better to work at some company to get knowledge, experience, skills, contacts, maybe some ideas. ***(Kate, daughter of economist/entrepreneur and agricultural engineer/businessman, HE)***

In this case, the parents have had direct influence on ***Kate***'s attitudes to business and career path. However, very few succeeded in 'doing real business' (***Nina***) during Transition. Instead, 'chelnochestvo', 'buying cheaper goods and selling them for higher prices', turned into one of the key surviving family strategies in the 1990s[25] . This practice represents a response to dramatic economic decline with such consequences as rampant inflation, loss of family savings, bankrupted enterprises, jobs loss and non-payment of wages:

We had everything in the Soviet times, since my father used to be a commodity expert, he was a head of a warehouse and material good meant a lot then. We had literally everything, some things others have never seen, or dreamt about. We had lot of money as well, and when the Soviet Union collapsed all money de-valuated. He still had that job but he could get only salary and what's the salary? Miserable one. So he resigned and started his own business buying cheaper goods and selling them for higher prices… No, now he is on pension. ***(Yesenina, daughter of commodities experts, HE)***

Once again this account indicates that participants do not come from elite families, but many of them belong to families which held strategic positions in the USSR. In the 1990s most participants' families of origin lost out in socio-economic terms but managed to re-gain their 'average' position during the 2000s.

Parents' occupational stability Vs reorientation in post-Soviet period

The transition from planned to market economy brought despair, stress and a sense of insecurity into most participants' families. This process posed serious challenges to Soviet knowledge workers. ***Ella*** suggests that *shock therapy* was particularly hard for families of Soviet knowledge workers:

The 90s were harsh. Many suffered, particularly those of the middle range, those who were teachers, engineers, doctors; they were never well-off, but they had stability in jobs and earnings and the prices were low [in USSR]… My mum was paid around 150£ [after 1991]… They are on pension now… The minimum pension is around 200£ or less… No, my father doesn't have that transport business anymore… You know, I don't have opportunity to help them. I have to feed myself without asking help from them. Moreover, they will never ask me for life expenses. ***(Ella, daughter of lecturer, HE and transport expert/entrepreneur, PTU)***

Parents' occupational stability or reorientation during Transition is another emergent theme. Many Soviet knowledge workers tried to reorient themselves or migrate (mainly within their countries) because their sectors or occupations went into decline. For example, ***Ada****'s* father re-qualified from driver to manager after failing to start a small agricultural business. Her mother went into 'caring people' in Italy (see her account above). ***Ella****'s* mother continued to work as a lecturer at University while her father started up his small business. However, 'reorientation' has to be used with caution since it can take place in the same field of expertise. For instance, ***Kate****'s* father transformed himself from agricultural engineer into farming entrepreneur while ***Ella***'s father, a transport expert, set up a transport business. Participants' accounts suggest that their mothers were more likely to switch to other jobs or occupations but also to abandon their professional identities 'to feed the family' (***Zoriana***).

Reorientation often did not happen on a voluntary basis. Entering a new job, occupation or moving to a different industry or country to achieve a more stable or higher income could mean de-skilling, what seems to be particularly common for women. ***Laura***, for example, reports that: 'My mum, with her education [!] of engineer-ecologist had to work as a head of

canteen'. Although many parents 'tried different things' (***Kira***) to survive during the early period of Transition, the majority of them ultimately remained in, or returned to the professions acquired in the Soviet period even when this meant loss of earnings or regular employment. Often participants expressed pride in their parents as representatives of their generation and their occupations:

I appreciate all those values, shown in Soviet films, when they show the value of friendship, sincerity, what I am missing a lot here. So I think my parents were bringing me up in that way to live by honour and conscience… My parents are very… I am so proud of them, of my Soviet parents. They are very intelligent, well educated. My father is a well-known doctor; my mum is pretty well-known. [Kemerovo, Russia]… They tried different things, tried to do business to earn at least something in the 1990s. But then both returned; they just could not switch. My father said: 'I cannot make it, it's not my cup of tea! Reviving children is mine and selling blouses is not mine… he is a resuscitator and my mum is a pharmacist-paediatrician. My father is working with very small children, with tiny ones… ***(Kira, daughter of paediatricians, HE)***

Transition brought challenges to professional identities of young and established Soviet 'spetsyalisty'. Many of them were altogether abandoned by the state as their employer and guarantor of welfare or forced to seek alternative sources of income when their salaries fell below the living wage. Some suffered from perceived loss of dignity and self-esteem. This is what ***Kira****'s* father meant by 'reviving children is mine and selling blouses is not mine'. This traumatising experinces could explain why some participants preferred not to discuss their parents' situation indicating only their level education and occupation.

In terms of values, many participants associate 'business' with 'chelnochestvo', i.e. having more to do with surviving than accumulating capital. Equally, work in 'sales' is not considered either 'decent' or 'respectful'. At some point ***Alexa*** emphasised with humour: 'We are not traders, quite the opposite, we make losses if we try to sell something'. Some of them also tried to become businesswomen in the region and had negative experiences. As ***Laura*** put it briefly: 'I'd rather be an employee here until retirement and then live by the sea somewhere in Southern Europe, like all pensioners here do, you see? Perhaps I could become a businesswoman there [in Kazakhstan], but I am afraid of that, I don't have fangs for that.' Overall, most participants express little interest in setting up businesses not only because very few parents provided successful examples of entrepreneurship but also because relatives or friends, experiences of 'doing business' in the region are associated with negative outcomes. Therefore, ***Eva***'s account looks rather exceptional:

I've got a dream. I'd love to buy a textile factory…Yes, over there [in Ukraine]. I'd like to produce cloths, accessories. I could supply that to my mum. By the way now they order everything from England. Now I am trying to focus on personal life, my work and all other things. I'd like to make connections so it could go through me, not through my mum's supplier in England, but through me… ***(Eva, daughter of music director/entrepreneur and football coach/arbitrator, HE)***

In summary, the Transition period was challenging for most participants' families of origin. It seems that children of Soviet knowledge workers learnt early in their lives about possibilities of re-skilling and professional reorientation in 'new times' or 'new places'. They have also come to appreciate the risks associated with losing jobs and professional identities as well as being de-skilled or de-valued as 'specialists'. This learning can have a significant impact on their career strategising (see 7.3 for further discussion). Equally, the idea of 'occupational stability', even in transformation times, can influence offspring's attitudes to education, work and occupation. Older participants themselves worked during Transition (3 cases)[26], however, most participants were still working towards formal qualifications during the 1990s and 2000s. In the next section parental impact on participants' formal and informal learning as well as their educational strategies is analysed.

6.3 Familial educational strategies across borders

This section continues to analyse parental impact on participants' careers mainly focusing on the educational strategies which are central their professional lives. Therefore the influence of parents on participants' educational aspirations, achievements and qualifications is analysed in detail. Transition from planned to market economy brought challenges to migrants' families of origin. Therefore the aim of this section is to understand how familial educational strategies adapted to post-Soviet transformations and transcended borders. The following set of questions is addressed here: Which expectations these families held regarding their offspring's education? What strategic decisions did parents make for their children? Could they transfer their knowledge in a new post-Soviet reality? Did parents support financially their children's tertiary education in the FSU and abroad? What is their level of education? Is it similar to their parents' one? What forms did informal learning take in their families? Is there any connection between parents and offspring in occupational terms?

Growing up under shock therapy: HE degrees as a route to independence

It seems that for many children of Soviet knowledge workers shock therapy of the 1990s had a stimulating effect for 'studying well' and 'becoming independent':

My father was studying physics in Sevastopol' [Soviet Ukraine], but I've never seen him in that. He worked at different companies, as a manager, economist, analyst. He is paid pretty well now, but I and my sister always had an idea that we have to become independent. We had scholarship in Moldova… My sister has got a good job straight after University [in Chisinau], so she doesn't want to stay here. [Diana's sister studied on scholarship in the UK]… We were studying well, since my father had periods of unemployment. We always tried to be independent… My mum used to be a doctor, I don't know how much she was paid in USSR, but in the 90s her salary was very small. And my father wasn't earning that much. He worked some time as a lecturer in physics too. Our grandparents supported us in building a house when we moved to Chisinau. <…> My parents often told me something like: 'Look at our neighbour girl, nobody expects anything from her. The whole street looks at you: who you'll become.' <…> We knew from childhood we would study at University. ***(Diana, HE[27], daughter of doctor/housewife and engineer-physicist/management analyst, HE)***

This rich narration generates several topics for discussion. ***Diana*** explains a wish 'to study at University' as a logical consequence to her parents' backgrounds. She emphasises that, from childhood, there were high expectations as to 'who she would become'. Her family moved from the town of Orgeyev to the capital of Soviet Moldova in 1987 as the result of her mother allocation as a 'spetsyalist'. However 'in new times' her mother turned into a housewife mainly because her salary had become too 'small'. It is the only case when a participant's mother became a 'housewife'. Although Transition brought financial instability to ***Diana***'s family, in the 1990s, her father 'successfully' reoriented from an engineer-physicist to management analyst. Other fathers' occupational histories also show that Soviet men 'spetsyalisty' sought to adapt to the market economy looking mainly for white-collar jobs.

Diana's account relates very well to ***Anjela***'s suggestion that adaptability to structural crises was learnt from parents. The idea of parents' responding to and adapting to new structural conditions could partly explain participants' adaptability in post-crisis London and their ability to stay in 'brain jobs' (see Chapter 7 for further discussion). Her parents pushed ***Anjela*** into a 'safe' profession which would 'feed' her and her family 'everywhere' and 'under any conditions'.

I think that our people are stress-resistant. For example, in the period of crisis they can move into another niche, to rebuild themselves. We've got that variability, perhaps it's our advantage, in the periods of unexpected crisis. Our people got used to it; therefore we took it with calm here. For many English people the crisis was some kind of crash. In hard times our variability appears. Everyone in Russia had to slip out for family. My

parents were stuck between dacha and work during Perestroika. My mum went to Poland to do trade since she wasn't paid at work. They had to 'spin'. As we say, 'if you want to live – you have to spin.' It was a shock for many and they had to cope with it. We've seen it and understood that any rate you can live. **<…>** *My parents insisted on getting education in accountancy, auditing. Back then there was a change is some values and they thought that I wouldn't have financial struggles with this profession. An accountant is needed always and everywhere, in any conditions.* ***(Anjela, HE + ACCA, daughter of teacher, HE and engineer-metallurgist, PTU)***

Some did follow their parents' advice in choosing their educational profile while others were not satisfied with careers 'imposed' by parents and tried either to combine them with doing something 'for the soul' or moved in altogether different field over time (see 7.3). Overall, half of the women studied for 'new' professions which became popular during Transition taking their relatives' advice, mainly parents, or following educational and labour market trends. As ***Margo*** pointed out: 'All tried to become either lawyers or economists'. Although among participants there is only one lawyer (***Masha***), eight women studied Economics or Finances in the FSU while another two, re-skilled to become accountants in London.

More importantly, it can be stated that there was no question among them about the need to pursue HE degrees rather the issue was about what educational profile to choose. From this point of view, gender did not seem to pose 'restriction' in their parents' judgment. Having an HE degree seems so 'natural' for these women that they could hardly explain why they completed an HE education. Those who were first in their families to be highly educated (4 cases) followed the trend of expanded educational opportunities in the region. Diversity of educational profiles is analysed in Chapter 7, here we focus on parental impact on offspring's level of education and 'why to have tertiary education' altogether.

Data show that the vast majority of the participants completed HE studies in the FSU (5-year University education according to the Soviet system). Thirteen women continued to study in the UK; ten of them completed Masters[28], mainly in London. (see Table 2). Three women obtained PhD degrees in the UK (2) and the USA (1) while one woman did not complete her PhD in London; all four received PhD scholarships. Meanwhile, one woman had a Candidate degree, post-Soviet equivalent to PhD, from Russia while the other four had incomplete Candidates in the region. By the time of interview only four women had undergraduate degrees completed in the FSU (1), the UK (2) and Israel (1). One of them had two BA degrees obtained in the UK. Yet, four women did professional courses in the UK in ACCA (3) and event management (1).

Usually offspring were told in their families that higher education degrees would improve their career opportunities and in the end this would make them 'independent' from their families of origin (***Diana***'s accounts above) and also from their future husbands (see ***Yesenina***'s account below). Often they had to achieve good results to please their parents.

My parents always insisted on an idea that I had to be successful… literally in everything. I was told that work is important and that I wouldn't be depend on my [future] husband. That I had to develop constantly. Moreover! That they brought me up and supported my education not for sitting at home doing nothing… From childhood. Getting best marks was very important to them. It was awful, I had to get '5' for all subjects, it's quite stressful… Rather for my father, my mum… she loves unconditionally, whatever happens, and I had to prove the best for my father… My mum came three times already… Papa is afraid of flights… Speaking to my mum via skype usually, almost every day. Going home, oh no, going to work by foot every day, so I call her every morning. Talking to her 40 min while I am walking to my work. ***(Ysenina, HE + MSc, daughter of commodities experts, HE)***

It is not surprising that many participants were high achievers at schools and HE institutions. They could take most out of studying given their parents' backgrounds and involvement. The issue of independence from parents is mentioned by many women. In fact, there are just two cases of 'helping parents', but these are not remittances on a regular basis. As for the reverse, there are six cases of parents financially supporting their children who moved to the UK; including a 'following parents' case of migration. The main ways of supporting children are connected with education and living expenses and more rarely with buying properties in London (2 cases). Therefore, it would be difficult to consider these women 'economic migrants' who migrated to the UK to support their families through remittances.

The desire to improve the quality of life of their families of origin is a rare phenomenon among this group of migrants. Hence, ***Ada***'s states 'I would rather make a proper career than supports our [parents] in Moldova' and ***Sofronik***'s wish 'to improve the quality of their housing' look rather exceptional. Most participants shared the idea of helping parents 'through becoming independent from them' (***Noa*)**. There are several plausible explanations that explain this choice for 'not helping parents'. First, parents do not need help since many are still working. Some of them have good wages and some others have additional sources of income, even if retired. Second, these women may not have sufficient means to support their families of origin, helping them through 'becoming independent'. Third, in some cases their remaining siblings who live in home countries take such responsibility.

Finally, communicating with parents 'almost every day' (***Yesenina***) is a rare practice among these women. Usually they get in touch with their families of origin once in a week or two. It can be stated that participants keep strong relations with their home countries primarily through their families of origin and friends. Many narrations suggest there is a good level of engagement with both own parents and partners' parents. Meetings take place in the countries of origin, in the UK, but also in third countries. However, it would be an exaggeration to call these families trans-national; they rather occasionally experience trans-national mobility as many people in the world we live in. Here is another example of this practice and mutual independence between families of origin and participants' families of creation:

His family lives on their own [on Cypus]. We are not helping my family either. We are doing together something occasionally. For example, if my father decided to visit us I would buy him a ticket. If my sister needs something I can help her, but we don't help them… We meet somewhere in Europe usually… ***(Karina, HE + ACCA, daughter of economists, HE)***

Investing into formal and informal education

Investing in children's education seems to be one of the priorities and highly appreciated values of these families. Also the offspring is expected to study up to University level but is not required to return money spent by their parents for their HE degrees. None of the participants took a loan for studying in the region. Furthermore, most of them did not work while studying in the FSU while just some of them worked during summer holidays. This means that they could afford to concentrate on enriching their formal and informal education during their five years in education. 'Prestigious jobs' were expected in these families after getting degrees in the FSU or abroad (see 7.2). Tertiary education was no longer free after 1991, but perceived as 'affordable for many families' (***Ella***) by participants. At least one third of cases show that providing education was a struggling experience for these parents:

I hate the 90s, my mum lost her job because she did not know Moldovan and my father had to support all of us [Roza has got a brother and sister]. Apart from working on a TV Channel he started to work on a private basis. There was no stability in jobs and earnings anymore while prices and bills kept growing… As many others we were struggling and this is when they had to pay for my education and provide me living in the capital. I tried to get a free place but they kept the budget places for their children, you know… I remember I was studying, studying and studying. I did not have money for any entertaining, well, maybe once in 2-3 weeks. But it worked for me. With all my knowledge, languages and commitment I found a good job [at 'Thompson Reuters'] and moved to Moscow [from Chisinau]. ***(Roza, HE, daughter of journalist/editor and cameraman/producer, HE)***

In Soviet times higher education was free, but available to few, usually 'the brightest' pupils at schools. It became more accessible during Transition; when almost everyone could complete University studies if only resources and motivation were provided. Those who could not pass exams used bribes, a practice criticised by interviewees. Many women believed that the quality of tertiary education declined during Transition and emphasised that the education they obtained at Soviet schools in the 1980s was of a very good quality.

Although education fees were 'affordable' across the FSU it was not the case for education abroad, particularly 'in the West'. Some interviewees emphasise that living and studying in 'the West' could never be afforded by their families. As we know only in five cases education in the UK was fully provided by parents and in two cases parents contributed to acquiring 'Western' qualifications. ***Annet*** pointed out that 'intelligent families oriented their children towards moving to the West'. ***Saule*** explains:

Those ours who are coming are from well-off families or 'upper middle class' [in English], their parents usually have their own business or they are company directors; otherwise, they are sponsored by the state… I heard that during last several years around 3000 students came to study within the programme [Bolashak programme]. Given that around 5000 Kazaks are studying in the UK it looks like the majority is sponsored by the state, but I'm not sure whether 3000 went to England or to all [foreign] countries… Yes, they have to come back to Kazakhstan. ***(Saule, daughter of historian/entrepreneur and lawyer/businessman, HE)***

It is worth noting that Kazakhstan is the only country in the region which has a large state programme which supports young citizens' education abroad. Family properties are pledged to guarantee for the Bolashak programme recipients' return to Kazakhstan of. However, four participants who moved from Kazakhstan are not recipients of the programme. Moreover, most of those who studied in the UK or third countries did not have parents' financial support for it. Most of them used their own or their partners' resources. Two women took loans and one of them had access to public funds as a refugee. Three women who pursued academic careers have been awarded scholarships. Findings also suggest that older migrants are less likely to continue education abroad/ in the UK.

Leila followed her daughter ***Saule*** to the UK and is the first participant in this research. ***Leila*** could not complete her candidate degree in Kazakhstan after her second child was born and started working as an international education agent connecting Kazakhstan with 'the wider world', based at first in Astana, then in London and then again in Astana. She considers herself 'a descendent of intelligentsia' since pre-Soviet times. ***Leila***'s account captures well the evolution and perception of education-related issues in the FSU. She observes how HE

education in USSR became a value and a norm as well as a mechanism for upward mobility among a discrete group. It gained mass appeal only after 1991, when higher education became the minimal requirement for entering 'good jobs'. Today, she explains, 'well-off' families send their children to study to the 'West' [as it happened to her daughter ***Saule***] while 'middle class families' send their children to study in 'cheaper countries' mainly 'to become more competitive in Kazakhstan'(see also section 7.3). ***Leila*** was surprised to learn that HE degrees is not so highly regarded in the UK and that sometimes it is possible to 'get into a good position' without having it.

Some participants stressed that it was not easy to study in the UK, mainly because 'educational systems' were different what did not allow them to be A level-students as at home institutions. ***Kira*** explained: 'I had a silver medal at school and I finished University with a Red Diploma and of course it was harder to study here, it's not in my language and I worked three full days and studied full three days. I had Sundays to recover and then again.' At this stage it can be stated that for this group of migrants an 'education abroad' is more likely to be the outcome of their, not their parents' initiative. Some parents, like ***Ella***'s father, 'did not understand why' they moved to the UK. Nevertheless, parents' role in attitudes to education and educational strategies should not be underestimated.

The impact of parents on informal learning can be also traced in attitudes to 'Western' languages and IT skills. For the majority proficiency in the English language became one of priorities from school or University, despite the fact that only six women specialised in Foreign Languages. Often parents advised their offspring to learn English as well as to gain IT skills. Some explain it as part of 'the very 90s euphoria' (***Nina*)** about integration with the 'West'. Even in the late Soviet period English was not popular and only started to attract attention in the 1990s. Structural changes in the labour market should be considered for changes in understanding of employability skills:

*When I was studying at University [in Chisinau] I looked through decent jobs ads just to have a rough idea what is required, it was always about a HE degree, IT skills and three languages were always there [Romanian, Russian and English]… I was studying in a Romanian-English group… It means that some subjects were taught in English. We also had visiting English-speaking lecturers. (**Roza, HE, daughter of journalist/editor and cameraman/producer, HE)***

This account relates to 'a new trend' in 2000s whereas at some Universities some subjects were taught in English outside Foreign Languages Departments. However, this is rather the

case for Universities in the post-Soviet capitals and major cities. Other ways of learning or improving English before moving to the UK were found as well.[29] It is crucial that participants started to study English at schools and Universities in the region because English proficiency among this group of migrants ranged from intermediate to advanced level well before migration. For example, those who took English proficiency tests before studying in the UK achieved IELTS results ranging between 6 and 8. Among participants, only three women had 'poor English' (***Edita***) when they moved to the UK. (see 7.3 for its consequences for careers) Younger women seemed to know English better.

Overall, language capital is high among this group of migrants, most of whom are Russian-speakers. Half of the participants spoke three or four languages[30] (see table). Their parents, arguably, were among the first to tell them to 'pay a particular attention to languages and computer skills' (***Nina*)**. Last but not least, parents also invested into offspring education beyond school education enriching their cultural capital in Bourdieu's terms.

Perhaps I will be like my mum. She could not leave us in peace; she made education and diligence a priority and she always controlled us. In that sense I'm very grateful to her. I think she was doing the impossible. I don't have that energy to do what she was doing in those times. I and my sister finished the best high school in our city [Karaganda], we've got musical and drawing education, we tried choreography. We tried many things thanks to our mum. In the mornings she dropped my sister at kindergarten, me at school and then took us home. She controlled our home-work. She left us at music school twice a week and for choir rehearsals on Saturdays; on Wednesdays we had drawing lessons. She had to manage all of that and she worked from 8 to 5. I think only Soviet people could do that. And now we are all so relaxed. I don't think I am doing even half of what mum did. Or, maybe those were different times, I don't know… ***(Laura, HE + 2 MSc, daughter of engineer-ecologist/head of canteen, HE and mathematician/head of Cathedra, candidate degree)***[31]

Laura's account is a fair representation of the multi-level parental impact on offspring lives. Other women have also volunteered their views as to which role they should play in their children's education and careers. Overall, some participants recognize support they had from by parents through encouragement, material support and informal learning. Others underplayed it though:

Both my parents studied at University; of course they supported me in that. I never had writing talent; that was obvious. I was studying at math class… English and math went very well. I don't remember anything, now I know how I will talk with my daughter about career. As far as I remember nobody was talking to me about any career. I went to study – good. Now I think, why nobody told me that there are political games at work? Why nobody told me: 'Don't be nervous, no one is thinking about you, there is a bigger picture'. I will explain these things to my daughter from five years old. ***(Karina, HE + ACCA, daughter of economists, HE)***

Social reproduction of knowledge workers?

Limited data on family histories suggest that there is a strong multi-level correlation between parents' and even grandparents' social position and that of their off-springs. It has to be pointed out that in eight cases both parents belonged to the same occupation. More importantly, some participants represent particular professions in second or third generation. ***Ella*** planned to become a lecturer like her mother while ***Sveta*** became an IT engineer like her mother. ***Roza*** followed her parents in working in mass media. ***Liza*** and ***Karina*** families represent a second generation of economists. ***Vera*** stands for family of health professionals in a third generation. Meanwhile, ***Olesya*** represents a third generation of engineers and scientists. Yet, ***Saule*** said that she was 'the first' in her family who did 'arts professionally'. Meanwhile, ***Annet*** started to study Finance under influence of her mother-economist. So, professional paths could be also understood through the lens of occupational family histories.

In order to have a clearer picture on participants' families of origin it is worth exploring their siblings' backgrounds. Twenty five participants have siblings who live and work either in the FSU or in the 'West' (12 cases). Most of them are highly educated professionals. Findings suggest that in most cases we are dealing with families of knowledge workers in a second or third generation. At least in twelve cases we are dealing with grandchildren of Soviet knowledge workers[32]. Pride in their grandparents' status is usually expressed in educational and professional terms. For example, ***Nina*** so summarises her family history: 'Coming from such a family of 'spetsialistov' put particular expectations on you'. Grandparents may have also influenced these women even if memories of such impact are feeble: 'My grandparents always told me that if I finish University I'd have the future; it's almost the only thing I remember about them.' (***Kate***)

Overall, findings suggest that the impact of both parents had far-reaching effect on offspring's educational and professional values, expectations and achievements. From a gender point of view, it is particularly significant that participants' mothers and grandmothers worked in the public sphere (see 6.5 for further discussion). They worked full-time until retirement having only maternity leave breaks. The impact of highly educated 'working mothers' is rarely verbalised but most participants volunteered about the parental impact on their lives despite never being asked in a straight-forward way.

My mum always boasted that she was an A student… I was studying English since I knew I'd live abroad most certainly. So I was also preparing for that… All my friends studied Law or Economics. I was the only one from my class who studied Languages; back then it wasn't that popular… I think it's because it's humanistic, rather female and not bringing money. At that period I had a perspective to become a teacher either at school or University… I had an aim to be an A student and to finish University with a Red Diploma… Yes, I got it but it's not important at all… I always wanted to work, since my mum is like that. She never sat at home. She always worked and it was a good example for me. I always wanted to work and to be among other people. You have to do something and yet it gives me financial independence. I always thought that it's interesting to go to work… For biggest part of her life she worked at University. And before that she worked as an editor… ***(Ella, HE + MSC, daughter of lecturer, HE and transport expert/entrepreneur, PTU)***

The influence of ***Ella***'s mother can be traced in several respects: working in the public sphere, valuing the workplace as a space for socializing, seeking financial independence as well as in her choice of educational profile and flexibility in professional orientation.

In conclusion, it can be said that most participants' career aspirations were high since childhood. On the one hand, investing into offspring formal and informal education was one of the key priorities in these families of Soviet knowledge workers. On the other, Perestroika and the 1990s seem to have a long-term effect on participants the vast majority of whom grew up in that period. There was a strong desire from young age to become independent from both parents and 'future husband' (***Yesenina***) and 'to live decently' (***Nina***) or 'to live better' (***Jane***), as they put it, achieving or surpassing their parent's standard of living and more importantly, 'to have stability' (***Roza***).

6.4 Creating dual-career families

In this section migrants' families of creation are analysed with a focus on partners from three perspectives. First, women's preferences for partners' characteristics are analysed. Singles' preferences for 'imagined' partners are related to narrations and data on other women's 'real' partners. Second, partners' backgrounds are explored from an educational and occupational perspective. Third, support from partners in the processes of settling and career-making in the UK is explored. Ideas and practices of citizenship and homeownership are analysed elsewhere (see 5.4) and conceptualised as part of settling process. Support can take many forms such as familiarising with the local culture *through* a partner, working in the same sphere *with* their partner and 'postponing' career entry *thanks to* a partner. The aim of this

section is to appreciate the processes of building a relationship and creating a dual career family as the outcome of strategic thinking and to establish the role partners play in participants' careers. All three themes represent a new terrain in migration studies. The outcome of this analysis also affords to ask whether participants create families similar to those of their parents.

Matching 'imagined' and 'real' partners

To start with, we have to consider the relationships and marital status of participants. By the time of interview, 13 women were married either to FSU (4) or non-FSU men (9). Older women are more likely to be married to FSU men, particularly if they moved to the UK together. Around one third of participants are divorced but view favourably the idea of remarrying. Among those who have not created families there are both singles and those currently in a relationship. Two women said that they prefer to build same-sex relationships. It is noteworthy that one of them has tried to create a family with British men twice, both attempts ending in divorce. It is also worth noting that among women with children there is only one single mother. Overall, women express positive views on family as institution and practice. They all state to have plans to set up a family as soon as they 'meet a decent man' as ***Margo*** put it. She is also one of few who explicitly employ a 'professionals' discourse to formulate her preferences:

*I tried to depict an ideal man in my mind and couldn't make it, it's all blurred… You know I realised that I've never had a Russian boyfriend though I'm Russian. Even in Russia my boyfriend was Armenian, the one who helped me with my own business. I don't think nationality plays any role; the main thing for me whether he is humane. It could be an English man, but I was always attracted by family-oriented men, with family values as Italians, Turks, Armenians; they are good with children… A professional man who knows his work attracts me. Often I didn't pay attention to someone, but when I saw him working my eyes opened, I could see him in another light. I just love to see when a person knows his business and makes it with confidence... He can be a professional in any field really. 'Professional' is a very good word, so even if he is a professional fitness trainer that could attract me; he doesn't necessarily have to be a politician… You know he would hardly be lost in this, he can grow professionally, he might even change spheres of work and jobs, but he is a professional. (**Margo, single, renting room, Golders Green**)*

Other narrations also suggest that there are different forms of support in making careers (business in ***Margo***'s case) both in the region and in the UK.

Many women stress their preference for a 'family-oriented men' for whom family is important. Their 'an ideal man' is also described as someone with whom they could have children. Often 'having family' is equated with 'having children' and an ideal man 'should be a good father and not just a good husband' as ***Kate*** said. Overall, when asked about preferences for (potential) partners, both singles and divorcées show to have a clear picture of what they were looking for. ***Sofronik*** identifies three key criteria consisting in masculinity ('being a man'), cultural proximity ('understanding my culture') and occupation ('not a barman') lenses:

Perhaps, my one big strategy for all my life is to meet my love, to have children and a good family. This is my strategy for the future… The main thing for a man is to be a man: he has to know what he wants. Sometimes for me it's hard to make decisions… So make that decision for me! I need a man who knows my general picture of the world and helps me in smaller things supporting me, sharing his experience, giving an advice. It's crucial to appreciate and understand my culture. Ideally he'd speak Russian. If he is a foreigner I wouldn't say 'no'… But if I meet a man I like and he likes me and he also understands my culture, perhaps she lived in Russia at some point. That is the highest point. I've been living here and I understand English culture and I'd like him to understand mine… I would like him to have a well-paid job, a good position with career opportunities, to [pause] basically, not a barman. I think I want stability, since if I'd like to have children it has to be a man, who can provide my children. ***(Sofronik, single, renting flat with friend, Kingston upon Thames)***

Sofronik's preferences are shared by others in one form or another. Most women include 'breadwinning' responsibilities into the idea of 'being a man'. For example, ***Saule*** draws on her father as a model for 'what a man should be' while ***Olesya*** points out that a man should not be 'a rag' [a metaphor for a 'soft man']. The key characteristics of 'imagined' partners expressed by singles appear to correspond to those of the 'real' partners of married women. The largest difference among those women who married non-FSU men is that half of them point at common language and 'understanding my mentality' as a key criterion in choosing their partner while for others it does not seem important. Life stories of ***Vera*** and ***Karina*** exemplify this difference.

For some time I didn't speak any Russian at all after I moved from Kiev. I was one of the first who came from the FSU; they looked at me as if I descended from the Moon [laughing]. So I always lived, studied and worked with English people. During a year my English improved and I could do something with it. My friends are English-speaking and my boyfriends and my husband were local… I met him in London in 99 or 2000. We worked on the same juridical case; he was an advocate and I worked as a translator, I was turning a penny sometimes while studying. ***(Vera, single, divorced lawyer, MA, British citizen; owned 2 bm flat, Islington)***

My husband was born in Cyprus; he came to study in the Soviet Union in '89, but we met in 91 [in Kyiv]… He moved to the UK in '95. I didn't want to move at first but we kept our relationships. So we both moved back and

forth until 2002. This is when I moved completely… He liked everything in me, he didn't try to re-make me or to make another person out of me. So I was myself and he was OK with that; I appreciate it a lot. I know men who try to change their partners for their own sake. We didn't have those issues. He also differs from many speaking Russian being a foreigner; he understands my mentality, that's ideal… I think Ukrainian men are full of uncertainties and psychological problems and foreign men are more stable, open-minded in life and communication. ***(Karina, married to entrepreneur, HE, Cyprus/British citizen; owned 2 br house, Luton)***

Significantly these participants shared very similar characteristics in all other respects. By the time of interviews they were circa 45 year old and had one child. They both have moved from Kiev to London, in 1991 and during 2001-2003 respectively. Both had senior positions earning between around sixty thousand pounds a year.

Many women appreciate the opportunity to 'be myself' with their partners. Some women point out that they preferred 'foreign men' since they are more 'stable', 'not that traditional' or 'more family-oriented'. Additionally, their accounts show that meeting 'foreign' partners often took place in education- or work-related contexts either in the region (6 cases) or the UK (6 cases). Some used dating websites while living in London (3 cases).

Data suggests that these women prefer to create families either with 'Western' or FSU men, although this is rarely articulated in open terms. Some show interest in 'our but westernised' men (***Vera*)**.Women who show interest in 'non-European men' add that 'he should respect our culture' (***Olesya***). Overall, participants are more likely to build relationships with EU citizens (an Australian and a USA citizen are also to be found among partners).

Some women identified themselves and their FSU partners as 'Europeans'. ***Roza,*** who has been married first to a Russian and then to an Italian, said: 'I could never marry a person from another civilisation, I prefer Europeans.'[33] Language and 'cultural proximity' proves to be an important factor for matching with partners in the UK. In four cases of 'mixed' marriages with CEE migrants of first or second generation; two are Bulgarian citizens (2) who speak Russian. Two other women are married to British men of Jewish origin whose ancestors flew from 'our lands'. A more complete picture of their partners is offered by their education and occupation backgrounds which are explored in the next section.

Partners' education and occupation

Data on partners' backgrounds show that in most cases these women build relationships and create families with 'knowledge workers' (see Table 2). Their partners work in the following jobs: IT engineer (3), trade analyst, credit analyst, fraud and risk analyst, user interface designer, magazine journalist, trade union officer, marketing researcher, finance executive director, radio presenter, natural resources engineer and music producer. All represent 'analytical' and/or so called 'creative' jobs in private sectors of the economy. Some of the partners occupied mid-range to high-level managerial positions, working in finance, manufacturing or consultancy companies. Some 'other' cases in terms of occupation and employment status are also present: these are, respectively, a construction foreman, a self-employed restaurant supplier, a casino owner and a media investor. Only in two cases partners display a less successful and troubled employment track record[34]. The latter suggests that women from the region can be more adaptable to British labour markets than their FSU partners, particularly if they move together to the UK at a later stage in life. In terms of partner's occupation and level of education one case looks exceptional[35].

All partners except one possess tertiary education. This seems to confirm that the level of education plays an important role among the criteria these women share for finding partners, although it is rarely verbalised. ***Vera*** who used to be married to a lawyer (British citizen) briefly notes: 'He has to be highly educated; he must be, if not – what to do with him?' ***Zoriana*** expressed her doubts regarding having a HE degree as a necessary requirement to achieve a 'decent living'. Her point of reference is her father's successful story at changing from a mere mechanic into an entrepreneur. ***Zoriana***, instead, being one of four participants who did not have a HE degree, claims that she 'sacrificed' her 'career for family happiness' and therefore 'finished University as an undergraduate' (in Nikolayev). However, she is still married to a highly educated man (IT engineer, Bulgarian citizen). Few women have married to 'Western' men with a lower level of education (4 cases) or those who originate from a family perceived as being of 'slightly lower' social status:

It seems to me my family [in Russia] is middle. They live normal in Russia. My mum is an engineer-geodesist by education; my father is engineer-metallurgist by education. They are rather the middle, as the majority of people… My husband's family is slightly lower socially, since his mother was alone with two children. She didn't have some serious profession; she didn't finish University after she got pregnant; so she was doing what she could get access to. ***(Anjela, married to trade analyst, HE + MSc, Bulgarian citizen, renting 2br flat, Willesden Green)***

Moreover, cases where partners enjoyed lower social status, absence of HE degree or career stagnation show high chances of divorce (3 cases). As for partners who originated from the FSU, they were highly educated and usually came from families of highly educated urban professionals similar to the participants' ones. This case is quite representative in this respect:

My husband's mother is paramedic and his father works at mayor's office in Cahul [Moldova]… His brother is a public prosecutor… Yes, he lives there… If to divide the middle class into three we are in the first one here, the lower middle ***(Diana, married to IT lead, HE, Moldovan/Romanian citizen, owned 2br house, Reading)***

Clearly, most of these women tend to create families with highly educated professionals. Although for some of them the partner's career starting point was not important, particularly in in British context, they do appreciate their career growth. Most women express pride in their partners in professional terms. It can be stated that participants are interested in building relationships and creating families with 'successful men'. This can be understood as a 'silenced' issue, i.e. not explicitly articulated. This attitude is well exemplified by the difficulty one participant encountered in accepting these terms to justify her own behaviour: 'I appreciate independence, stability; I don't want to say that [pause] being successful is a criterion, but preferably he would be successful, of course.' (***Jane***) The use of the word 'successful' in a narrow economic sense only become popularised in the Russian language after 1991. Therefore women rather justify their preferences by reference to family needs, motherhood practices and breadwinner's responsibilities (see 7.4).

Eliciting multi-dimensional support from partners

Support from partners represents another emergent theme in this study. It is recognized in two interconnected areas, settling down and career-making in the UK. As a starting point it is important to observe that in 12 out of 17 cases where participants acquired EU citizenship they did so by way marrying an EU citizen: UK (8), Bulgaria (2), Germany (1) and Italy (1). This occurrence could be interpreted as resulting from a strategic move on their part aimed at settling down 'in the West' more generally and specifically at gaining access to the UK labour market (see also 7.3). An additional incentive for marrying altogether is related to access to property. Research findings show that married women are more likely to live in owned properties. Those who live in own properties either share mortgage responsibilities with their husbands or join partners in their properties (see 5.3 for more details):

I think my family is the middle, perhaps lower than middle. I understand that I will never fit any of the classes in Britain. It's like to compare apples with pears, I mean both are wonderful. There are different species of apples and I am a particular species of pears and if to mix them, well we'll get apple-pear jam, I don't feel I'd like to. I know people who live in Britain for ten years; they try to become friends with British, but it doesn't work… We've got a flat in Vykhino what is on the outskirts of Moscow; it is a wonderful flat though and it's next to a park. Over here, our flat is across the road from Hyde Park. Yes, it's great, but it is not thanks to me, it is related to James. ***(Alexa, married to credit analyst, MSc, USA citizen, owned 2br flat, Notting Hill)***

This narration captures very well a gendered practice of moving from a parents' into a husband's house; something shared by other participants too. At the same time it shows that some women improved their socio-economic situation in the UK thanks to their partners' social position. On this issue, ***Alice*** expresses her concern about the image of 'our' women in the UK while ***Leila*** tries to explain why 'Western men like us':

I think they all marry us with a worry. They understand that we are good, educated, but deeply inside they are afraid, since our reputation here is not good, quite many go into mock marriages. ***(Alice, married to magazine journalist, MSc, British citizen, owned 2bd flat, Hendon)***

Our women are beautiful, educated, well-mannered and they are more dependent, they are not that independent like English women. So, these men feel themselves as men with our women, if they are looking for that. ***(Leila, divorced lawyer/businessman, HE, Kazakh citizen, renting 2 br flat with daughter, Maida Vale)***

Most women have received support from their partners in career-making in direct and indirect ways. Citizenship, homeownership and adaptation practices are understood as having an indirect effect on women's careers. ***Alexa*** describes how her 'Western' husband helped her to adapt after migration by comparing her situation to 'when a child is learning to walk'.

My attitude to family changed. For example, in Russia I was absolutely self-sufficient. And when I moved everything was complicated. I had to make National Insurance Number, to register, GP, the fifth and the 10th. What was striking is how James supported me in everything. He wasn't doing anything instead of me but he helped. That was a true revelation for me. He was caring about me. It's like when a child is learning to walk; you cannot walk instead of a child and you are not pulling a child, you held the child's hand. It was like that. Around one year he was investing in me and I am awfully grateful to him that he provided me with foundation for my tranquillity. ***(Alexa, married to credit analyst, MSc, American citizen, owned 2 br flat)***

[M]y second husband comes from a city diaspora, typical middle class from North London. He had other interests but music. I learned a lot from him, he showed me London the way he knew it. He told me about contexts, culture. He told me what is accepted and what is not, but not from the point of view of those who live in 'countryside', but from the one of London's middle classes which are more 'liberal' and 'relaxed' [in English]. He told me what they like, what they do, what are their interests, what music they listen, what they

wear and so on. ***(Rita, HE, divorced both nuclear physician (MSc) and music producer (MA), British citizens, renting 1br flat, Islington)***

The idea of husbands helping with the acquisition of local cultural codes seldom emerges from the accounts; it was not a primary focus of this study. ***Rita*** worked together on several projects with her second ex-husband after she left her first one and moved to London. She is a musician and music teacher at a Russian-speaking music school for youth. In fact, several practices of direct support in professional terms are found. Overall, in ten cases the partners work in the same sphere (6) or even worked in the same company at some point in their careers (4). Only several women report that their partners planned to help them to develop professionally, however, it can be suggested that partners who work in the same field are more likely to these women in career-making. Additionally, ***Alice*** expresses the hope that her partner would help her to become an entrepreneur since he has 'already made several business plans'. Yet, several women have helped their partners in career-making. The equally important issue of partners' valuable connections for job search is addressed in 7.3.

Another example of direct impact on participants' professional lives is 'postponing career entry' in the UK. At least in eight cases women could 'postpone' their entry to the London labour markets thanks to their husband financial support during a period of up to one year. It is crucial that partners expected these women to enter employment at a later stage. In most cases 'postponing' lasted for half a year, coinciding with access to EEA family rights. Narrations suggest that the women were particularly preoccupied with avoiding jobs such 'as a waiter or a nanny' (this attitude is fully analysed in 7.2):

First half a year I worked on my English. I had an 'advanced level' [in English], I took courses in Donetsk, but my speaking wasn't great for working. So I decided to improve it while adapting to culture and making friends. I had several hours of English every day and then I worked in that school as a volunteer, since I couldn't find a job. My Ukrainian education wasn't rated well; I wasn't invited for interviews. And I didn't want to work as a waiter or a nanny since I had a HE degree. I couldn't find a decent job, since I didn't have work experience. So I started to work as a volunteer as an option; so I could put at least some local work experience into my CV. Only three years later I decided to study for Masters… Yes, he supported me in that. ***(Inna, married to executive director, HE + MBA, Ukrainian citizen, renting 1br flat, Pimlico)***

This period, defined as 'foundation for tranquillity' (***Alexa***), was strategically used for adapting to a new country and city life, improving language proficiency, building up a circle of friends, solving registration issues, and sometimes studying for an British degree. The practice of postponing employment can be interpreted as a privilege or asset. For partners this

could well represent an investment into their spouses built on the expectation that they would make 'a proper career' (***Roza***) and contribute to family budget in the near future. Therefore ***Alexa*** reports how her husband started to ask her at some point: 'When, when will you find a job at last?' She was asked whether she could be a housewife some day:

Only if I'd have lot of money or had a child, otherwise I cannot imagine myself as a housewife. You see, my husband is American and they've got a particular attitude to money, you have to… earn them. You have to, for example, his parents visited France, they visited us, they travelled across England for three weeks… We met them in France too, they just returned to California. So they are really living. They are around 70 and they are spending the money they saved all life… He says: 'Look at my parents and my sisters. They are travelling. We'll want to travel as well.' So on the one hand he is family-oriented and he doesn't push me for looking for a job to buy a house together. But we share food expenses and I am paying for all my things… I'd say he earns 3,5 times more than me. ***(Alexa, married to credit analyst, MSc, American citizen, owned 2 br flat)***

Clearly, both these women and their partners are interested in creating and sustaining dual career families (for full discussion of family budget see 7.4). Not all participants of course define their families of creation as middle-class families, but they describe their lifestyle along similar lines. It is therefore fair to conclude that in most cases participants are drawn to build relationships and create families with highly educated professionals, who are interested in supporting them in career-making. More importantly, participants create dual career families very much like their parents.

Last but not least, those women who created families in the UK are less likely to return to the region. ***Ella*** was about to return to Astana mainly for work- and family- related reasons. On the one hand, her department in an international travel agency was disbanded as part of company restructuring. On the other, her account captured both her family of origin and her imagined family of creation in the context of migration. This narration also reveals that migration is a complex process when initial plans might not coincide with what happens next.

London is a lonely city. It's hard to find friends since people are always coming and going. You feel yourself lonely also because your family is far away. Of course, if I'd have my own family here I wouldn't feel so… So far I cannot say that London is my home. Some people call and feel themselves Londoners in a year of living here. But it's a foreign city to me and perhaps it will stay so. However, today I feel myself more comfortable here than anywhere else. Maybe it's hard to get in touch with people who live here… I might always feel out of place here, but at least if I create my family I will have some set lifestyle. Perhaps I'll see everything in a different way… My mum was 'for' it and my father still cannot understand why I am here. Perhaps he thinks that it's just a phase in my life. This is what I thought when I left. I thought I'd live here for a year or two and then return… I compared life I could have at home and my life here. Well, there are pluses and minuses both there and here… If I wouldn't leave perhaps I'd work at that mining company for a year and then would change

it. I'd move to another company at least… I suppose that it will get better, the country is developing, but it's hard to say, I didn't go there for long [four years]… There are many factors; family factor is the main one. If situation improves in Kazakhstan it might be one of the factors [for return], but not the decisive one… I talk to my mum very often… First it was a financial reason, and now I don't really want to go there, but I think I'll go there in the nearest future. I'll see if I can stay there and return forever… Today I feel it's about 40% that I will return. ***(Ella, single, renting room, Finsbury Park)***

6.5 Summary and discussion

Although family dimension was not conceptualised within the initial research design it turned out to be a very useful analytical lenses for understanding migrants' life and career strategising. Findings delivered in this chapter support the argument for the significance of relating individual stories to 'family histories' which have to be put into 'the historical context' (Miller 2000). Meanwhile, 'putting' migrants' stories into the context of their families contributes to critique of conceptualising migrants as 'homo economicus' (Arango 2004). Strong connections with families of origin reveal migrants' high level of 'self-reflexivity that relies on their double orientation to the values and outlooks of the country of origin and of immigration' (Nowicka 2015: 22). However, mainstream migration studies remain 'family-blind' and more generally 'social reproduction-blind'. Family-related migration is marginalised despite the fact that it is the dominant mode of legal entry to the EU (Kofman 2004). It is also overlooked in skilled migration studies (Kofman 2012).

Overall, region/country/family-of-origin perspective is under-developed in migration studies (Guveli et al. 2014: 5-8). It can be added that often it is reduced to studying migrants' social networks, ethnicity, remittances and practices of care. Recent conceptualisation of social reproduction framework in migration studies (Locke et al. 2013; Kofman & Raghuram 2015: 1-17) call for related empirical studies. This study contributes to these elaborations and to understanding of the multiple connections between the worlds of production and reproduction in the context of migration (Truong 1996). Understanding family as a gendered inter-generational phenomenon in the context of migration (Kraler et al. 2011) enriches analysis of societal processes and transformations. The subject of family was approached from three perspectives in this study: family of origin, familial educational strategies and family of creation. Therefore the key findings are summed up and conceptualised across three lines.

First, participants originate from dual career families. Their parents had tertiary education; two thirds of them have higher education degrees. In most cases parents belonged to a particular social group of Soviet *spetsyalisty* (knowledge workers). In some cases they belonged to autonomous/strategic professional groups in USSR. So, participants' parents were neither factory workers nor *kolkhozniki* (Soviet collective farmers), who composed the biggest part of Soviet society. But they also did not belong to *nomenklatura* or Soviet elite (with two exceptions), who had access to all state assets and turned into post-Soviet elite (Lane 2013). Soviet knowledge workers which included so called 'Soviet intelligentsia' represented around a quarter of Soviet workers by the end of 1980s. (Samchenko 1993) However, defining their offspring as 'middling' on the basis of their family origin seems to be too simplistic (Conradson & Latham 2005) with this group of migrants.

Socio-economic position of migrants' families of origin calls for further research. It turned out to be not an easy subject for studying because of its complexity and sensitivity which are mainly related to transformations in post-socialist societies (Feldmann 2006; Ashwin 2006). Parents' educational and occupational backgrounds are close to those of the middle classes in the West, but not necessarily their lifestyle and socio-economic position. Participants' claimed that their families used to be 'average' and remained so under Transition. Most of them experienced some kind of upward and/or downward social mobility post-1991. Only some of them improved considerably their socio-economic position during Transition while some others fell down drastically, particularly in the 1990s. It can be stated though that these families somewhat adapted to Transition from planned to market economy. In fact, they were quite successful in living under so called 'crony capitalism' (Peev 2002) or 'wild capitalism' in new neo-liberal times (Lane 2002; Upchurch, 2011, 2015). This study shows that they built on different forms of capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1986) accumulated in Soviet times, particularly the cultural one, which can be converted into other forms of capital.

Second, the influence of parents on their offspring in terms of educational aspirations, achievements and qualifications is strong. Therefore, the framework elaborated for social class reproduction in Western societies seems to be applicable for educational strategies of families of (post)Soviet knowledge workers (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990). However, a regional specifics has to be acknowledged in several respects. Participants' mothers were more likely to be highly educated than their fathers. It is not surprising since higher education became more widespread and feminised phenomenon since the 1960s in USSR. As the result, for instance, by 1988 around 40% of research workers were women. (Ashkhamaphova 2011)

This finding suggests that higher education is perceived as a norm by participants in contrast to some other women migrants in London who were victims of 'restrictive femininity' (Erel 2015). Meanwhile, Perestroika and early 1990s were a turning point for participants' families in socio-economic and professional terms. Many families had to invent different surviving strategies during challenging and unstable the 1990s (Clarke 1997). Nevertheless, most of participants' parents stayed in or returned to their occupations while those who reoriented themselves continued to work in the same fields or switched to other 'white-collar' jobs.

In this context investing into offspring formal and informal education turned into one of the key priorities in families of knowledge workers in 'new times'. Participants were brought up with the idea of becoming independent from both their parents and future husbands mainly through career-making. Getting HE degrees seemed to be a logic step for that (29 out of 33 of participants are highly educated). Growing up under Transition had a big impact on these women's attitudes to education, work and occupation as well as their career strategising (see Chapter 7). Migration itself turned into one of strategies for building more stable family lives in the West after 'crazy 90s' in the region. At the same time limited data on participants' grandparents, parents and siblings and their narrations suggest that we are dealing with families of professionals in a second or third generation. It could be called social reproduction of knowledge workers.

So, for the majority acquiring qualifications was part of a family tradition and strategising for getting access to 'prestigious jobs' (see 7.2). Yet, the power of marketisation and expansion of higher education system in the region as well as trans-nationalisation of education and labour markets do not have to be underestimated (Weiss 2005; Zhang 2009). Therefore, further education in the UK is conceptualised as a multi-facet strategy in 7.3. It can be assumed that cultural capital initially accumulated in families of origin and enriched in educational institutions was converted into other forms of capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1986) in the process of career-making across borders. Languages, citizenship, cosmopolitanism and homeownership have been also interpreted as forms of capital (Casey & Dustman 2005; Weenweek 2007; Bauder 2008; Rerat & Lees 2010) which can be converted into economic capital via labour markets. Chapter 7 will shed light on the ways some of these forms of capital were converted into economic one within career-making in the region and the UK.

Third, participants create dual career families similar to their families of origin, however some differences are recognized. It is not surprising that women shared positive views on

family as an institution and practise. Ideologies, institutions and practices of family and labour sustained at a state level in USSR had a big impact on gendered lives post-1991 (Ashwin 2000; Engel 2004; Kay 2007) even if long-term migration brings some changes to gendered identities and practices (Jolly & Reeves 2005; Cretu 2010). It is crucial from a gender perspective that 'making a career' was a norm for participants' mothers and grandmothers. Therefore, post-Soviet women migrants did not have to 'adapt to the dual earner family norm' as some other groups of migrant women in the West (Kavli 2015) or to become 'pioneers' of this process (Leinfellner 2015). However, they are one of the first who created their families outside the region with either 'Western' or 'Westernised' men from the FSU. New created families can be called trans-national from both professional and mixed marriage perspective. This is what differentiates them from families of origin which could be 'mixed', but within regional ethnic groups.

Additionally, women migrants are active actors in choosing their partners. Moreover, it turned out that their 'real partners' fit 'the imagined' ones. Women formulated their preferences along masculinity, cultural proximity and occupation lines. Although preferences for 'highly educated' or 'professional' men were rarely articulated in most cases their partners are highly educated professionals. These women are interested in building relationships and creating families with 'successful men' which turned out to be one of the so called 'silenced' issues. Limited data on ex/partners' profiles suggest that they are more or less 'successful' in pursuing careers in different sectors of economy , mainly in London. 'Not a barman' concept can be interpreted as a tool to delineate 'successful' men from 'unsuccessful' ones in these women's eyes. Process of choosing spouses and their impact on women's careers are overlooked in migration studies. Clearly, the preferences to marry 'Western more stable men' who prefer to create families with 'more dependent' women can be partly explained by the post-Soviet crisis of masculinity (Kay 2006: 1-18). At the same time, marrying EU citizens allows migrants to convert their cultural capital into citizenship one which increases migrants' opportunities at work (Bauder 2008).

This study correlates with relevant studies on 'marriage migrants' and 'mixed families' in some respects and contradicts them in others. 'Marriage migrants' and women who 'followed' their husbands also enter British labour markets. So, the study supports a critique on overlooking 'skilled' women who migrated through non-skilled routes (Kofman 2012) as well as assuming that wives sacrifice their careers after migration (Raghuram 2004). However, migrant women can be more educated than their 'Western' partners even if they

are not ‘marriage migrants’. Additionally, in contrast to relevant studies participants had several years’ difference with their ‘Western’ partners with one exception (Niedomysl 2010). The next Chapter will demonstrate that these women did not prioritise home sphere over career-making as some East European women in the UK (Csedo 2009). Overall, findings resonate with a discourse of continuity and change in the world of family in the post-socialist countries (Rajkai 2014) which is discussed in 7.5 in the context of changing gender orders.

Finally, this study correlates with the argument that a decision to migrate might be influenced by family strategising ‘even in the case of young, single, childless migrants’ and that ‘family’ should be understood ‘in the broadest’ sense in migration studies (Ryan et al. 2008). However, the impact of partners on life and work experiences in the context of migration is overwhelmingly ignored while diversification of family strategies across class lines is not recognized. Study shows that these women and their partners are interested in creating and sustaining dual career families. Partners supported them in both settling in the UK and career-making in direct and indirect ways. Women’s ‘postponing’ career entry in the UK, for example, can be interpreted as a long-term strategy these families use to strength their social position in future. These families are privileged enough not to enter any job ‘just for earnings.’ It differs them from many other groups of migrants who are often cannot escape low-paid and low-skilled jobs, even from the same region (Cretu 2010).

Dual-career families have attracted attention of some researchers’ mainly working within transnational perspective in migration studies. Although transnationalism proved to be a useful theoretical frame and methodological tool (Wimmer & Glick-Schiller 2003; Amelina et al. 2013) it has to be applied with caution in both migration studies (Nowicka 2006; Levitt & Jarowsky 2007) and family-focused migration studies (Poster & Prosad 2005; Cieslik 2012; Ho 2013; Haagsman & Mazzugato 2014). In general, there is a need for more critical reflections on ‘trans-national turn’ across humanities and social sciences. (Kitiarsa 2010; Macdonald 2013). Over-using a transnational approach in understanding migration processes leads to a downplaying of national and regional processes. Therefore, migrants’ dual-career families of creation are not seen through social reproduction lenses while trans-national social reproduction of knowledge workers is overlooked in migration studies.

To conclude, this study shows that family and migration influence each other in multiple ways. Migrants as most human beings are grounded into both families of origin and families of creation. Family-of-origin and family-of-creation perspective proved to be a fruitful

analytical tool for understanding post-Soviet women professionals' life and career strategies which transcend borders. The fact that almost all highly educated women who originate from families of Soviet 'spetsialisty' build relationships and create families with highly educated professionals suggests that it is not just part of life strategising. It is part of social class reproduction which opens up one of most plausible directions for further research (see 8.3). Putting together findings on families of origin, familial educational strategies and families of creation crystallises understanding that we are dealing with social reproduction of knowledge workers and dual career families across time and space. It represents one of the key contributions to knowledge, mainly in the areas of migration, class and post-Soviet studies. To have a more complete picture about this group of migrants in London their transborder career trajectories are explored in the final empirical Chapter.

CHAPTER 7

TRANS-BORDER CAREER TRAJECTORIES UNDER FOCUS

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this Chapter is to explain trans-border careers in the case of post-Soviet women professionals working in London. The focus is on 'the researched' as professionals in-the-making and their trans-border career strategising, i.e. about *why* and *how* careers are made. Career strategising is rarely explored in gendered migration studies (see also 2.2). This process is studied here from three inter-related perspectives: 1) work-related values, objectives and expectations 2) resources or 'success factors' in career-making 3) ideas and practices aimed at combining familial and professional life. Both work-related and family-related values are conceptualized as formative for participants' career strategies and posited as key determinants of their careers. Therefore, the Chapter begins by analysing work values and expectations with a focus on the idea of 'prestigious' jobs while the last section analyses ideas and practices of living between family and work.

The career trajectory approach represents an analytical tool for understanding labour histories and professional paths in the social sciences (see 2.2 and 4.1). For the purpose of this study, career trajectories are analysed both at the level of practices and meanings seen as interlinked. Therefore, work experiences and strategies are explored alongside the meanings which participants assign to them. It is worth noting that this Chapter does not aim at categorizing migrants on the basis of their career trajectories or the elaboration of a typology of career trajectories. Instead it should crystallise common tendencies in working lives of a particular group of women migrant professionals minimising arguments about diversity of stories and identities (see 2.3 and 4.4 for justification of this approach). It aims at understanding whether participants pursue trans-border career trajectories in the first place.

The Chapter consists of four sections, following key moments identified in the trajectories of participants. First, an analysis of accounts referring to initial and subsequent work experiences across borders is presented. Concepts of 'prestigious' jobs emerge as primary goal and guiding criteria for career-making. This approach is also used to assess career progression. In the subsequent section, six key factors or resources affecting career entry and progression in London are discussed: access to formal work, language capital, pre-UK work

experience, (over)education, valuable connections and post-Soviet backgrounds. These 'success factors' are equally relevant for career-making in the region; however, due to space constraints the focus is on career development in London. Finally, the issue of combining familial and working lives is analysed through the prism of 'the golden mean' for family and work. Work-life balance is reconsidered though the ideas and practices of respondents of managing housework, parenthood and the family budget. Women's attitudes to family as well as their ideas and practises of combining 'doing family' with 'doing career' are investigated to have a more complete picture of their lives beyond careers. It might initiate debates on continuity and change of post-Soviet gender order on the move (see 2.4). In the last section the key findings are summed up and discussed in the context of relevant literature and secondary data.

7.2 'Prestigious' jobs: career entry and progress 'there' and 'here'

Findings from this research indicate that both work-related values and initial work experiences have far-reaching consequences for trans-border careers. Therefore this section focuses on women's initial work experiences 'there' and 'here'. It then evaluates the connection between their educational and professional backgrounds across time and space. Do participants pursue trans-border careers? Are their work expectations met across borders? 'There' refers to work experiences in the post-Soviet region and in several cases in third countries. 'Here' refers to work experiences in the UK, mainly in London. Data on participants' first and last jobs in the region and in the UK are presented in Table 2. The concept of 'prestigious' jobs which forms the core of participants' work-related values is explained in their own words. Their narrations uncover both work-related values and work experiences 'there' and 'here'.

Conceptualizing 'prestigious' jobs[36]

The idea of prestigious jobs was articulated by most participants in one form or another. ***Zina*** pointed it out as a key discriminating concept in 'our people's minds': '…And then our people divide jobs into prestigious and non-prestigious. They don't understand that while you are doing your qualification you can make pastry. And then you move up. Oliver [her

husband] started as a driver.' She also gave two examples of non-prestigious jobs and related prestigious ones to formal education. The latter is verbalised by others in different contexts:

Back then it cost around £200 per year [education, Kazakhstan], quite affordable... Yes, I lived with parents [while studying]… Even those who work are studying part-time… Perhaps, it is not a guarantee, but at any rate you hope for a prestigious job in future… I'd say that 60% of my classmates did not go for studying at University… Now the economic situation has improved and some parents can afford to send their children to study abroad. ***(Ella, events & meetings coordinator, FT, £22K)***

*I don't know about other Soviet Republics, but those Russian families which orientate their children towards the West are intelligent families. Roughly speaking they are recognising the fall of our country and are looking for development opportunities… What we are doing here is already regarded as success there, since we cling somehow to a foreign country. We are doing some not very well paid but prestigious jobs, and in England! Perhaps, we are achieving much less than our parents in Soviet times, but it's our personal achievement. So they can tell their friends that I am in England, that everything goes well. (****Annet, arts cataloguist, FT, £15600****)*

So, prestigious jobs, as pointed out by ***Annet***, are not necessarily associated with high pay. This is seen as desirable, but not essential by most women. Findings about career trajectories are consistent with this attitude. However, there is a common understanding that over time prestigious jobs can lead to 'successful' careers and high earnings. Even unemployed ***Kate*** ultimately stated: 'If you are a professional or an expert sooner or later you would be paid well'. Entering low-paid jobs can be seen as temporary tactics to enter the labour markets, particularly in the UK as well as exclusion from better paid jobs on the basis of discrimination or 'under-qualified' status (***Anjela***). Yet, some women shared the idea that senior positions and well-paid jobs require 'more responsibilities' (***Diana***) and may lead to 'overwork' (***Nina***). This is what ***Karina*** meant when she said: 'It's important that I don't work for 50 hours, in that case it's better not to work.'

Although most participants are not satisfied with their earnings they reproduce the idea of having a 'decent wage'. Some of them express essentialist views on women who 'should not earn too much, otherwise they don't need men' (***Nina***). It is worth noting that some women had quite 'successful' careers in the FSU and were paid better 'there' than 'here', particularly at the very beginning of their careers in London. There is little sign of regret for it in their accounts. The issue of de-skilling in the context of migration is fully addressed in 7.3. Available data on earnings in the UK suggest that about half of participants have worked in low-paid jobs at first while the other half had 'average' wages in British terms from the very

beginning. Given the choice, for most participants it is more desirable to have 'not very well-paid but prestigious jobs' (***Annet***) rather than to have better paid but non-prestigious ones. It means that for them the nature of work is more important than earnings per se.

How do participants define their jobs in relation to the 'prestigious' versus 'non-prestigious' divide? The two following accounts exemplify the transition from non-prestigious jobs to prestigious ones from a participant's perspective. In ***Eva's*** account we can recognise the impact of significant others in discriminating between prestigious (secretary to a CEO and economic manager here) and non-prestigious (shop floor assistant here) jobs.

We were five in the shop [1st job, Sumy] and about 120 employees in the second company… Relationships were good in the first workplace, but I didn't see the bosses often. I knew that I didn't have any chances for development, that's why it was temporary for me.… No, I left, since I grew up from that position, I don't know. There was an egregious story. When I studied at Ukrainian school we had Russian language and literature. The teacher was a very intelligent woman and an interesting personality, we had great relationships. So, when I worked at that shop, she came in... I greeted her and she exclaimed: 'Are you here? With your speech?' I felt so embarrassed. I thought: 'In fact, what am I doing here?' I deserve something better… No, in that company I was an economic manager, but I entered as a secretary to a CEO [2nd job, Sumy]… Yes, they were looking for a secretary and gave me a job on the day of interview. They understood they employed not just as a secretary. ***(Eva, project manager, FT, £25K)***

Ella's case is equally significant (see her career trajectory in App. III). The very first job she had in the UK after completing MSc in Tourism Management was a weekend job in a shop in Hendon, London. In two months she started to combine it with a leisure consultant job in a travel agency in Farnborough. However, she did not see working in a shop as 'work experience' and considered her 'first job' in the agency as her first job 'here'. Non-prestigious jobs are treated as temporary income-generating ones without career prospects which participants 'cannot even put into CV' (***Margo***). They also reflect a common idea that working in sales or retail is 'not respectful' (***Alexa***) or that you can only do it 'if there is nothing better' (***Roza***). Such connotation relate to negative associations with *chelnochestvo* experience by their families of origin in the 1990s (see 5.3). In fact, all women who worked in sales 'there' or 'here' moved out of this sphere over time. Finally, ***Ella*** expressed appreciation of working at 'more or less' known company, what was seconded by others.

It can be any job at a good company, which is well-known. If you sell shoes it's nothing and I started to work in Mothercare. If you've got brains you will learn everything. Only the language stopped me. Not working, but talking… I looked for any job to develop the language. I didn't understand anything first [smiling]. My husband told me: 'You have to get a job where they talk'. ***(Ada, customer manager, FT, £28K)***

Ada is the only participant who has made a career in a retail company; however she has used it as a labour market entry 'here'. After a round of interviews she started to work as an assistant in customer service and worked mostly as a part-time customer manager for eight years with a half a year-long break, when she was 'looking for [her]self'. Over time she moved into customer service in a British multinational company, where her partner works as a Trade Union official. This case also correlates with findings in 6.4.

The idea that desirable jobs should entail 'talking' but 'not working' [physically] is also widely shared. So, prestigious jobs are not 'physical' or 'manual' jobs. In most cases women show reluctance at discussing experience of non-prestigious jobs particularly if they included 'physical' tasks, which suggests they perceived them as unpleasant or even shameful experiences, even if they were student jobs. For example, ***Laura*** had two part-time jobs in Karaganda before having full-time ones. She worked 'in the kitchen' on summer holidays and did tutoring when studying at University. In contrast to sharing enthusiastically her memories about tutoring she could only speak a few words about her work 'in the kitchen'. In fact, all women who first had 'manual' jobs later moved to office jobs, even if they were paid less and jobs were precarious. ***Jane***, a senior hairstylist, is the only participant who would like to combine a 'mental' job with a 'manual' one (wedding hair-ups on weekends). By the time of the second interview she completed an MSc in Digital Marketing and was an internship in a relevant field. It should be pointed out that almost all participants worked in offices except four self-employed, two of whom are entrepreneurs.

Finally, the following accounts exemplify which occupations participants consider 'professional'. So called typical jobs for female labour migrants in care, cleaning and catering are not considered 'professional', also because they often are 'without contract' (***Anjela***). So, 'professional' or 'office' jobs are expected to provide 'formal' employment. ***Angela*** was asked whether she ever worked informally while ***Diana*** reflects on occupations taken up by migrants she met in London:

No, I've never worked informally. I think that normal work cannot be without contract, yes? Normal in my understanding; perhaps it helps someone, but I think that work without a contact is a nanny's work or some housework. I don't consider it for myself, I didn't study to have tha;, it should be at least office work. And office work most probably means contract. I don't think that I can be offered some office work without a contract. ***(Angela, marketing researcher, PT, 15£ p.h.)***

I know some who work in City, economists, there is one who does recommendations for Peru, she did PhD here. I know someone from Russia who is doing 'research' [in English] here. I know someone who worked as a waiter, but now she is a 'professional' at any rate… It took her two years, now she works professionally and gets a good salary… Perhaps we know less about the others. There was an interesting blog 'Moldova UK', it's closed down now, but they promised to re-launch it. I looked at 'where you live', 'where you work' as a 'subject'. There were many people living in different places and doing different jobs, even qualified doctors. ***(Diana, IT tester, FT, £28K)***

So, participants differentiate themselves from other groups of migrants on the basis of occupation. Yet, **Diana** points out that it is not uncommon for migrants to have jobs below or not related their qualifications. It raises the issue of de-skilling among these women as well.

In summary, prestigious jobs are defined as 'professional', 'decent', 'good', 'normal', 'intellectual', 'formal', 'office' and 'respectful' in participants' eyes, but they are not necessarily highly paid. Often they are white-collar jobs with career prospects similar to the ones their parents held in the region (see 6.2). For all these reasons, career entry is considered by most women as entering 'prestigious' jobs. Meanwhile, non-prestigious jobs are treated as a temporary source of earnings which cannot be 'put into a CV'. Most participants entered prestigious jobs in the region; however half of them struggled with accessing them after migration. Therefore, moving from non-prestigious to prestigious jobs can be understood as strategising around work-related values and available resources or 'success factors' in London which are explored in detail in 7.3. First the following questions are addressed: What are participants' career trajectories? Do they make trans-border careers?

Connecting educational and professional backgrounds across borders

As we know from section 6.3 all participants completed tertiary education. Most of them have higher education degrees from the region in the following fields (listed from most to least common): Foreign Languages and Translation (7), Economics (4), Finance and Banking (4), Psychology (3), Music (2), Graphic design (1), History (1), International

Communications (1), International Relations (1), Journalism (1) and Sport education (1). Two women have degrees from third countries: ***Sveta*** who moved with her family to Israel has a BA degree in Computer Sciences (Tel-Aviv) while ***Olga*** who moved with her family to the US studied towards a PhD in Biology there. Meanwhile, ***Alexa*** has a Candidate degree in Psychology (Moscow). Three participants did not complete Candidate programmes in the region and ***Vera*** did not complete a PhD in the UK. ***Lisa*** and ***Zina*** have obtained PhD degrees. Four women have acquired tertiary education in the UK.

Seventeen women continued to study in the UK, mainly for Master Degrees (see 'further education' in Table 2). Obviously, those who have pursued academic (3 cases) or finance-related careers (3 cases) continued to study in the same fields. Yet**,** ***Sasha*** who had a HE degree in Foreign Languages (Kharkov) has gone on to complete a BA in Translation and Interpreting. However, if we look more carefully it would appear that most women went into studies related to the previous degrees. For example, ***Kira*** studied Social Psychology in Kemerovo and continued with an MSc in HRM while ***Sofronik*** completed an MSc in Corporate Communications after studying Foreign Languages in Perm'. (see their career trajectories can in App. III.) It is worth noting that most of those who continued to study in the UK studied at Business Schools. Finally, four women completed professional courses in accountancy qualifications (4) and event management (1) in London. Three participants who continued to work in Finance received ACCA qualifications.

Additionally, six cases of re-skilling through education and work are found (just one of them took place in the region). Three women did professional courses in London. It can be said that former teachers are more likely to re-skill in London what problematizes the issue of diminishing prestige and transferability of this profession across borders. Yet, three women turned into accountants, even if temporarily. Strong Soviet school education in mathematics and demand for accountants in London are among the key explanations for this reorientation. It seems that some of those who tried to re-skill deliberately use 'an occupation in reserve' (***Jane***) moving in and out jobs related to their educational profiles across borders while others have struggled to find their professional path.[37] Their accounts suggest that re-skilling in London is related to issues of transferability of knowledge, recognition of qualifications, labour market trends as well as to the more personal 'looking for self' issue (***Ada***).

Data on the first and last jobs in the region have to be summed up. Eight women have entered employment in the UK (see ***Inna***'s case as an example App. III). Others were in employment before migration. Four of them started working in Soviet times: (see data on ***Edita, Leila, Lida*** and ***Masha*** in Table 2). Most women entered a wide variety of different jobs in private sector in the 1990s or 2000s earning from 100$ to 1000$ between 1999 and 2007. The highest ones were in law, finance and coaching in Moscow. It includes six women who started work in education in schools or at universities being paid around 100-200$ between 1996 and 2008. For three of them the 'humiliating salary' was one of the main reasons for emigration: 'I was paid about 100$ at University and I had to pay half of it for a room. I felt offended: I studied for five years!' (***Alice***) This is also why two other former teachers moved into marketing and law in the region and ***Edita*** turned into a housewife in the 1990s when her husband became 'quite a successful businessman'.

Most women progressed in terms of career and pay working in large companies or in the public sector; only three women moved into other sectors or occupations over time. Six of them reached good positions (see Anjela, Karina, Kate, Masha and Zina in Table 2). Meanwhile, ***Leila*** (education abroad agency, Astana), ***Lida*** (jewellery shop, Moscow) and ***Margo*** (trade, Volgograd) had small businesses. ***Laura*** represents an interesting case in this sense. Her last job in Astana was a finance director at a Kazakh-German company (£600 p.m. in 2008) combined employment with the buy-to-let property business in 2004 which allowed her and her sister to move to London, at first just on an English language course (see a transcript excerpt of interview with ***Laura*** in App. II). Others display more modest achievements. It has to be emphasised that all participants' jobs before migration were more or less directly related to their initial educational profiles. For example, ***Sofronik*** and ***Ella*** (Foreign Languages) worked respectively as personal assistant to a foreign person in Moscow and a leisure consultant in tourism (see App. III for more details). Initially it would appear that ***Yesenina*** (Practical Psychology) and ***Diana*** (Banking) represent the only cases of mismatch between education and last jobs before migration. However, the first applied her knowledge in marketing within banking sphere while the second switched to an IT job within a finance-related sector.

Participants can be grouped on the basis of their first jobs in London: 1) Some women started with manual precarious jobs (in several cases in the informal sector) in hotel and catering (6 cases) or care (1 case). Between 2002 and 2007, these 'low-skilled' or 'unskilled' jobs were

paid from £4 to £10 an hour. Some took up student part-time jobs or seasonal work for foreign students at first. 2) Others started with part-time precarious non-manual work such as volunteers for charity organizations (3 cases) or receptionists (4 cases). They were paid up to £10 per hour between 2004 and 2010. 3) Half of women entered 'prestigious' jobs, though not always permanently employed, either during or after completing their education in the UK (8 cases), as work permit holders (6 cases) or EEA family members (3 cases). It includes three cases of paid internships. The fact that 'students' and 'work permit holders'[38] are more represented in this group suggests that they are more likely to start with better jobs in London. Over time 'students' turned into work permit holders or EEA family members.

The big question is: Were participants de-skilled in London? About half of the participants started with jobs they considered prestigious or what are considered skilled jobs (mainly group 3). At the same time, there are seventeen cases of what can be considered de-skilling following arrival in the UK (mainly in groups 1 and 2). De-skilling is understood as affecting those who work below their level of qualification as well as those who work in jobs not related to their education (see 2.2). Although there can be cases of professional closure, employers' exploitation and discrimination on the basis of nationality and gender, de-skilling is explained through deficit in resources or 'success factors' in 7.3. At this stage analysis of findings reveals three major developments. First, most cases in the 3rd group display a connection between either pre-migration careers or educational backgrounds and the initial jobs in London. For example, ***Edita*** (HE in Sport Education) joined a team working in patient public involvement at NHS after BA in Public health. ***Zina*** combined seminar tutoring with private tutoring when she was doing her PhD. Second, there is no connection between educational backgrounds and the first jobs in London in the 1st and 2nd groups, except for ***Yesenina***'s case. Third, most of those who went into manual jobs in London did not have any pre-migration work experience, did not know English well or did not have access to formal jobs. Therefore, the case of highly educated ***Ada*** (Economics, Chisinau) who was recruited as assistant manager in a retail company looks exceptional. She had neither pre-migration work experience nor British qualifications; however she had 'satisfactory English' and restricted access to formal work. She also had read 'My first job interview' and was trained by her partner, trade union official, before the very first job interview in her life took place.

If we look at participants' initial and last jobs and workplaces in London some trends are clear. Among those who started with 'prestigious' or skilled jobs there are both those who

experienced and those who did not experience upward mobility within sector/occupation/workplace. It is crucial that almost all who were de-skilled after migration have improved their position over time. These includes three women who successfully re-skilled through education and work. Additionally, two women were in the process of re-skilling. At the time of the last interviews participants were employed in the following in different organizations mainly on full-time basis: project managers (British charity organization, NHS, conference organizing company), financial assistant managers (British architecture company, global hospitality company, Russian oil company), HR managers (British recruiting company, international brokerage company, British railway company), senior manager and tax consultant (BIG4), administration officers (investment banks) and lecturers (Business Schools). Other cases include: post-doctoral fellow in laboratory, network officer at non-profit international organization, reporter for international news agency, meetings and events coordinator in an international travel agency, technical lead in a transnational software company, arts cataloguist for a Russian art gallery, senior clinical scientist in a private clinic, R&D coordinator in a small e-learning services firm, regional manager for a British luxury interior design firm and IT tester at an European finance service provider. Most participants work in international, European or British companies. Only some women work in public sector (3), charity (2) or non-profit (1) organizations. Although only six women worked in businesses related to the FSU, it is worth noting that seventeen women have exploited their post-Soviet and Russian-speaking backgrounds in career-making or entrepreneurship (see 7.3 for more details).

It is found that eight women were self-employed or small entrepreneurs; three of them have only British qualifications. These are either in the creative industries, such as graphic design, fashion design, film-making and music. ***Leila*** has her international education agency in Astana and is registered as self-employed in the UK. However, a tendency out of self-employment is identified, particularly for younger women. Some of them try to become company employees, particularly post-2008.[39] It can be stated that post-Soviet women prefer to be employees rather than self-employed or entrepreneurs. In the face of diminishing social security, 'stable earnings' are important to them (see further discussion in 7.5).

By the time of the last interviews two women were on maternity leave and one was unemployed and registered as her partner dependent after her two year post-study work visa expired.[40] In terms types of contract most women have full-time jobs, but only nine of them

have permanent positions. Only ***Ada*** and ***Inna*** are part-time employees and this can be seen as a conscious choice when their partners are the main breadwinners. ***Inna*** explains: 'it is the same but you earn less and you have more free time for yourself, classes, hobbies and so on.' (see 7.4 for a full discussion on family budget). Overall, fifteen women who are in their mid- and late thirties have managerial jobs or senior positions. Finally, participants' earnings range from £25 to £60 thousand per year. Most of them earn around £25-30 thousand per year.

Eight participants out of 35 did not work before migration to the UK, including four women who studied for tertiary degrees only in the UK. Do others pursue trans-border careers? Surprisingly enough quite many women (20 out of 27) are making careers in the sectors/occupations/fields they entered in home or third countries (2 cases**)**. Work visa holders (6 cases) are not the only examples of a clear trans-border connection in careers. Moreover, most women develop careers consistent with degrees from the FSU or with re-skilling through education in London (4 cases). Most of those who do not work in jobs related to their trans-border educational profiles express their intention to do so in the future. Some of them are already working towards this end: ***Alexa***'s case is a very representative in this respect.[41] So, seven women work in jobs not related to their pre-migration employment, including cases of re-skilling. (see further discussion on re-skilling in 7.5)

In summary, almost all participants are employed in prestigious or skilled jobs in London; three women returned to their home cities and one woman was unemployed. Most of them have progressed in terms of position and pay over time. It seems that migration to the UK has fulfilled their work-related values and expectations. However, very few express satisfaction with their income and working hours, mainly because 'London is an expensive city' (***Margo***) and 'it is impossible to meet the targets on time' (***Nina***). It can be concluded that the vast majority of participants pursue trans-border careers since in most cases there is a connection between their educational backgrounds and occupations across borders. In several other cases an indirect link between work experiences 'there' and 'here' can be traced (see next section). Yet, many women have experienced de-skilling during the first years in the UK (17 cases), doing jobs below their educational qualification or not related to their pre-UK backgrounds. How did they make it? The next section will shed light on strategising around the key 'success factors' for career-making in London, what includes the ways out of de-skilling.

7.3 Career-making in London: Six 'success factors'

Six key factors affecting participants' career trajectories in London are identified: access to formal work, language capital, 'Western' education, pre-UK work experiences, valuable connections and post-Soviet backgrounds. Findings suggest that access to formal work and English proficiency are essential resources for career entry in the UK. Meanwhile, pre-UK work experiences and local qualifications are significant for both career entry and progression in the UK. Finally, valuable connections and post-Soviet backgrounds represent additional mechanisms for career-making in London. Participants are strategising around these resources, forms of capital or mechanisms which are conceptualised here as 'factors of success' which differentiate this group of migrants from the less privileged ones. They also reflect structural changes in the world of work (see 2.1 and 3.4) as well as inequalities existing on national, regional and global scales (see 2.2 and 7.5 for further discussion). This study shows that a combination of these 'factors of success' not only guarantees access to decent jobs, but also facilitates their career development. Overall, the more 'success factors' women migrant professionals can accrue the easier it is for them to make careers 'here'. A tendency of moving from 'available' to 'better' jobs in London is explained through strategising around these resources on later stages in careers, if not on earlier ones. Narrations reveal cases of successful building on 'factors of success' as well as cases of failure to capitalise on them what results into limited career strategising.

Unlimited and restricted access to formal jobs (essential)

Access to formal work is dependent on the following issues: the right to live/work in the UK, restricted right to work, the need of work visa and work permit limitations. The first issue is the least relevant for this group of migrants. The vast majority of participants have acquired the right to live and work in the UK (see Ch.6). Two participants who were undocumented for several years worked informally in London (see 6.3). ***Noa*** worked in catering while ***Alice*** used to be a care worker. These cases corroborate many studies which reveal that undocumented women migrants are often relegated to 'female' low-paid low-skilled jobs in informal sector. After 'legalisation' both studied in London and moved into other occupations. ***Noa*** has become a freelance filmmaker, while ***Alice*** re-skilled into an event

organizer. ***Alice***, one of five women who were interviewed in 2009, points out how access to education is one of the key benefits of 'being legal' in the UK:

You can always find a job here even if you are an illegal. Now it's harder though; they check documents and languages. Documents were my only problem… If you've got documents you can go to different courses. You can enter some company without work experience and have 'trainings' there. They look at your potential at the interviews. If you want to stay at the company they will give opportunity to grow… I always liked to organize something, I like to be among people, it's very interesting to me… We are organizing corporate parties, sometimes working with banks… ***(Alice, self-employed event organizer/entrepreneur, £2000£ p.m.)***

Alice's labour history and career start in London differs from her sister's. ***Ada*** moved to the UK on a marriage visa: 'The contract was for two years, for as long as visa. They would like to give me a contract for longer, but they couldn't make it by legislation.' As we saw in Chapter 6, many participants either entered the UK as family-related migrants or turned into EEU family members over time and as such they do not have any restrictions to work. However, ***Ada's*** narration suggests that having either a temporary or permanent residence card might have an impact on the length of contract. This is what I call 'restricted right to work'. Another problematic situation is having access only to part-time work for full-time international students. The impact of the work visa restrictions on employability was problematized by some participants on the basis of their and their friends' experiences.

Overall, twelve women who came as full-time students could work part-time, but only half of them used this right. Others started to work full-time after receiving 2-year post-study visas with unlimited right to work. Overall, one third of participants held work permits by the time of interview, including three company transferees. The 'visa issue' (***Inna***) was also discussed in the context of return scenarios (see ***Kira's*** account in 5.4 as an example). Finally, limitations imposed by work permits are considered in relation to mobility and career development. Four women complain about being 'stuck with the company because of the visa' (***Nina***). The necessity of getting work permit and its limitations is captured very well here:

It was one of the hardest job searches in my career. It was the end of 2001 and it was crisis here plus the need of 'work permit', so I think about 90% of employers sifted me, but somehow I managed to find a job… Yes, it was an English IT company; I worked there for nine years… Well, first, 'work visa' was made for four years and I couldn't move to another firm, then they extended it for another year after which I've got ILR. You know, it was not bad at the beginning, but it got boring and I looked for another job, for quite long, for half a year… ***(Sveta, technical lead, international software company, FT, £65K)***

Language capital beyond English proficiency (essential)

As we know participants, under parental influence, had long paid a particular attention to languages and IT skills (see 6.3). Available data suggest that most of them possessed either intermediate or advanced levels of English proficiency before migration. It seems that most women had 'not brilliant, but quite good English' (***Nina***), however, they all improved or 'polished' it (***Zina***) while living and working in the UK. ***Noa*** who stayed undocumented for several years recalls: 'I had a very hard period in my life in London, if you know the language it's a strong start, it took me a while'. It is the only case when a participant could not build on both essential 'success factors', access to formal work and language proficiency. It is obvious that it is hard to live and work in any country without speaking its main language or to make a career with 'poor English' (***Edita***). It is worth noting that four women who had 'poor English' started with manual jobs in London. Those who worked as volunteers first saw it as also the opportunity 'to improve English and to communicate with locals' (***Edita***). ***Zoriana***, one of five participants who were interviewed in 2009, shared her negative experiences of working in jobs which did not require English proficiency:

They looked for assistants with languages for illegal patients from Russia and Ukraine… I know that girls work there for 13-14 hours… I remember the doctor said: 'Now we'll send the urine test to the laboratory and the lab is at a cupboard in the toilet! Basically I had 8 jobs during one year. My husband told me: 'Something is wrong with you'. I had a barrier – the language… I worked in that hotel for three weeks. I know that cleaning is not mine! It's better to sit at home. I remember my father said over the phone: 'You studied here not to clean the toilets there!' At some point I worked in a café and in a hotel, 14 hours a day, I lost 10 kg. I just came home, took shower and into bed! Then I left it. I studied English at a college and looked for another job… ***(Zoriana, finance manager assistant, global hospitality company, FT, £1100 p.m.)***

Language capital has received much attention in literature. Two issues are identified in relation to it: 1) 'English as a means' attitude and using it at work before migration; 2) improving it in British workplaces and capitalizing on 'other' languages in London. Fourteen participants report how they used English in working environments in the region (see ***Ella's*** and ***Sofronik's*** career trajectories in App. III as examples). This phenomenon can only partly be related to education in Foreign Languages (7 cases). ***Zina*** explains: 'Foreign Languages? No! English is a means, it's never been an aim; philology is boring.' In fact, only two women worked in language-related jobs in London. Obviously, many women improved their

language while working in the UK. For example, ***Kira*** reflected on how her work at a local library in Brixton helped improving her colloquial English and then on the problems she had at first with 'business English' when employed as an HR assistant in a brokerage company in Canary Wharf (see her career trajectory in App. III). Finally, most participants know three or four languages and professionals with a diverse language capital appear to be in high demand in such global city as London.

Usually editors are dong just editing, I am doing both filming and editing. And then although competition is high the niche I work in is not that competitive. Who knows two East European languages [Russian and Polish] and can freely go to the region? Very few. ***(Noa, freelance filmmaker, last project in Russia - 250£ a day)***

I can tell you that sometimes they employ our people or East Europeans for languages... My educational background was also important, but I don't think they would employ me if I would know just English and Russian. They needed someone who knew German as well… It was competitive, but I cannot say it was very hard to get there; I also had some work experience from Russia and the UK. And let's not forget I came in as an assistant. ***(Sasha, administration officer, investment bank, FT, £35K)***

The issue of capitalising on post-Soviet backgrounds and Russian language is discussed in the last part of this section.

Between getting local qualifications and over-education (significant)

More than half of participants continued to study in the UK, mainly for Master degrees. It can be said that most of them are over-educated for their jobs; however, they rarely complain about it treating it as a natural thing for foreign professionals. ***Anjela***, whose last job in the region was a senior tax consultant in one of 'BIG4' in Moscow, explained:

I have some experience of communicating with recruiters, they told me: 'It's great that you have an extensive experience, but it's from Russia, and we need experience from the UK. So, we cannot offer you certain jobs since you are overqualified for them, but you don't have enough local experience for senior positions.' In fact, my experience in finance here is very limited so far… Yes, it's the problem number one, in Russia I can get into any top company with my experience… I had a certain way in Russia to reach something. I feel like I have to do the same here, so I have to get a qualification [ACCA], they didn't change but it will be a longer process. Over there I don't have to prove anything, I am a professional there. And here I have to prove that I can be that professional… ***(Anjela, marketing researcher, PT, £20 p.h.)***

It seems that in order to secure access to 'prestigious' jobs in the competitive British/London labour markets foreign (women) professionals have to acquire local qualifications and as a

result become over-educated. However, investment in education appears as a multi-faceted strategy which exceeds the need for securing career entry in a host country or finding a way out of de-skilling. These women invest into 'global degrees' (***Nina***) which can be useful trans-nationally. Further education has to be also understood as part of participants' family strategising or tradition (see 5.3). However, some women express doubts about the quality of education in the UK. ***Laura*** who completed an MSc in International Financial Management in London and then an MBA with specialisation in Global Marketing in Nice complains about the quality of her studies at one of the Russell group Universities: 'London in my CV is nothing else than 'Gucci' since in reality it didn't give me anything.'

Other reasons for investment into 'additional degrees' or 'double degrees' as well as into Western Masters are also identified. The very opportunity to study in the UK opens up a possibility (even if limited) to live and work in a host country. For some women this was the only way to gain the right to work in the UK, i.e. on the basis of the two year post-study visa, the right which ceased to exist. Education gives an access to British labour as well as marriage markets. Some 'students' met their partners, studying at the same institutions or programmes. Moreover, studying 'here' transcends an instrumentalist approach to it. It was a crucial period for adapting to a new country, improving English, 'learning how everything works' (***Nina***), developing personal and professional networks. Some women were privileged enough to 'postpone career entry' investing into education. Less typical cases of over-education include lecturer ***Zina*** who completed two Masters in the UK, one of which was part of a PhD programme and ***Sasha*** who studied on longer maternity leave 'in order to not lose time'. To sum up, even if Western education gave little in terms of knowledge its importance in both life strategising and career making in London cannot be underestimated (see further discussion in relation to employers' preferences 7.5)

Underappreciated pre-UK work experience (significant)

At the same time, the need for further education hides the fact that work experience from the region is underappreciated by both employers and participants alike (see ***Anjela's*** account above). Recruiting agencies and employers may deliberately ignore pre-UK work experiences to employ over-qualified workforce. Nevertheless, it can be argued that pre-UK work experience has a positive impact on career-making in London even if it is not recognized or not claimed by women professionals as one of 'success factors'. Hence two issues in this

respect have to be highlighted – direct and indirect application of previous work experience. Some narrations suggest that transfer of knowledge also takes place in more hidden ways. ***Kira***, for example, was asked whether she had any difficulties at work:

It wasn't hard to remember the organisational structure, since I told you I worked in Piter [Sankt-Petersburg], where we also had many subsidiaries, in that sense it was easy… I think so [applying previous experience], but, you know you don't need two degrees for that and extensive experience. If you've got brains and you came with English, so you absorb fast. ***(Kira, HR officer, international brokerage company, FT, £31K)***

Many women who started their careers in the region have been able to build on their professional backgrounds in London (see 7.2). Although some of them complained that their regional work experiences were 'useless' (***Margo***), 'not taken into account' (***Edita***) or 'ignored' (***Ria***), findings suggest that in most cases knowledge and skills were transferred more or less successfully. Very few articulated that they had to do 'basically the same' (***Roza***) in London. This is mostly the case with company transferees and those who pursue academic or finance-related careers. For example, ***Zina***'s account crystallises a direct link between work 'there' and 'here':

At Years 4 and 5 at University my official job was something like 'research assistant'. We worked with TACIS grants. Our Head of Department tried to get grants, he was very active. I think he is my teacher since he brought me into this, into Economics. He needed someone who knew English and could work with him. And there were our communist grannies with their Candidate degrees in Engels… I was paid per hour, not much, depending on a grant, but it wasn't much… I had to translate, to explore literature, a typical 'research assistant', to collect data, to analyse. When I came I didn't have anything new in working on my thesis or in teaching, I knew everything. ***(Zina, lecturer, Business School, FT, £32K)***

It can be stated that those who worked in the region are better prepared for working in London. They are accustomed to such work-related practices as developing CV, job search and being interviewed, entering and leaving workplace, making friends and coalitions at work, working on their own and in teams, having training and being promoted. They worked in small or big companies, changed jobs or occupations, had permanent or temporary contracts and experienced gender and power relations at workplace as well as over-working. In short, they knew what is a probation period or a business lunch before migration. These invaluable experiences are transferred to a new terrain, namely the labour markets in the UK. With few exceptions those who started their careers in the region have proved more likely to succeed in career-making in London, often pursuing careers related to their educational and professional backgrounds. At the same time those who came without any work experiences

are more likely to get into 'non-prestigious' jobs after migration (see 7.2 and Table 2 for detailed cases).

Non-migrant and migrant valuable connections (additional)

At least one third of women have used valuable connections for entering or progressing in their careers in London. Connections are understood as social ties originating from a multiplicity of relationships including family, friends, acquaintances or colleagues. They are considered as 'valuable' since they proved crucial for entering 'prestigious' jobs or for moving from 'available' to 'better' job. Valuable connections can be related or not related to post-Soviet backgrounds or divided into migrant and non-migrant ones. They are used as an additional mechanism 'here'; as ***Nika*** suggests: 'Over here you can find a job without connections, but connections help.' Some women stress that they lacked connections or did not have them at all 'to get a good job' (***Alice***) in the region while some others used their connections 'there' and 'here' (see ***Ella***'s and ***Sofronik***'s career trajectories in App. III as an example). Many women emphasise that connections are important both 'there' and 'here' pointing out some differences in this respect.

I think connections work here, but not on that level that you can get a job po blatu [thanks to connections], rather on the level of learning something. I think there are pretty many jobs which are not even advertised on the wider market. I mean the interview process, tests and all that will be fair, but if you don't have connections and information you cannot get even access to the interview. I'm pretty sure in that. ***(Sveta, technical lead, transnational software company, FT, £60K)***

Data on career trajectories demonstrate that some participants use connections in career-making in the region as well as in the UK. Here the focus is on the latter cases. At least in five cases women built on non-migrant connections for 'learning about' or getting access to 'prestigious' jobs. For example, ***Alice*** who tried to re-skill into an event organizer found her first part-time job in this field (10£ p.h.) through acquaintances of her husband [journalist, British citizen]. ***Kira*** instead met her future line manager, HR officer, through her colleague at a library where she worked for one year (see App. III). Over time Kira herself became an HR officer at the same company. Her career trajectory strongly supports the argument for connection between education and work across borders. Several other women used their non-migrant connections for career progression. For instance, ***Vera*** mobilised her professional connections moving between different workplaces.

I moved since I wanted to develop and I found a job with a higher wage and status at a private clinic… but the more you grow the harder to find a place, people are not leaving! [laughing] So, I looked for workplaces people left… I was young, not even 30 and became a 'chief'… No, my boss left… I remember when I started a PhD they looked at me like 'are you crazy', 'you are already a chief'… Yes, I had hard times, I had to earn after divorce. So, I returned to the lab medicine. And I can do there whatever I want, nobody strains me… I also worked a locum for some period earning about 1000 a week… I returned to this clinic, there was a woman who worked with me back in the 90s. She used to be my 'junior', she invited me… Part-time first… Actually, I got all my three last jobs since I knew someone. ***(Vera, senior clinical scientist, private clinic, FT, £65K)***

Some other women are more likely to use so called 'migrant connections' building on their post-Soviet or Russian-speaking backgrounds in job search, career entry or progress. They also proved to be significant in some cases for entering the labour market, improving English, getting local work experience and building non-migrant connections. However, migrant connections can also lead to non-prestigious or precarious office jobs as Inna's career trajectory shows (see App. III). ***Nika's*** career trajectory represents an interesting case for analysis since she could find jobs across borders 'with' and 'without connections'.[42] All these stories corroborate the argument that both migrant and non-migrant connections are used as additional mechanisms or resources in career-making. Obviously, those who work in Russian-speaking businesses or post-Soviet niches rely heavily on their migrant connections.

Capitalising on post-Soviet backgrounds (additional)

Findings show that at some points in their careers about half of the participants have worked in post-Soviet niches or Russian-speaking markets. They are defined by three domains: customer base, ownership and expertise. First, most self-employed women-entrepreneurs have built a clientele on the basis of common post-Soviet background. Second, some women work(ed) in companies whose owners originate from the FSU, mainly Russia. Finally, some women worked in British or multinational companies as regional experts as well. Little is known about these niches or markets in London. This gap in knowledge is addressed here along with the following questions: Do participants consider their post-Soviet backgrounds as a limitation or a resource for career-making in London? Do they appreciate working in Russian-speaking jobs/businesses or treat it as temporary? Why do they enter and exit them?

By the time of the last interviews five women worked in 'post-Soviet niche' as self-employed (2 cases) or employees in Russian-speaking businesses (3 cases). Graphic designer ***Yana***

worked mainly with Russian-speaking clients in London, however, she was looking for a full-time job in a company 'to have stable earnings'. ***Leila*** is an entrepreneur in Astana and self-employed in London. Her agency in Astana provides 'education abroad' services mainly to Kazakh clients. She was interviewed when she lived and worked in London, having a partnership with several British Universities and consulting Russian-speaking clients on studying in the UK. Project manager ***Eva*** (FT, £25K) and arts cataloguist ***Annet*** (FT, 1100 p.m.) work in a conference organizing company and at an auction house respectively. These businesses are co-owned and run by married couples (female owners are Russian). Both businesses are focused on Russian-speaking clients and 'Russian' products while most of their employees originate from the region. ***Inna*** worked as finance manager assistant (PT, £17K) in the London office of a Russian oil company (see her career trajectory in App. III).

Additionally, some employees and self-employed partly used their post-Soviet background at work. For example, fashion designer ***Saule*** mentions that 60% of her clients originate from the region while musician ***Ria*** teaches part-time at a music school to Russian-speaking youth in addition to 'other projects'. Several women have capitalised on their post-Soviet backgrounds in the past while others express interest in working in a 'post-Soviet niche' in future. For example, ***Roza*** started to cover 'political news in Russia and the CIS' in an international news agency in Moscow before she was transferred to the company's London office as investment banking reporter. Meanwhile, ***Sofronik*** dreamt about her non-profit organization expansion to Russia since she would love to become a regional expert in Russia and 'our countries'.

Finally, some women were mainly employed as regional experts. ***Lida*** (FT, £36K) works for a British luxury interior design firm being mainly responsible for expanding their client base in Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. ***Alexa*** used to be a manager of a tiny newly created Russian department in a British recruiting company. Lecturer ***Zina*** (FT, £32K) is a developing researcher in what is called 'emerging economies' at one of the Business Schools in London. It seems that ***Karina*** (daughter of economists) could make the most of her background and could make her career 'with' and 'without' building on it. She originates from Kiev where she started to work in PwC. She 'followed' her partner in migration, but lived in-between Kiev and London for two years. She decided to settle in the UK in 2003 after she found a job in the same company in London. Then she moved from PwC to 'a competitor company' mainly because 'a unique vacancy' opened up to use her background. Shortly after the interview she returned to Kiev as transferee in a 'higher position'.

When I came to this company in 2006 it looked like I left the company number one. But they created a unique vacancy for me 50/50. Half of my work was about doing auditing for the Soviet Union, I mean Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Russia and the other half was about consulting on financial accountability. Plus the wage was higher and I had 'flexible working'… Yes, the position was better and then at PwC you are working, working, working 'intensive super experience' in interesting projects, but no 'work-life balance'. I came here and was so happy… You do what you love doing and they pay you very well. Business trips to Moscow and Kiev, almost all my friends live there. I loved it. Now I don't like my role, it's 100% 'technical'; I mean I am just a consultant. I cost too much for auditing… It's more paperwork, but I prefer 'mixed'. I like to work with companies, people, projects! And then all 'flexibility' is gone after crisis… ***(Karina, senior manager, one of BIG4, FT, £60K)***

These cases demonstrate that post-Soviet women professionals treat their backgrounds rather as an additional resource in their professional lives. In most cases they temporarily mobilise this form of capital; only some of them build their careers on it. To sum up, career trajectories and narrations of those who work(ed) in post-Soviet markets reveal participants' preferences, but also the limits of their employability and career strategising in London. Capitalising on post-Soviet backgrounds tends to be more significant when participants cannot build at full on the other 'success factors'. Yet, about half of women do not declare any use of their backgrounds for job search, career entry or professional development what could be interpreted as a display of their ability to make careers in London without capitalising on their regional / country-of-origin / language-based backgrounds (see further discussion in 7.5). The next section is dedicated to understanding women's career-making through the lenses of balancing personal/familial and professional lives.

7.4 Aiming at 'the golden mean' for family and work

Combining family and professional lives has become a significant issue in modern societies, especially for working women who have historically borne primary responsibility for childrearing and family life. Findings from this research already showed that participants create dual career families. Here I address four questions in relation to work-life balance: How do participants combine 'doing career' with 'doing family'? To what extent their family-related aspirations and expectations are translated into their lived experiences? Do they display dependency on their partners? Do they reproduce household and parenthood practices similar to their parents' ones? The aim of this section is to explore women's attitudes to family as well as ideas and practices of managing housework, family budget and

parenthood in their families of creation, which are under-explored in migration studies in this combination. Overall, this section will shed light on how the public and the private spheres influence each other today in the case of a particular group of foreign women professionals.

'Choosing between family and work sounds terrible'

Participants who originate from Soviet dual career families tend to reject conceptualisations which postulate the need for 'choosing between family and work' (***Margo***). For example, ***Nina*** despite her claim that 'career [was] not [her] cup of tea' states at some point that 'choosing between career and family sounds terrible'. ***Annet***'s statement is on the same lines: 'Nowadays women are such highly developed creatures that we can combine family life with our beloved job; there are many good examples'. It has to be emphasised that all singles and divorcees declared an interest in both making careers and creating families even if 'it is idealistic to have both family and career being happy in both' (***Ella***). Moreover, for some of them living in a host country has a stimulating effect on the desire to create a family and have children, what has the same meaning for these women:

Definitely not just one child if I have a family. Well, one child is better than zero and if you have one, why not to make a second one? You know, living alone in England I started to appreciate family values. I understood that something important is missing; not only at Christmas time. Family is very important to me [pause] but this balance is also important: family – work. I've never understood why people are choosing between family and work. For me both are important. They are absolutely different though, but I cannot imagine choosing. Family is something [pause] sacred, 'out of horizon'. And work, it's the same with work. It's something very special particularly if you are 'satisfied with this job' [in English]. These are two main factors of happiness and I cannot compare or contrast them. ***(Margo, project manager, FT, single, renting room, Golders Green)***

It is crucial that they are not interested in 'being just a housewife or just a mother' (***Rita***). Overall, no one considers being a housewife for life even if their partner can support the family. ***Nika*** argues: 'Of course I wouldn't like to be a housewife! Housework is not creative enough.' ***Olesya*** equally points out the repetitiveness of housework as against professional development in the public sphere while ***Kira*** emphasised that being a housewife implies dependency on husband (see App. III for details). Finally, ***Yesenina****'s* story represents an interesting case for analysis in this respect. She divorced mainly because her husband preferred her to be 'just a housewife' following him to his home country, Australia. At the

same time her new partner seems to meet her understanding of 'the golden mean'. They share housework chores, employ a cleaner and plan a child.

'Sharing everything 50/50' but family budget and parenthood

Most participants have similar views on household management. They would prefer more or less equally to share household responsibilities with their partners. Yet, most of them expect men to be primary breadwinners when women take the main burden of childcare. Almost all participants have or plan to have children, however very few identify motherhood as the most important part of their lives. Most participants, in one form or another, express the idea of finding 'a golden mean' (***Jane***) between family and work.

We'll share everything, all duties! I couldn't live with a traditional man; therefore I can't get on with our men here… You have to share duties – they are 'common duties'. If I work it means I have less free time; so I can't do everything… I'd stay with my small child, up to five years old, and then back to career! <..> I could do digital marketing and hairstyling from home. That's why I like the idea of being self-employed… But there should be a balance in everything: you don't have to be all in your child or career; you have to find a golden mean… Family should be important for him, otherwise we cannot create family and I don't want to push him for that… The main thing is he would be responsible and bringing money home. ***(Jane, senior hair stylist/intern in digital marketing, single, renting room, Shadwell)***

The account above is general yet unique: it generates several topics for discussion highlighting common attitudes, but also standing apart from other accounts in two respects. First, like for most of the participants, the progressive idea of 'sharing everything 50/50' (***Alice***) co-exists with understanding the roles of 'man-breadwinner' and 'woman-mother' as complementary. Second, other narrations suggest that the ideas and practises of sharing household responsibilities are not limited to 'the West' or 'Western' partners reflecting contemporary dual-career families' lifestyle. ***Ada*** even suggests that London may affect men to share everything: 'London builds men, whether they want it or not; we do what other Londoners do.' Third, ***Jane*** is one of three women who express the desire of 'staying at home until the child is five year old' (while being self-employed in ***Jane***'s case). Most women would like to stay on maternity leave for one or two years and return to work. Fourth, ***Jane***'s account once again shows that for these women family and children are two sides of the same coin. Childless singles expect to be primarily responsible for childcare in their imagined families. This is consistent with the experience of women who already have children. Most

women communicate similar experiences of managing household and parenthood in the region and London, reflecting on theirs and friends' practices:

I've got a very good example of my friends, both are Kazaks. One lives in Kazakhstan and another one lives here. One lives with an Italian and another with a Kazakh man, but he is very advanced Kazakh, great guy. I am very glad for her. So they share everything in two. I think it's right. He can make a present for her and she can make a present for him. They alternate cooking and child care as well… Yes, one couple has got a child. So they share responsibilities for everything and it's easier than doing everything on your own. ***(Saule, fashion designer/entrepreneur, single, sharing a 2br flat with her mother, Maida Vale, no children)***

At the same time, some participants remember how their mothers were overburdened since they were mainly responsible for housework despite working full-time. **Kate** refers: 'My mum was doing everything at home and she always worked, I always felt sorry for her, I knew I did not want that crazy lifestyle.' This is not 'the golden mean' participants want; they support the idea of sharing household chores equally with their partners, regardless of income differentials. 'My husband earns more, but we have an equal relationship; I work as much as him.'(***Nika***). Yet, conflicts over everyday life practices such as family budget, housework and shopping can also lead to divorces. Some families outsource house cleaning to resolve conflicts. Most women who have partners claim that they share more or less equally housework with their partners. Three cases suggest that this is also true of situations where women work part-time.

I'd say we are doing everything together, but I am cooking. He compensates that by doing the washing-up. We are cleaning our place together, doing shopping together… He earns more; I'd say he supports me since all my salary goes for studying. So he pays for renting, food, etc. It's normal I think… ***(Anjela, marketing researcher, PT, 20 p.h., married, renting 2br flat, Willesden Green, one child)***

There are two main scenarios regarding family budget: either it is shared equally (when partners have similar earnings) or women contribute to it (when their partners earn more). Both are considered a natural and fair exchange. Even ***Lida*** (regional manager, £36K) whose husband can afford renting a terraced townhouse in Regent's Park is not an exception in this respect: 'All these communal bills are on my part. So my wage comes and goes in three days and then there is my husband who provides us the whole month.' ***Sveta*** is the only woman who is a primary breadwinner in a family with two children while ***Vera*** is the only single mother. She complains: 'If I had a husband who'd earn the same we'd live very well, like 'upper middle class', but since I am the only earner [pause] it's like having half of my wage [£65K].' She pays off the mortgage on a two bedroom flat in Islington and brings up her

child. Some singles and divorcees emphasise that it is not easy to live on their own taking 'responsibilities for everything'. Perhaps, 'that's why people get married' ***Ella*** observes**.**

Available data suggest that in half of the cases women earn two or three times less than they do, particularly when partners are 'Westerners'. ***Nika*** voices a critical view of 'our' women: 'Here women are less dependent on men and expect less; we've got a consumer attitude to men.' This stance resonates with ***Leila***'s account on the dependency of our women on ('Western') men which seems to satisfy both partners (see 6.4). Meanwhile, ***Alice*** stressed that 'it's hard to split bills in two, but it should be at least 70/30' showing that not all are able to abide to an equal sharing of costs. Finally, for some women partners who own properties or pay mortgage on their own seem to be an important part of 'the golden mean'. This attitude co-exists with the understanding that when the time comes women would take greater childcare responsibilities: 'If he would have English principles I would look for another man since I'd like to become mother so he has to take responsibility for the rest' (***Ada***). It remains to be seen how motherhood is planned and practised by participants.

Imagining, planning and practising motherhood

Twelve women had one or two children by the time of the interview. At the time of the last interviews two women were on maternity leave while two women were pregnant and three women planned to have children in the near future. Here there is a clear generational difference. ***Edita*** and ***Masha*** who are in their fifties gave birth in their 20s in the region in the Soviet period. Younger women had their children in their thirties in the region or the UK. Almost all women who are older than 35 years have children. ***Alice*** and ***Zina*** are exceptions in this respect; however both have received medical recommendations to avoid childbearing unless they have special treatment. Most childless women would like to have two or three children; particularly if they are the only children in their families.

It seems that these women do not reject motherhood; they rather postpone it (see ***Kira***'s account in endnotes). There are different reasons for that. ***Kira*** points out that childlessness made her more 'competitive' in the labour market. ***Ella*** who has returned to Astana shortly after the interview highlights the advantages of bringing up children in the region. More often postponing is explained as the result of a 'Westernisation' process. Many childless women communicate how should they have stayed in the FSU they would already have children and

shared the desire to 'enjoy life' longer and to make careers 'first'. However, these are not the only reasons for postponing motherhood. As soon as these women meet 'a decent man' (***Margo***) and feel secure enough they plan children (see ***Yesenina***'s case above).

The partners' social position proves significant in providing an enabling sense of social security. Only several women verbalise a direct link between having a child and maternity leave entitlements in the UK: 'I said to my husband that first I had to find a job and then I would get pregnant. I am a foreigner and this state wouldn't give me anything; so at least my job could pay 'maternity' (***Zina***). However, it can be stated that both social security and 'having a responsible partner' are key for planning children. Finally, although no one mentioned migration to the UK having a 'postponing' effect on parenthood this may well be the case. ***Kate's*** statement can be interpreted in this vein: 'I am just starting to make my career here. It will take some time to start off, to get a permanent job. So I could have a maternity leave, it might take ten years and first of all we'd have to marry.'

Childless women have similar opinions on how children would change their life and family prospects. Almost all consider childcare for a period of one to two years and then returning to work. Three women said that they could take childcare until school age as opposed to 'English mothers who hire nannies' (***Jane***). Those eager to return to work justify it with arguments about the importance of working in the public sphere, the boredom of housewife chores and economic reasons. Only ***Zoriana*** (finance assistant) states that her husband (IT engineer) could look after children if she makes a 'successful career'. Some childless women feel uncertain about the way motherhood could change their lives. It is also found that attitudes to parenthood change over time. Three women suggested that they could avoid motherhood altogether, though for different reasons. When interviewed again ***Roza*** was pregnant while ***Ada*** planned to move out of London with her husband and have children. Some pointed out how family became more important for her than career with age.

Life stories reveal that employment and parenthood are intertwined in complex ways. Some women would prefer jobs and working regimes which fit childcare. Others assume that they could set up their own business to combine motherhood with work: 'I always liked the idea of having my own business since if I have a child I'd like to control my work.' (***Alice***) while others 'prepare' for motherhood by seeking change in work arrangements. ***Sofronik,*** for example, claimed that she initially chose working in 'international development' to be able to

have balance between family and career in future (see details in App. III). Half of the childless women consider hiring nannies if family financial situation would allow doing so.

'The golden mean' seems to lie in being able to combine work and family after maternity leave. This study shows that when time for parenthood comes it is women who are responsible for children regardless of partners' nationality and income. It is true for both those who experienced motherhood in the region (***Edita***, ***Leila***, ***Lida***, ***Masha***) and those who became mothers in the UK. This means that attitudes to parenthood of childless women coincide with what happens in reality with women who have children. Narrations suggest that parenthood is negotiated in these families and partners seem to agree to take up a breadwinning role at least in the period when women take primary childcare responsibilities.

There are three main scenarios for women in the first years of motherhood: returning to work after maternity leave; making a temporary 'stop in career' (***Inna***); combining work and motherhood. The decision is made mainly on the basis of women's preferences and family financial situation. Most women either return to work after maternity leave or leave their jobs for a while. Those who return to their jobs straight after maternity leave hire nannies. Others bring up their children for longer; sometimes they plan to have a second child (3 cases). It can be said that the former are rather career-oriented and the latter are more family-oriented; however, all women are interested in both having families and making careers. The following accounts represent rather two opposite sides of the same continuum.

We didn't have other options, I didn't see other options. I've never had an idea not to go to work… I am not a person who can sit at home and then I am earning pretty good money… If a nanny would cost more that would be nonsense… I am with my baby from the moment I come home until we get up, from 7pm till 7am… Well, my husband helps me washing her or bringing a bottle. All other processes in the evenings, nights and mornings are mine… If he works all day the nanny arrives at 8:30 and stays until 7… We are doing 30/70. We have a cleaner and I give instructions to him what to do, managing. He cooks, driving for shopping, repairing, making calls <…> I've got a balance, but I wouldn't be able to work if I wouldn't be successful in my company. Success in career is very important to me, but my family would never occupy second place just because I need that success. ***(Karina, senior manager, FT, £60K, married, 3br house, St Albans, one child)***

Quality of life will be decisive where to live [in Bulgaria, Russia or the UK]. We have to be able to give our children good education, accommodation… There should be a balance between time spent for work and family; it's crucial… Ideally I'd like my husband to be a family breadwinner. I am ready to work, it's interesting to me, but I wouldn't like to work 'full-time' or I'd prefer to work in such a regime I like. And if to talk about future children I'd like to pay more attention to them, but I wouldn't like to be completely a housewife. I'd like to work in a calm regime. [1st interview] *No, I don't plan to return, planning to sit at home with my child for two years*

at least. Then I'll think about kindergarten, but we don't know where we'd live by then… I'd like to work since I need self-realization. Marketing research is convenient for me. It's not what I was dreaming about but I could work from home. We wanted to have a child, but later. I finished that part of studying [ACCA] and became 'partly qualified' what allowed me to get a full-time job, and I got pregnant [2nd interview] ***(Anjela, marketing researcher, PT, £20 p.h./on maternity leave, married, renting 2br flat, Willesden Green, new born child)***

These women show the key differences between those who make shorter breaks in careers (more 'career-oriented') and those who dedicate to childcare (more 'family-oriented'). ***Anjela*** planned to stay with her child for longer while ***Karina*** returned to work three months later than was planned since 'six months was a not realistic target'. It seems that women who have full-time permanent jobs are more likely to return to work. However, ***Karina's*** account suggests that full-time working mothers also dedicate a lot of time to their small children. Career-oriented women are less dependent on their husbands and often have similar earnings with them. Both women emphasise that 'priorities are changing' (***Anjela***) or 'everything is changing' (***Karina***) when children are born, even if they have different paths after maternity.

Findings show that in reality the third scenario, namely combining part-time work or entrepreneurship with motherhood, is the least preferred and practised (2 cases). Usually these women are either self-employed as ***Rita*** (musician, London) or have their business as ***Lida*** (jewellery shop, Moscow). ***Lida*** who has two children represents an interesting case since she experienced motherhood both in the region and the UK with different childcare arrangements. She brought up her first child with her mother's support in Moscow. In London childcare was shared with a nanny and her husband-millionaire. One third of women consider the possibility of bringing their mothers to London for 'helping out' with childcare (***Zina***). However, in reality this happens rarely. ***Lida***'s case suggests that sharing care with family members is more likely to take place in the region. Meanwhile, ***Anjela****'s* story shows that it is a short-term practise in the UK mainly because participants' mothers live in the region.

Finally, views on parenthood are crucial for the long term stability of relationships and marriage. ***Rita*** represents a case when different views on how to arrange childcare leads to divorce. She preferred to combine work with childcare while her first husband wanted her to stay at home with children. She has tried to combine work with motherhood during her second marriage which has proved to be a stressful experience. After a second divorce her children stayed with their father and she is usually seeing them on weekends. In fact, on the

interview day ***Rita*** came with her daughters and we had lunch together. Finally, **Inna** problematized 'inconsistency' between partners' views on when to have children what turned out to be one of the reasons for divorce over time. (see details in App. III) It seems that four women divorced mainly because their understanding of 'the golden mean' was challenged.

Towards 'relaxed careers' in post-crisis London?

To sum up, participants try to combine their familial and professional lives aiming at 'the golden mean' or prepare for that stage in their lives. Therefore, they prefer 'to work in a calm regime' (***Anjela***) or make 'a relaxed career' (***Roza***), particularly after they create families (not necessarily before). It does not mean that all participants did 'relaxed careers' at the time of interviews; however, it is a preferable scenario for most of them. This change is connected with both age factor and current 'stable' labour market position:

*I know that I couldn't do work 'full time' in 'city', 'bank' or 'office'. I wouldn't like to work like that in future. I have to earn enough, but I wish my work goes well with family and it's 'convenient' for my child… Before I always wanted to work and was like 'career, career' and not relationships. And now it's so important to me to have someone close, close friends, my boyfriend. Now career is not that important to me. It's important in that sense that I could do something I like… I always tried to be independent, but it doesn't mean [a pause] any rate family is family… I could drop my work, I mean for a while, for family. But I'd like to work, I cannot live without it. (**Lisa, lecturer, Business School, FT, £34K, in relationship, renting 1 br flat, Mill Hill)***

About half of the women think that they had already put 'relaxed careers' scenario into practice as soon as they had the opportunity to do so. These findings leave little room for a discussion on the impact of both employers' discrimination against female foreign workers, in general and glass ceiling at the workplace, in particular (see 7.5). The question of whether this tendency reflects participants' preferences or their limitations in London's labour markets is a subject for future research. At this stage the key question is: How can these women even think about doing 'relaxed careers' in such a competitive city as London, particularly post-crisis? There are several explanations for this phenomenon.

First, some women can afford doing 'relaxed careers'. It is particularly relevant to married women and those who have financial support from their families of origin or additional sources of income in the region, as ***Laura***: 'Of course, I appreciate a good salary, not super big or super small, the fair one.' Second, it seems that they follow their parents in having

'prestigious' occupations, but not necessarily 'awesome careers' (***Vera***) or highly paid jobs. Third, almost all women progressed in their careers, but they were interested in making rather 'middling careers' in a calm way than so called top careers 'working like a slave' (***Sasha***) adjusting to existing or imagined family lives. Therefore ***Diana*** said at some point: 'I'd like to be promoted slightly, but I wouldn't like to get very high… I could become a manager, but I can also continue working as an IT tester in different companies to earn more and have 'flexibility' since we are planning to have a child.' Additionally, some women are not ready to 'work extra for free': 'I always put on scales whether I'd like to work free for two hours or to have a walk and enjoy the sun.' (***Laura***) Being mainly responsible for 'creating family home' and childcare they also expect their partners to 'get high' (***Nika***). Finally, some women entered 'not that competitive niche' (***Noa***) or make relatively relaxed careers working for Russian-speaking, charity or non-profit organizations.

A regional perspective has to be acknowledged for understanding a preference to make 'relaxed careers' in several respects. On the one hand, some women did not want to have tough working regimes like they had before: 'I was working so hard in Kazakhstan; I know what it is to have two jobs, I don't want that anymore' (***Nina***). On the other hand, they can have decent earnings, even if working part-time, in contrast to the region: 'There are all conditions for women to bring up children working 'part-time'. In Russia we've got very limited opportunities in that sense.' (***Sofronik***) Some women said that they think that they are underpaid in the UK or have 'to work extra' to meet the targets (***Roza***), but they did not complain about it. Even part-time precarious contract jobs in London give them greater feeling of security than having full-time jobs in the region. Additionally, making any kind of career in the UK is appreciated in the region: 'What we are doing here is already regarded as success there, since we cling somehow in a foreign country' (***Annet***).

Therefore, it can be said that most women use 'stability over careerism' strategy. It can partly explain why half of them worked at the same workplaces minimum for five years (four cases of visa-bound labour mobility are excluded). Study shows that as soon as participants enter 'prestigious' jobs in 'well-known' companies they stay there for 2-10 years. When IT tester ***Diana*** was asked about other career path options she replied: 'I always was telling that I would work here for a while and then would become a journalist. I had a blog, I liked it a lot, I was praised, but I preferred to work from 9 to 6 and to have 'security'. Therefore, the career entry across borders is much more important than career-making itself. (see 7.2 for more

details) Many women appreciated other immaterial goods in relation to their work in public sphere, such as a possibility to work on a distance, closeness to work, flexible hours and good *kollektiv*. 'Stability over careerism' strategy or preference to work 'in a calm regime' can partly explain these work-related values.

Pre-UK work experience and over-education also partly explain the very possibility of making 'relaxed careers' in London. Meanwhile, those who did not have access to formal work or had poor English ended up in informal jobs with poor working conditions before getting out of the vicious circle of exploitation on the basis of nationality and gender division of labour. Valuable connections contributed to enlightening career progress (see 7.3 for a full discussion on six 'success factors'). Other resources or forms of capital which can be mobilised for making 'relaxed careers' include urban origin, embodied cultural capital, whiteness, citizenship and homeownership capital. The impact of the latter can be traced in this account: 'You don't need to earn much if you have your own property in London and if you are not interested in having Armani watches' (***Ada***). Structural conditions which facilitated participants' trans-border careers were discussed theoretically in Chapters 2 and 3 are analysed further in 7.5.

More importantly, the tendency towards 'relaxed' career-making has to be related to the ideas and practices of life-work balance in participants' dual career families and their imagination. It is clear now what single ***Sofronik*** meant: 'Perhaps, my one big strategy for all my life is to meet my love, to have children and a good family. This is my strategy for the future.' For all these reasons participants' career-making have to be put into the context of their understanding of 'the golden mean' for family and work what makes the core of their life strategising. It is worth noting that the author does not think that most participants make 'relaxed careers', however, it is a preferable scenario for them. The big question is: Will these women ever be able to make 'relaxed careers' when social security is diminishing and employers expect employees to work harder for the same or even smaller earnings? The key findings of this Chapter are discussed further and related to relevant literature below.

7.5 Summary and discussion

The key findings about trans-border trajectories suggest that most participants continued their careers in the sectors/occupations they entered in the FSU and/or related to their original

educational profiles, what contradicts many studies revealing 're-domistication' and 'compromised careers' in the case of women migrant professionals in different countries (Hardill 2002; Man 2004; Suto 2009; Mushaben 2009; Meares 2010). The majority of them are not satisfied with current employment positions and pay despite obvious progress relative to some groups of local population and 'other' migrants. Several concluding remarks regarding their careers can be made here: 1) professional identities are important to these women; 2) they could transfer their knowledge and work experience across borders in contrast to some other highly educated migrants in London (Rutten & Verstappen 2012; Tzeng 2012) or other 'Western' countries (Meares 2010; Liversage 2009b); 3) they were able to develop trans-border careers. Taking into account participants' family backgrounds, ability to make professional careers can be partly understood as an inter-generational phenomenon.

The main aim of this Chapter was to explain trans-border career-making from three inter-related perspectives: work-related meanings, 'success factors' and work-life balance practices. Career trajectories were explored along with meanings participants they give to their work experiences. It has to be emphasised that the level of work-related meanings is overwhelmingly ignored in (gendered) migration studies. Existing relevant studies aimed at elaborating typologies of career paths (Reyneri 2004; Castagnone 2015; Liversage 2009a; Mushaben 2009) or categorizing migrants on the basis of career trajectories (Meeteren et al. 2014; Szewszyk 2014). Meanwhile, the issues of *why* careers are made in the first place, *how* migrants understand them and *what careers mean* for migrants are often omitted or only partly discussed (Jungwirth 2011; Kou et al. 2015). Often work-related attitudes are a product of historical developments in the region/country even if it does not exist anymore. This study makes a small contribution to labour and gender studies in the region (Bowers 1996; Ashwin 2000, 2006; Goldman 2002; Engel 2004) focusing on continuity and change of women' work-related values in migration context.

I will draw on several examples, which demonstrate a connection between work-related meanings and regional developments. The idea of 'prestigious' jobs or brain jobs in formal sector of economy, which are not necessarily highly paid, is one of guiding criterion in career-making for this group of migrants while other jobs are considered just as temporary earnings. Identified 'stability over careerism' strategy and a strong wish to become independent from both parents and partners can be interpreted as one of the consequences of growing up under *shock therapy* (Hyman 1998; Reddaway & Glinsky 2001; Dale 2002).

These are the times when many participants' families faced financial struggles while their parents had to adapt to market economy experiencing unemployment and disruptions in careers responding with professional reorientation, new form of employment and family survival strategies (Clarke 1999, 2006). The idea of stability in careers and social security becomes even more significant in new turbulent times. Interestingly enough, occupational stability and working in consistency with educational backgrounds as well as preference of being employees and not self-employed/entrepreneurs characterises other migrants from the region, namely, Soviet Jews in Israel (Remennik 2003; Razin & Scheinenberg 2010). Therefore, these attitudes can be interpreted as a continuation of Soviet work-related values what can be explained through habitus concept (Bourdieu 1995 /1977: 72-95; Bourdieu 1996 / 1984: 169-225; Maton 2008).

On the one hand, career trajectories can be understood as the outcome of participants' work-related values, work expectations and career objectives. On the other, they are also the outcome of strategising around 'success factors' affecting both career entry and career progression which become particularly visible after migration to the UK. Career-making in London is heavily influenced by access to formal employment and English proficiency, what seems to be obvious. Pre-UK work experiences and over-education facilitate career progression while valuable connections and post-Soviet backgrounds offer additional resources for career development. Finally, the critical role of successful balancing familial and working lives is recognized and discussed through continuity and change in the post-Soviet gender order below.

The identified 'success factors' are often explored separately while English proficiency (Crystal 1997; Lan 2011) and social capital (Portes 1998; Poros 2001; Anhias 2007; Harvey 2008; Ryan 2008; Ryan et al. 2008; White & Ryan 2008; Ryan et al. 2015) are over studied in migration scholarship. The former is essential for career-making in an English-speaking country; however, the issue of capitalising on 'other' languages in British/ London labour markets is under-explored (Tzeng 2012). Most participants know three or four languages and half of them worked in post-Soviet niches or Russian-speaking businesses. The impact of language capital and post-Soviet background on careers in London calls for further research (King et al. 2014). Overall, conversion of embodied cultural capital into other forms of capital by migrants has attracted attention recently (Erel 2010, 2015; Cederberg 2015).

Meanwhile, social networks are obvious and easy to study, but they are not necessarily the most important or the only resources migrants use. Moreover, there is little need in mobilising social capital for those with high level of cultural capital (Cederberg 2015). This study shows that not all participants mobilised their social networks in career-making while, those who did, used it as an additional mechanism for entering jobs or developing careers. It is crucial that migrants can build on both migrant and non-migrant networks as some other studies show (Beaverstock 2002; Raghuram et al. 2010). Yet, most women do not belong to any regional or ethnic-based community organisation, what is seen as one of the specifics of migrations from FSU (IOM 2008a: 35), but 'professional circles' which are certainly region- and language-based, but not ethnic-based.

Both pre-UK work experiences and 'Western' qualifications seem to be significant for trans-border careers. It is found that the former is under-appreciated by both employers and employees, however, it does not mean that migrants are not able to capitalise on previous work experience in direct and indirect ways, as this study shows. Yet, the issues of validation of qualifications and transferability of 'skills' (Raghuram 2004; Iredale 2005; Kofman & Raghuram 2006) seem to be as significant as migrants' ability to signalise embodied cultural capital, to convert it into other forms of capital (Bourdieu 1986; Skeggs 2011; Vershinina et al. 2011) and to transfer it across borders. It can be said that participants were successful in negotiating their knowledge and skills in the UK, however, becoming recognized as 'skilled' is rarely studied as the outcome of negotiation between employers and employees (Csedo 2008, 2009). At the same time employers' under-appreciation of foreign qualifications reveals internationalisation of education as well as superiority of 'Western' education on a global scale (Waters 2008, 2012; Findlay et al. 2011). However, participants did not have to 're-train' because their qualifications were not recognized (Cederberg 2015: 39). They could build on their previous qualifications pursuing further education in the UK what proved to be a successful investment strategy for building a bridge between 'there' and 'here'. Having local degrees might help migrants to negotiate their 'skills' with employers whose knowledge of foreign qualification is often 'minimal' (Bills 2004; Csedo 2008). However, it is debatable whether immigrants' over-education guarantees access to highly skilled jobs (Nielsen 2007).

Growing up in the Soviet families of knowledge workers affected the choice to pursue further education and professional careers. Almost all interviewees have completed tertiary education in the FSU. Twenty three women out of thirty five continued to study in the UK

mainly in the fields related to the previous degrees. Only some women tried to re-skill through education while several others were in the process of returning to their initial backgrounds after working in 'other' fields in London. It means that these workers prefer to develop in the fields they entered in the region unless they cannot enter them in the UK. Qualifications obtained in the FSU were recognized in the UK and they could build on them studying for Master degrees in most cases. It can be stated that migrant women professionals being under-privileged agents chose an 'over-education strategy', however findings of a cross-national European research project on work organisation and restructuring in the knowledge society suggests that some 'local' workers are also over-qualified for the jobs they do (Valenduc et al. 2009:29). Is overqualification becoming a norm behind the growing number of highly educated workers in the West and so called emerging economies?

Due to time and space constraints some other resources in career-making were only partly explored. The impact of urban origin (Horvath 2008; Rye 2011), 'Europeannes'/'whiteness' (Colic-Peisker 2005; McDowell 2007, 2009; Samaluk 2014; Cederberg 2015) and citizenship capital (Ong 1999; Bauder 2008) seems to have a positive impact on career opportunities as other studies show. I would suggest that most post-Soviet women do not occupy the lowest levels in a 'hiring queue' being highly educated Eurasians originating from urban families of knowledge workers and having access to formal work. Individual agency in career-making and not structures which shape it and shaped by it were discussed in this Chapter. However, secondary data on trans-nationalisation of education and labour markets, feminization and diversification of workforce, expansion of knowledge economy and changing London economy (see Chapters 2 and 3) which facilitate transborder career-making informed this study. At the same time, 'success factors', in other words, a set of skills, entitlements, forms of capital or resources identified on individual level, not only demonstrate what is needed for making transborder careers today. They also reflect structural forces and inequalities existing at national, regional and global scales which condition 'positional advantage', employability and successful career-making (Weiss 2005; Waters 2008, 2012). Therefore, they have to be studied in a critical and not celebratory manner (see further discussion in 8.3).

In addition, careers were studied in relation to ideas and practices of balancing familial and professional lives. In this respect the findings represent a contribution to recent debates on the transformation of gender orders on the move (Birgit 2004; Parrenas 2001; Jungwirth 2008). Reproduction of the Soviet gender order (Ashwin 2000, 2006) can be traced in three respects in a migration context. First, post-Soviet women professionals are interested in both 'doing

career' and 'doing family' what can be interpreted as an inter-generational lifestyle. 'The golden mean' was conceptualised by them in relation to 'living in-between' family and work without choosing one of them. Soviet women were supposed to combine family and work regardless whether they belonged to the working class or knowledge workers. Post-1991 both employment and family was no longer part of state duty, however, there was no question about being 'either mother or worker' for most women (Engel 2000). Similarly to the past the question was how to combine family and work. Therefore, being 'just a housewife or just a mother' is not considered as part of 'the golden mean'. It resonates with other studies on 'highly skilled' women from post-socialist region in Denmark (Liversage 2009 (b): 131). I would suggest that this attitude is relevant for women of different socio-economic backgrounds originating from post-socialist countries.

Second, although participants prefer partners to be the breadwinners, in reality half of them share equally financial responsibilities with them while others contribute to the family budget. Third, childbearing remains women's preserve in the region and beyond it (Tartakovskaya 2000; Bridger 2007). Often immigrant women leave the labour market after having a child and then return to part-time work as well as local women (Trzsinski 2005). However, combining part-time work with motherhood turned out to be most stressful and least common experience for these women. It also was not typical for the Soviet gender order, when women had to return to full-time employment sending their children to free public kindergartens after maternity leave. Therefore, most of these women return to full-time employment in one or two years after giving a birth. Longer periods of maternity leave are more relevant for those who earned twice or three times less than their partners. Obviously, the choice of scenario seems to be the outcome of a 'rational' family strategy whereas women chose childrearing due to lower expectations of high earnings (Gorny and Kepinska 2005) coupled with the cost of childcare.

Although motherhood is not perceived as the main purpose of their lives, they continue to create families and reproduce new generations. In fact, 'having family' is equivalent to 'having children' for them and these are the key lenses they use in choosing partners. One third of participants who have children took the main responsibilities for childcare when the time came and then return to their careers. A longitudinal research would shed light on the impact of motherhood on their careers and those who plan children. Overall, it seems that these women reproduce the Soviet 'working mother contract' combining their family and

professional lives, similar to their mothers, but without state support. This corresponds to post-Soviet women identities in the region (Aivazova 2001). Most women 'postpone' both marriage and motherhood which correlates with other studies on younger women in the region (Ashwin 2006: 49). Soviet women married and gave births by mid-twenties.

The Soviet working mother contract 'which was sustained ideologically and materially under state socialism still represents a main social model for women' from the post-socialist region. It can be interpreted as working mother habitus in Bourdieu's terms (Cretu 2010) and analysed within a regional gender order framework, in general and a family-of-origin perspective, in particular. Yet, these women re-produce an enlightened version of this model easing their everyday lives. Perhaps, since Perestroika times a wish to live 'easier' rather than feminist ideas made women try to escape a trap 'a week like any other' (Baranskaya 1969) experienced by Soviet women. Some narrations suggest that it includes participants' mothers and grandmothers who were responsible for 'three C's' while working full-time. These women migrants succeeded in sharing housework more or less equally with their husbands, regardless of their nationality. Moreover, partners' traditional expectations about these women to be 'just housewives' or to take the biggest burden of housework led to conflicts and even splits. Ideas and practices of more equal distribution of household chores reflect changes in contemporary dual-career families. Interviewing partners/couples would give a more balanced and nuanced picture about these families and everyday practices of combining familial and working lives (Morgan 2011).

So, these women also re-produce the Soviet gender order in some respects and challenge it in others. They might look 'traditional' in their wish to create families, however, the ways they share housework with their partners sounds 'revolutionary' regardless of difference in earnings and whether they work part-time. In contrast to many women in the region, they do not want to be post-Soviet 'superwomen' who are responsible for housework, care, networks and managing family husband additionally to working in a public sphere (Ashwin 2006: 37-53) at the background of crisis of masculinity (Kay2007:1-18). Perhaps they are privileged enough to run away from a burden of women's roles multiplied post-1991. Therefore, migration could be seen as a strategy to escape it (Jolly & Reeves 2005).

Additionally, some families outsource cleaning and caring to migrant women, who often also originate from the FSU. Exploitation of migrant women by dual-career/middle class families

has attracted the attention of many migration researchers working on 'globalisation', 'feminization' and 'ethnicitisation' of care (Anderson 2000; Schrover et al. 2007; Lutz 2010). Outsourcing of 'three C's' (cooking, cleaning and caring) is a new phenomenon in post-Soviet context. Therefore, classed relations between migrant women who make careers and migrant women who do 'the dirty work' also represent an interesting area for future research.

Overall, the 'old' & 'new' models of behaviour and representations co-exist in a contradictory form. This resonates with gendered area studies (Buckley 1997; Engel 2004; Ashwin 2000, 2006; Kay 2006, 2007). However, it is difficult to understand whether all these transformations are connected with migration to a particular country (the UK here), changes in post-Soviet gender order (Ashwin 2006; Kay 2007) or transnational challenges to gender systems (Connel 2002). Further research is needed. Gender order is a complex changing over time phenomenon existing on national, regional, global and trans-national levels. It was suggested that gender orders in sending as well as receiving countries have to be considered in gendered migration studies (Lutz 2010). A regional perspective for understanding gender orders in post-socialist countries (Jungwirth 2008) is particularly useful in the post-Soviet context (Ashwin 2000; 2006). Contradictory transformation of gender order on a global, regional or local scale is not a subject of this study, but it can be concluded that women migrants are also agents of this transformation.

To sum up, it proved to be fruitful to study the impact of family and work-related values, different resources/forms of capital and work-life balance practices on trans-border career strategising. Findings of this Chapter call for a longitudinal research mainly to understand whether participants' career aspirations fulfilled over time as well as to explore the impact of motherhood on their professional lives in London more in-depth. It is worth noting that by the time of the interviewees only eleven women had children while two of them brought up their children in the region in the 1980s. Another interesting question is whether 'the golden mean' post-Soviet women migrants reached in balancing their familial and professional lives is challenged by further austerity measures and diminishing social security in post-crisis times. In Conclusions findings of three empirical Chapters are 'put together' in the context of relevant literature highlighting the interdisciplinary contribution of this study to knowledge and suggesting one of possible directions for future research.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Addressing research questions

1. What is the impact of family and migration processes on working agency?

Findings suggest that the impact of family and migration processes on participants' careers is significant and multi-dimensional. On the one hand, migratory experiences, such as pre-UK and in-between-cities mobility, gradual moving to the UK and 'legal' modes of entry ease integration and facilitate career-making in London. On the other, there is a strong impact of both families of origin and families of creation on career strategising. Almost all participants originate from Soviet urban families of highly educated knowledge workers. All forms of capital are present in these families, however, cultural capital in its embodied and institutionalised state is key in this case. Participants see both professional careers and dual career families as a norm. The idea of 'prestigious' jobs forms the core of their work-related values, expectations and objectives. They create families with highly educated professionals, who expect these women to make careers, but also support them in career-making in every possible way. Most married women live in owned properties in good areas in London.

2. What strategies within and beyond work do migrants deploy for making careers?

Participants work in different occupations and sectors of economy. They deploy a range of strategies and mobilise different resources to succeed in professional careers. They secure access to formal 'prestigious' jobs. They enrich their cultural capital through formal and informal learning. Most of them complete post-graduate studies in the UK building on their regional HE qualifications. Half of women used English language in post-Soviet workplaces or by working in international organisations. Overall, they are successful in transferring their pre-UK knowledge, 'skills' and work experience in white-collar jobs. Those who enter 'non-prestigious' jobs after migration find their ways out of de-skilling. Additionally, some of them capitalise on their migrant and non-migrant connections and ability to speak several languages. Half of them build on their regional backgrounds at different stages in their careers working in the post-Soviet niche or Russian-speaking businesses in London. They also postpone career entry in the UK (to escape non-prestigious jobs), marriage and motherhood adopting a 'stability over careerism' strategy.

3. How do women migrants balance their professional and familial lives in the UK?

Inter-generational ability to combine professional and familial lives is another explanation for successful career-making. In fact, this is how they understand 'the golden mean' in their lives. They appreciate both public and private lives as their Soviet mothers and even grandmothers. Depending on earnings, these women either share equally financial responsibilities with their partners or contribute otherwise to the family budget. Yet, they share equally housework with them. In regard to parenthood, these women prefer to bear main responsibility for childcare for one or two years while their partners turn into breadwinners. Most women work full-time; however, findings suggest that half of them switch to 'relaxed careers' and part-time jobs after maternity leave. This scenario reflects their preferences as well as the ability of their partners to fulfil the breadwinner role. Most women, who are in their thirties, occupy middle level labour market positions and plan to have children. It seems that the post-Soviet gender order adapts very well on British soil.

8.2 Interdisciplinary contribution of the study

This study adopts a career trajectory approach with several methodological innovations. Recent studies explore career trajectories either in a quantitative tradition, focusing on labour market integration (Tomlison 1999; Vasquez 2009; Dutch & Struck 2011), or at policy and organisational level (Cooke & Platman 2009; Valenduc et al. 2009; Castano & Webster 2012). However, today very few employees work in the same workplace for the whole their lives. Therefore, it is proposed to explore career trajectories as a self-managed process focusing on the interplay between work-related meanings, strategies and actions. At the same time, the focus on mobility between countries and workplaces does not dismiss occupational stability as a value and a strategic objective. Exploring migrants' careers across time and space leads to recognition of the importance of connecting pre-migration and post-migration work experiences. Furthermore, the impact of both families of origin and place of origin has to be considered for understanding work-related values and career strategies. So far the trans-border career approach has been mainly applied to those migrants who move from one country to another and settle in a host society rather than to so-called 'trans-national

professionals' (Nowicka 2006). In fact, it is a big question whether in reality all mobile professionals can be easily called trans-national.

This thesis contributes to debates in the sociology of work and gendered migration studies in several respects. First, it shed light on a particular group of 'skilled' women who often enter the EU through non-skilled routes remaining invisible for research and policy analysis (Kofman 2000; 2012). Second, it problematizes the issue of victimisation of migrant women in public and academic discourses (Slany et al. 2010: 12; Campani 2010: 153). The dominant view is that women migrants' labour market outcomes are constrained because of segregation by gender and nationality. This study shows that we do not have to treat women migrants as victims and it is indeed possible to appreciate their agency by reconstructing the range of strategies they deploy both within and beyond the labour markets in order to succeed in career-making. Most of the participants to this research show clear plans as to how to fulfil their professional aspirations, mobilising different resources. Findings also suggest that some women from the FSU are successful in making careers in Western Europe, what correlates with few relevant studies on East European women in Denmark and Germany (Liversage 2009a; Jungwirth 2011). It is interesting that gender is not perceived by them as an obstacle for making careers in London, though it is considered by some women as a barrier for making 'top careers'. This is consistent with arguments from cross-national scholarship about the persistence of glass ceiling for both local and migrant women.

Third, most migrants' jobs continue to be highly gendered (Mcllwaine 2008; Wills et al. 2010) and many women migrants are relegated to low-paid low-skilled 'female' jobs (Kiblitskaya 2004; Slany and Malek 2005; Capussotti et al. 2007). However, only half of the participants to this research work in feminised jobs or occupations. So, some women migrants can succeed in entering mixed or male dominated jobs and sectors. This is particularly the case in Western Europe as in contrast to Southern Europe (Slany and Malek 2005; Raghuram 2004; Bulova 2006; Wallace and Vincent 2007; Pugliese 2009). This scholarship supports not only the idea that national labour markets shape women's work and career prospects, but also the emerging theme that global cities have acquired a distinctive role in differentiating migrants' opportunities (Sassen 1991; Harnett 2003; Schiller & Caglar 2009; Wills et al. 2010). London as a global city provides migrants with both opportunities and threats, especially because of its flexible labour markets. Flexibility and precariousness can have a mixed reception and cannot be judged univocally. Some women find their 'precarious' flexible jobs useful for balancing familial and working lives. Attention to

country of origin histories, values and experiences is equally essential to identify explanatory factors in career making. The association with the FSU at the level of meanings and *habitus* (Bourdieu 1984:170) can partly explain the tendency to work in mixed and masculinised occupations and sectors. In the post-socialist countries both the educational system and labour market are historically 'less sex segregated' (Jungwirth 2011: 115).

Fourth, numerous studies suggest that women migrants are often de-skilled after migration due to being 'doubly disadvantaged' in the host society (Ackers 1998; Kosygina 2007). Deskilling is understood as working in jobs not related to the migrant's educational background and pre-migration professional experience as well as working below qualifications within the relevant occupation (Kofman 2012). It is debatable whether in migration context those who do not have any work experience and enter jobs below their qualifications should be considered de-skilled (Nowicka 2012). This study tries to understand why some highly educated women may be trapped in low-skilled jobs while others succeed in entering 'skilled' after migration. The likelihood of the former occurrence appears to be greater for those few participants who lack access to formal jobs or sufficient language proficiency, but also pertains to those who did not have previous professional experience or 'Western' degrees.

Additionally, findings suggest that those who originate from less privileged families and possess lower levels of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986) are more likely to work in precarious jobs for longer periods, even if they possess UK as well as country of origin qualifications. In contrast, those with access to a combination of factors such as formal jobs, good English, pre-UK work experience and British degrees have proved able to start immediately their careers in London by accessing 'skilled' jobs. Overall, many participants progressed in terms of career in the region, however, half of them underwent de-skilling after migration entering precarious jobs in feminised or mixed sectors without career opportunities. It can be stated that less privileged and resourceful highly educated migrants are exploited in the labour markets, at least for some period. the career trajectory approach allows to establish that over time all participants progress in terms of employment position and pay. They are working today in London in what they consider 'prestigious' jobs, which in their own accounts are professions with high intellectual content as opposed to routine or manual jobs. It also means that some of them have found ways out of de-skilling, strategising around different forms of

capital and opportunities, including some cases of re-skilling. The latter is consistent with findings from some other studies (Erel 2009; Liversage 2009 a).

This study also addresses gaps in knowledge about the ways women migrants combine their professional and familial lives calling for further comparative research in this field. The initial assumption was that work-life balance represents even a more serious burden for women migrants. Work-life balance issues have been analysed at an individual level to initiate a discussion on these issues in a particular case of women migrants in London. Particular attention has been given to ideas and practices of managing household, family budget and parenthood. However, findings suggest that these women are quite successful at balancing their professional and family lives. This conclusion is based on a threefold explanation. First, participants originate from families where since Soviet times women are expected to combine family and career tasks. This dual work and family orientation is perceived as a normal practice for them, even in the host society. Second, participants proved to have achieved a more or less equal division of labour in sharing household chores with their progressive 'Western' or 'Westernised' partners from the FSU. The latter development represents a marked shift from the gendered division of labour which exists in the Soviet families they originate from. Finally, it seems that public debates on work-life balance in the EU and the UK positively contribute to these women's attitudes. Due to time and space constraints the issue of work-life balance in the workplace is only partly explored. It can be concluded that employees of foreign origin have to be incorporated into debates on restructuring, 'flexibility' and work-life balance at organisational and policy level in the UK (Lewis 2001, 2002; Roper et al. 2003; Lewis & Roper 2008, 2009; Lewis et al. 2007, 2016).

The interpretation of migrants' ideas and practices through post-Soviet gender order lenses is one of the main contributions to gendered area studies (Bowers 1996; Ashwin 2000). Yet so far, the migrant's region or country of origin is rarely added to the equation when migrants' practices of managing household and parenthood are studied. This research attempts at rectifying this deficit by exploring intergenerational social reproduction. It seems that, migration has not radically changed post-Soviet women's position in the labour market as well as attitudes to work and family. In the USSR, ideologies, institutions and practices of heterosexuality and family as well as of work and motherhood were sustained on a state level. In the post-Soviet period employment, family as well as childbearing has moved from state duty to private responsibilities. (Ashwin 2000, 2006; Kay 2006, 2007) However, women

continue being strongly attached to professional life themselves identifying as working mothers, both in the region and beyond it (Aivazova 2001; Engel 2004; Cretu 2010).

Interviews reveal that women's life and work plans are intertwined in complex ways. A particularly interesting find lied in that these women are partly changing their attitudes to marriage, motherhood and work-family balance while retaining their attitudes to work as a sphere for self-realization and socialisation, even if they claim not to be career-oriented. The association between work and socialisation is widespread in contemporary post-industrial societies. Very few women indicated their changing attitude to motherhood has made it into an additional area for self-realisation. 'When the job market is unable to sustain and meet women's ambitions… the private sphere emerges as a possible location' (Capussotti et al. 2007: 131-2). Most participants who are in their thirties postpone marriage and motherhood, what is consistent with relevant studies in the region (Ashwin 2006). They can be said to adopt and perform an 'enlightened' version of the so called Soviet 'working mother contract' (Cretu 2011). Ultimately, it seems that life priorities, work-related values and gender attitudes only partly change after migration.

This thesis also contributes to policy debates on women professionals crossing borders outside the institutionalised 'skilled' migration route (Raghuram 2004; Kofman & Raghuram 2005; Kofman 2011, 2012). It is already been established that the migration of professionals is not necessarily part of the controlled and recorded 'skilled' migration to the EU and UK. Yet research on 'invisible' groups of migrants which are 'privileged' enough, but are also restricted in a host society, needs further development from a comparative perspective. Research on which this thesis is based has partly explored the structural conditions which facilitate and constrain these women migrants' integration in the London labour market. The starting point has been ideas and practices of career-making at an individual level. However, it can be said that the identified 'success factors' reflect the hierarchical structure of society, which privileges those who are more resourceful in so much as they can build on different forms of capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1986; Bourdieu et al. 2002) in the context of migration.

This research shows that studying public and private lives as inter-linked in the context of migration can be fruitful. Recent studies on migrants' dual–career couples emphasise that migrants' professional lives cannot be understood without studying their private and family lives. (Shinozaki 2014) Moreover, combining career and family does not necessarily

disadvantage women in dual-career families (Wailer & Yansey 1989) even in migrants' families (Meares 2010). Recent conceptualisations of social reproduction frameworks in gendered migration studies have progressed in this direction (Locke et al. 2013; Kofman & Raghuram 2015). However, mainstream migration studies remain 'family-blind'. Work-life balance has become a subject only in a few studies of organisational policies for expatriate families (Ravasi et at. 2013; Khokher & Beauregard 2014) or dual-career families in academia (Schiebinger 2010; Leinfellner 2015).

From a gender point of view it has to be pointed out that this research is focused on life and work experiences of women professionals what represents one of its key contributions to knowledge, but also one of its limitations. Would findings of this study be relevant to post-Soviet men professionals living and working in London? It can be assumed that they are more likely to be found in Finance and IT sectors in London. The findings of this study suggest that participants' partners who originate from the FSU are also undergoing changes in their classed and gendered subjectivities. The ways post-Soviet men balance their personal/family and professionals lives across time and space are yet to be discovered. Overall, little is known about work-related gendered experiences of migrants from the FSU in the UK since research on post-Soviet migrations to the UK is overwhelmingly diaspora, ethnicity and identity focused (see 1.2 and 4.5). Therefore, I believe that future research on both men's and women's career trajectories would give a more complete picture of migration of professionals from the post-Soviet space to the West/ EU, in general and to the UK/London, in particular. It would also allow us to contrast and compare men's and women's lives and careers from a gender perspective. Finally, a similar research with men would let us test the hypothesis, which can be generated on the basis of this study: post-Soviet men professionals originate from urban families of (post)Soviet specialists. If that is so, theoretical elaborations about the multiple connections between mobility and class formation in the context of post-Soviet changes would have a more rich soil for growing.

In summary, findings from this research suggest that post-Soviet migrant women, who originate from families of Soviet specialists, have become active agents of social reproduction of dual-career families and future knowledge workers across borders or trans-nationally. At the same time their working agency can be seen as an integral part of life strategising. This study therefore contributes to initial attempts to incorporate family and work perspectives in the context of migration (Truong 1996; Jungwirth 2008, 2011). It shows

how, also in the context of migration, the worlds of production and reproduction can be studied as inter-linked dimensions. It is also suggested how to explore migrants' working agency as a complex social phenomenon. The reconstruction of participants' career trajectories shows how work-related and family-related values and expectations interplay with career objectives which are found embedded in their narrations. For example, it seems that most participants are satisfied with what could be defined as 'middling careers' which are understood by them as 'relaxed careers'. This can be put in connection with the fact that the neoliberal economy provides jobs to those of foreign origin not only at the top and at the bottom of London's labour markets (Favell 2008a, b; Smith & Favell 2009 (2006); Wills et al. 2010). So far, analysts and academics have paid far less attention to middle-range jobs which are often occupied by both local and foreign women. This study shed some light in this area. Finally, if trans-border careers are understood as an imprint and outcome of life strategising across time and space, studying life strategising from a (trans-national) class perspective seems to be fruitful for future research.

8.3 What transborder careers tell us about class and social transformation?

This thesis aimed at understanding how working agency is interconnected with broader social processes. If to summarise the key findings of this research (see 8.1) the following is clear: despite diversity in occupations, types of employment, earnings and career prospects participants share socio-cultural backgrounds and demonstrate a striking similarity in work-related values, strategies and actions. They suggest that a specific combination of the latter explains the ability to enter prestigious jobs and progress in careers both in the region and in the UK. It also can be stated that this group of migrants display a relatively successful transferability and conversion of different forms of capital across borders and their expansion after migration. It seems that their life and career trajectories 'follow the same pattern'. Meanwhile, variations in participants' professional biographies, migratory experiences, marital status as well as their parents and partners' backgrounds do not radically change women professionals' social positions and key life events.

Thus, it can be concluded that a particular *social trajectory* (Bourdieu 1984: 124; Bourdieu et al. 2002: 3-4) characterises this group of women migrants which can be interpreted from a class perspective. So, participants belong to the same social group not only from region of

origin and gender points of view, but also in class terms. It was already pointed out by some researchers that a very diverse and fragmented post-Soviet diaspora is forming and expanding in the West and in the UK, in particular (Kopnina 2005; Malyutina 2015a; Pechurina 2015, 2017). However, this diaspora can be found beyond the Western world and should not be seen through 'Russian-ness lenses', even if it is one of its key features. In short, regional backgrounds and shared Soviet past (Byford 2009; Malyutina 2015b) as well as the reality of post-Soviet transformations (Cretu 2014, 2016) characterise this diaspora. Seeing diasporas through class lenses, what includes relationships between migrants, calls for further research.

Another logic question which occurs is whether the main similarities in the value system and career strategising between participants of this study are relevant for post-Soviet professionals who live in other Western cities, such as Amsterdam, Berlin, New York or Paris. Are they all part of trans-nationalising middle class, if it exists? Since class experienced on individual and collective level can be understood as the outcome of interplay between social position within a nation and on a global scale (Wallerstein 1974, Weiss 2005) it seems that this group of migrants is quite privileged not only in the region, but also trans-nationally. Some recent theoretical elaborations on class and radicalisation of social inequalities above nation states suggest that they cannot be studied with national sociologies of class anymore (Weiss 2005, Beck 2007). Yet, class analysis has recently become incorporated into migration scholarship through empirical studies (Van Hear 2004, Agullier 2003; Heather 2005; Kelly & Lusis 2006; Nohl et al. 2006, Weiss 2006) and appearing more theoretical works (Van Hear 2014). For all these reasons the key findings of this study are conceptualised here from a trans-national class perspective to better understand the interplay between class and migration (Van Hear 2014) while the latter is seen an integral part of on-going social transformation processes (Castles 2007, 2010, 2017).

This study suggests that social class plays an important part in migration outcomes. It has been pointed out that 'international migration and social mobility cannot be separated' (Scott 2006: 1123). Meanwhile, the very possibility of using different forms of capital transnationally reflects a privileged position (Weiss 2005). It has been already pointed out that mobility of labour and capital, deregulation and changes in the world of work have to be studied as inter-linked (Sassen 2001, 2005; Hamnett 2003; Wills et al. 2010: 1-27) while polarisation of labour markets and occupational polarisation can be seen as one of the outcomes of this interplay (Castles 2010; Wills et al. 2010: 28-57). However, this is true not only for 'middling' transnationals moving within 'developed' countries (Conradson &

Latham 2005) or free moving *Eurostars* (Favell 2008). Therefore, migrants' socio-cultural backgrounds can be seen as a pre-condition, not necessarily as an outcome of work experiences in migration (Csedo 2008: 806).

Overall, post-Soviet women migrants with relatively high level cultural capital and a wide range of strategies are quite successful in securing (trans-national?) middle class lives through building both professional careers and dual career families. This way, 'successful' migrants' strategies become part of broader societal processes (Cretu 2013). Moreover, this study shows that pursuit of transborder professional careers reveals a strong case of social re-production of urban professional families and not necessarily social upward mobility. Yet, individual and family migration histories have to be put into *longue duree* perspective or into the historical time context (Liversage 2009; Remennik 2011).

The link between consequences of a dramatic fall of the post-socialist region on a global scale and the effects of *shock therapy* (Clarke 1990, 1993, 2002, 2007; Gerber & Hout 1998; Reddaway & Glinsky 2001; Dale 2002, Richmond 2005) on life strategising what included migration scenarios (Morokvasik 2004; Heyns 2005; Meardi 2012) was made, but there was a need for more empirical studies on this connection. This study suggests that sudden, radical and profound changes in the post-socialist society which led to collective 'cultural trauma' (Sztompka 2000, 2003) which can last over several generations in multiply ways shaped participants' life and career strategising within and beyond the region. Additionally, participants originate from families of Soviet knowledge workers or specialists who have a very unsecure socio-economic position post-1991 as well as working class people. It seems that participants' parents represent those who adapted to new socio-economic reality more or less successfully post-1991 in contrast to many others. They could convert different forms of capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1986) acquired in the Soviet period into a relatively privileged social position during Transition from planned to market economy. However, the level of education, embodied knowledge and 'skills' as well as white-collar occupations and even senior labour market positions in these families do not guarantee 'decent' living in the region.

These families occupy a very narrow stratum between 'the very wide poor' and 'the very narrow rich' in the region which I would call forming or 'incomplete' middle class in contrast to the Western one, having lower level of social security and socio-economic well-being. Therefore, in my opinion, migration of children of Soviet specialists to the 'Western civilisation' hides *a silenced desire* to become part of established 'Western' middle class, not

the unstable forming national or regional one. This *silenced desire* reveals quite a rational preference 'to join' a more secured and well-off Western middle class rather than to take part in the laborious historical formation of middle class (Bourdieu 1987, 1989; Wacquant 1991, 2013) in their countries of origin. However, roughly speaking, they are 'caught in the historical process' of trans-nationalisation of social inequalities and class relations. It can be assumed that these representatives of *trans-national middle class* (Weiss 2005, 2006) are not only formed by this process, but that they are and will be active agents of its formation.

At the same time, this 'trans-national class privilege' can come at odds with vulnerability related not only to such factors as gender and 'migrant status', but also to the fall of the region on a global scale, diminishing welfare state and growing precarity at work. Obviously, the effects of neoliberalism on labour and welfare which connect sending and receiving countries and regions, have divergent but comparable impact on more and less privileged migrants. Only at a first glance it can be said that participants of this research benefited from migration 'to the West' at the background of numerous studies showing that most working men and women have turned into victims of neoliberalism both in the region and beyond it (Upchurch 1998, 2012; Morrison et al. 2012; Morrison et al. 2012, 2013; Meardi 2012; Meardi et al. 2013; Upchurch et al. 2015). It is debated whether men have benefited from huge social transformations in the region in comparison with women (True 2000, Ashwin 2000, 2006; Pollert 2003, 2005; Kay 2006, 2007; Adamson 2015, 2017). Many migrants from the post-socialist region suffer from exploitation and social insecurity in the West and the UK, 'fixing' the problems of aging population and labour shortages as well as economic restructuring, deregularisation and flexibilisation of work (Curie 2007; Ciupius 2011; MacKenzie & Forde 2009; Samaluk 2015, 2017).

So, findings of this study suggest that participants' their life and work experiences differ from those who are often called 'labour migrants' and it seems that they have benefited from occupational polarisation at the very heart of neoliberalism. At the same time participants' life stories and migration scenarios reflect world/regional inequalities developing in the context of 'the new world disorder' (Anderson 1993; Wallerstein 2004; Castles 2010) and neoliberalism galvanised by globalisation (Bauman 1998; Massey et al. 1998; Portes 2010) and '*razval*' (in Russian). The latter means not only the fall of Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union as it is 'known from outside', but the whole breakdown of the previous system accompanied by profound 'traumatogenic changes' (Sztompka 2000) in the post-socialist society that followed. Moreover, in the process of integrating with global economy

post-Soviet region turned into one of its peripheries (Lane 2009) or semi-peripheries in Wallenstein's terms. Therefore, post-Soviet migrants' working agency has to be studied through prism of these historical events.

Social insecurity grew with unprecedented speed in the post-socialist countries, what is considered to be one of the key features of so called 'reflexive (or second) modernaziation' (Beck 2007: 700). Therefore many migrants from the post-socialist region 'chose the 'flight forward' to organise welfare for themselves' (Meeus 2013, 2017). It includes 'privileged' group of migrants. Although social insecurity is growing trans-nationally post-Soviet welfare states lose the battle against Western welfare states. Future research among different groups of migrants from the FSU in the West would shed light on perceptions of vulnerability and privilege which could be connected to 'geography of needs' concept (Morrison & Sacchetto 2014). Finally, most participants are precarious workers with 'middling' positions in the labour markets and. Therefore, another direction of future research could be connected with studying links between 'privilege', 'vulnerability' and precarity through migrants' perceptions of these issues which might change over time and space.

Key class-related findings can be grouped across two societal lines: social reproduction of both knowledge workers and dual career families across time and space. At the background of revival of a class perspective across social sciences (Wacquant 2013) a Bourdieusian approach was applied recently in migration studies (Nohl et al. 2006; Waters 2008, 2012; Oliver & O'Reilly 2010; Rye 2003, 2011; Urel 2010, 2015; Nowicka 2012, 2015; Cederberg 2015; Deeb & Bauder 2015; Samaluk 2016, 2017). This study resonates only with some of them and contradicts others. It contributes to development of a Bourdieusian approach in migration scholarship and refining Bourdieu's concepts mainly across social reproduction thesis which can be extended across national borders or trans-nationally.

Additionally, the idea of mismatch between *habitus* and *field* which leads to *hysteresis* in Bourdieu's terms (Bourdieu 1995 (1977); Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992) can be useful for understanding complexity of migrations from the post-socialist region in another respect. It can be suggested that migrants from the post-socialist region are traumatised 'there' as well as 'here'. On the one hand, those who lived and/or grew up in the socialist times experience 'cultural trauma' (Sztompka 2000) under huge changes in the post-socialist society 'switching' from planned to market economy and neoliberalism. On the other, their habitus might be 'lagging behind' the field, a host society in this case. (Nowicka 2015) Is it the case

of ‘double hysteresis’? Nevertheless, cultural trauma might have had a more significant effect on their life strategising. Roughly speaking, adaptation to neoliberal restructuring takes place in the post-socialist region first and then it might be experienced it in the Western world. Overall, Bourdieu’s conceptual and methodological elaborations are applicable for the post-Soviet case and could be employed in future in greater detail, but also with great caution.

Building on migration scholarship, these migrants can be identified as ‘middling’ trans-nationals who differ from both labour migrants and elite movers (Conradson & Latham 2005; Smith 2005) or ‘transnational professionals’ (Nowicka 2006). But at the end of the day they are also migrants with a point of departure and a point of destination, even in the cases of onwards migration. In most cases participants of this study lived and worked only in their places of origin and the UK. Yet, for this group of migrants most of whom are not planning to move back to countries of origin, a return is more likely to happen than moving to a third country (3 cases against one). If to be more precise, these returnees moved back to their home cities or post-Soviet capitals. These are the key reasons for the author to develop *transborder* (not transnational) *career trajectory* as topic and tool of investigation. In epistemological terms, despite being very fruitful across social sciences a ‘trans-national turn’ is full of limitations which are yet to be addressed in future and therefore has to be applied in a critical rather than ‘celebrating’ manner (Hurtgen 2014: 217).

To sum up, most migratory paths explored represent voluntary mobility when the choice of where and how to migrate and live is conditioned by socio-economic background. Moreover, ‘the choice of whether to move or stay put is shaped by resources of different endowments of capital – class for short.’ (Van Hear 2014) Available resources define what destination is *chosen* and how moving is experienced. A transcript excerpt presented in this thesis for methodological and ethical reasons (see 4.4 and App. II), also represents a collective narrative of a particular type of migration to ‘the West’ pre-conditioned by class. Mobility itself is turning into a privilege, as it was well put by Zigmund Bauman: ‘the riches are global, the misery is local’. However, numerous studies, including this one, uncover migratory experiences existing between these two extremes (Favell 2008; Smith & Favell 2008; Csedo 2008, 2009). Migrant professionals can also be precarious workers; they can face discrimination and de-skilling and have to cope with all sorts of barriers in a host society. The question of whether they part of ‘the entitled’ (Skeggs 2004)/‘trans-national middle class’ (Weiss 2005, 2006) or rather ‘precariat’/‘the new dangerous class’ (Standing 2011) remains open.

Overall, it seems that participants of this study represent 'the class for itself' who can be mobile or immobile (Van Hear 2004, 2014). The knowledge economy differentiates both local and migrant workers on the basis of 'skills' which is meant to increase social inequality (Wills et al. 2010), often with negative consequences for 'skilled' women migrants (Kofman 2007, 2011). In fact, mobility contributes to developing new forms of social stratification on a global scale (Kofman 2004; Kofman & Raghuram 2006). New forms of hierarchy between states and citizenships themselves have been recognized (Ong 1999; Castles 2001, 2010; Weis 2005; Beck 2007; Amelina et al. 2017). However, it is rarely pointed out that today 'skilled' migrants also contribute to the trans-nationalisation of social inequality (Weiss 2005).

From a regional perspective it is a big question whether this group of migrants really represents 'the emerging middle class' (Daly 2008; Kharas 2010) or 'the expanding middle' (Wilson & Dragusanu 2008) on the move. To what extent this class is 'new', 'precarious', 'entitled' and 'privileged' is a theme for further studies the author is interested in. It is certain at this stage that we are dealing with migration from so called 'South' or 'East', 'developing world' or 'emerging markets' to the West. It is migration from the 'sovok' (a popular mockery nickname for everything what is Soviet) to the 'Western civilization' and not the other way round, despite the evidence of some 'Westerners' and 'Western' companies are present in the region. 'Imaginary West' and 'Western goods' became a subject of critical post-socialist studies (Rausen 2002; Burrell 2010), however it is yet to be explored in migration context.

'Class consciousness' formation which emerged as a theme puts ontological and epistemological puzzles for future research since migrants are caught between national, regional and trans-national hierarchical structures. In the case of post-Soviet migrations the picture is even more complicated since class systems in the region are under (re)formation in the context of huge social transformations. (Shakirova 2007; Daly 2008; Sorocian et al. 2015). Soviet society had a particular social structure and post-Soviet societies are even more complex as some recent studies demonstrate (Patico 2008; Lane 2011; Walker 2011; Narvselius 2012, Kordonsky 2016). Yet, a gender dimension of this transformation is rarely addressed (Gapova 2004, 2009). On the basis of this study it can be stated that class systems are under formation in the post-Soviet region and migrants' accounts reflect these processes.

Most participants originate from families of Soviet specialists and create families with highly educated professionals similar to 'British'/'European'/'Western' middle classes from educational, occupational, socio-economic and lifestyle points of view. Findings on their migratory experiences, property (what and where), practices of outsourcing housework/childcare as well as of non-remitting to their countries of origin support this argument. Nevertheless, the idea of 'not fitting' into British society in class terms was shared by half of the participants. At the same time another half of the participants identified themselves as middle/lower 'middle class'. It might reflect 'class-consciousness in-making' and the tendency towards 'turning into' middle-class on a national, regional and global scale.

Therefore, migrants' classed self-perception represents an interesting, but also quite a complex phenomenon for studying, since migrants are embedded into both home and host societies while globalisation and trans-nationalisation processes contribute to this complexity. Yet, 'Western' and British society became more complex from a social class perspective reflected in 'class fragmentation in its middle layers' (Savage et al. 2013). Finally, class intersects with other forms of identities and inequalities (Anthias & Yuval-Davis 1983; Anthias 1992, 2012; Brah 1992; Acker 2006; Brah & Phoenix 2004; Kofman 2004; Kofman & Raghuram 2006; McDowell 2008; Nash 2008; Brooks & Redlin 2009; Anthias & Cederberg 2010; Cederberg 2010; Amelina 2017). At the same time it has been already pointed out that a class dimension was underdeveloped in feminist, intersectionality and migration studies over the last decades (Acker 1999, 2000; Aguilar 2003; Kelly & Lusis 2006; Kofman 2008; Cretu 2013; Van Hear 2014).

Nevertheless, class self-identification among migrants and their role in (post-Soviet) class formation looks promising for further research. However, it might be difficult to conduct it due to the persistence of methodological nationalism in social sciences (Wallerstein 1974, 2004; Wimmer & Glick-Schiller 2003; Levitt & Glick-Schiller 2004;) which manifests itself in migration studies (Amelina 2010; Amelina & Faist 2012; Amelina et al. 2013) as well as in nationally bound class analysis rooted mainly in the theories of Marx and Bourdieu (Butler & Savage 1995; Bertaux & Thompson 1997; Savage 2000; Skeggs 2004; Devine et. al. 2005; McDowell et al. 2005; McDowell 2006; Savage et al. 2013 in the UK). The latter was critiqued by some researchers only recently (Aguilar 2003; Beck 2000, 2007; Weiss 2005).

Several questions came to my mind on the final stage of writing up this thesis: How can we learn about class from migrants? How do they fit reconfigurations in class systems/relations in home and host societies? Why do migrants struggle with putting themselves into a unequal social system of a host country even when they are settled? How long does this process take? How perception of class belonging can differ from the reality of social positions? What are the trans-national forms of social class formation and reproduction? ALL IN ALL, this research on post-Soviet women transborder career trajectories challenges ethnicity-focused migration studies and methodological nationalism in social sciences from a regional perspective. Epistemologically, it refines a career trajectory approach applied in labour migration studies, mainly through linking work-related meanings, strategies and actions across time and space. This thesis makes a timely interdisciplinary contribution to understanding of societal transformation and reveals multiple but uneven connections between the post-socialist world and one of the global centres of neoliberal capitalism.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interviewing

I. General data on a participant

Name/pseudonym
Year of birth
Home country (urban/rural)
Family of origin (size, social position, education & occupation of parents & siblings)
Citizenship(s)
Main place of residence
In UK\London from (first time)
Type of visa (initial and current if exists)
Education (level, profile)
Last job in home country/other country?
Last salary in home country/other country?
Singlehood/Family/Partnership status
Husband (Nationality, Age, Job)
Children (number, age, born in the UK)
Job/source of earnings in home country
Job/source of earnings in London (first, current, salary, type)
Other sources of income
Employment status
Last/Current job(s) (job itself, pay, and character)
Religion/Secular
Previous migrations (country, first and last occupation, salary)
Character of state (permanent, temporary, return)
Location (borough, area)
Current social/class position?
Accommodation (property size, owned/rented)
Contact details

II. Main study

1. **Work experiences**

Have you ever worked in your country? Tell me please about your work at home…
For how long did you work? Did you enjoy it? Why yes/no?
What did you expect from work before starting to work?
Was your work connected with your education? Is it important to you? Why yes/no?
Have you ever been a member of trade union? What was your job? What did it give you?
Were all these jobs full-time formal? Is it important to you?
Have you ever worked in any other country but the UK? When? For how long?
What were your jobs in other countries? Did you enjoy it? Why?
What was your last salary before you moved to the UK? Did you have career prospects?
When and why did you decide to migrate to the UK? Were you moving to the UK alone?
Did someone advise you to move to the UK? Who? What were you said?
How did your family and friends react on your intention to move to the UK?
Was it hard to get a visa? Where was it issued?
Did you know somebody in the UK before migration?
What were your aspirations before arrival? What did you think about work in the UK?
What was your first job in London? Did you find it quickly?
How did you find it? Did anyone help with the job search? Was it hard to find the 1st job?

Did you change it later? Why?
Did you face de-skilling upon arrival to the UK? How do you explain it?
In what jobs/sectors did you work in the UK?
Could you please tell me your labour story from your first to your last/current work...
Could you please tell me why you were moving from one jobs to the others…
Under what working conditions did you work? (How) did it change over time?
What types of contract did you have? (How) did it change over time?
Have you ever worked without contract in the UK? Why? How do you feel about it?
What are the pluses and minuses of being a formal & informal worker?
Why did you switch from in/formal to in/formal job?
Do you think you moved far from their initial job in the UK? How can explain that?
Do you think your work is skilled or not? Is it complex? Is it important to you? Why?
Why do you think it easier for you to find a job in the private sector of economy?
Have you ever worked extra? Why? What are the pluses & minuses of doing extra work?
Have you ever combine 2-3 jobs? Why? What are pluses & minuses of combining job?
Have you ever worked part-time? Why? What are the pluses & minuses of PT job?
Have you ever been self-employed? How do you feel about it? What are the differences?
Are you satisfied with your current job? What do you like/dislike about your work?
Are you satisfied with your current employment position? Do you think it will improve?
Are you satisfied with your current salary? Do you think it will be increased?
Do you think you are underpaid? Why?
Are you satisfied with work conditions at your current work? Why? Might it change?
Are you satisfied with working hours? Why?
Were satisfied with previous jobs? Which job you like/disliked most? Why?
Is it hard to do your jobs? Can anyone do it? What a person needs to 'succeed' in your field? How long it takes to become professional in your field?
Do you have some career prospects now? Is it important to you? Why?
Is there any relation between your educational and professional background and work in London? How do you feel about it? How can you explain it?
What did you expect from work in the UK first? How did it change over time? And why?

2. Work-related strategies

Tell me please about any challenges you are meeting in London's labour markets…
How are you looking for jobs? (How) was it changing over time? Why?
Is it harder to find a job and/or be promoted in the context of crisis? What changed?
Do you think your citizenship has any impact on your opportunities at work? How?
Did your opportunities in work increased after you've got British/EU citizenship?
Do you think your immigrant status has any impact on your opportunities at work? How?
Do you think your race/ethnicity has any impact on your opportunities at work? How?
Do you think the fact you are from Eastern Europe has any impact on your opportunities at work? How?
Do you think the fact you are foreign born has some impact on your opportunities at work? How?
Do you feel yourself rather as a migrant or?
Would you say you are rather a labour migrant or family migrant?
Do you think your age has any impact on your opportunities at work? How?
Do you think your social background has any impact on your opportunities at work? How?
Do you think the language limits your opportunities in the labour markets?
Do you think the level of your work experience has any impact on your opportunities in the labour markets? How did you learn about it?
Are networks important for job search or career promotion? How did it change over time? What are the pluses and minuses in using networks?
Do you think your level of skills has any impact on your job search and career?
What do you feel about these barriers? Are you trying to cope with them? How?

Which barriers can be overcome? Which ones not? Why?
Do you think your family or home country background has impact on your attitudes to work and career progression in London? In what way?
Do you think you'd work in your home country today? What would be your job?
Do you think the majority of your jobs are 'female'? How can you explain that?
Are these jobs also 'female' in your home country?
Do you think your sex influences on approaches to finding a job and career? How?
Do you think it's easier for you to find a 'female' job? Why? What can it be?
How 'male'/'mixed' jobs/sector differ from 'female' ones? What are the pluses and minuses of working in 'non-female' jobs/sectors?
If you were a man would you do other jobs? Why? Which jobs?
Do you think your education background/profession is 'female'? At home or here?
Do you think the jobs for women migrants exist? How can we explain it?
Do you think the labour market is divided? Rather on the base of nationality or gender?
What are you doing to move upwards in the labour markets?
Are you expecting to be promoted in your organization?
What are you doing to be promoted in your organization?
Is it important to you to be 'successful' in career? Why?
Are you planning to do something to 'succeed' in the labour markets? What? How long might it take?
Are planning to get further education? Why? In what? What might it give you?
Have you ever been re-skilled? Why? What did you give you?
Are you planning to re-skill? Why? How can you do that?
Would you like to try some 'non-female' job? Why? What king of jobs? Is it hard to find?
Do you think if you were local would you do this job? What would be your job?
Do you think it is easier to find jobs and be promoted if you are a local?
Do you know some migrants who are quite 'successful' in career-making? How did they succeed? Can you deploy their strategies of 'success'? Why?

3. Work relations and co-working

Tell me something about working with other people in the workplace…
Have you ever worked in some organisation in London? When? What sector? What job?
How many people worked there? For how long did that organisation exist?
What was it position in the industry? Did the company always had people coming and leaving? Why?
How many migrants were working there? From what countries? Of what age and gender?
Did you meet some migrants who worked there for a long?
What were the relationships between the employer and employees there?
Where there any differences between employers/managers attitudes to local and migrant workers? In what way? Why did it happen?
What were your relationships with the employers/managers at different jobs? Is it important to you? How and why did it change over time?
In what sectors migrants are usually working in London? How can you explain that?
What jobs migrants and local were doing in the same company? Any differences on pay?
Are you paid as locals for the same work? Why?
Are you paid as the other migrants for the same work? Why?
What are the differences between being paid per month and per hour?
Have you ever been not paid for your work? What was the job? For how long did you work there? Why do you think it happened?
What are nationality/age/gender of the employers/managers you worked for?
Were you working in a collective or individually at those companies? What do you like more and why? With how many people you worked?
What were your relationships with your colleagues? Any differences between co-working with locals/British ethnic minorities/other migrants?

Any friends among colleagues? What is their citizenship, race, ethnicity, age and gender? What were their occupations? Are you still in touch?
Have you ever asked your employer/manager/colleague about some help? What was it? Did they help? How?
How or by whom your work is organised? Does someone control you at work? How? Do you like it? Do you feel pressure? In what sense?
Have you ever been 'punished' by your employer/manager? How and why? Any consequences?
Have you ever have any conflicts at workplace? Why? With whom? How was it solved?
Did you have trade unions at those companies? Have you ever been a member of a TU in the UK? Why? For how long? What did it give you?
Was anyone of your colleagues a member of a TU? How can you explain that?
Do you know something about TUs in the UK? Do you think they protect workers?
Do you think TU help/should help migrant workers? How?
Have you ever seen some actions of protest at the workplace? Why did it happen? How was it resolved? Do you think it's an effective tool?
Do you think trade unions, contracts and some actions of protests are important? Why?
Have you ever solve some problems with your employer in a court? What was the case and how was it solved? Do you feel protected her? At home?
Would you like to do other jobs at those companies? Which ones? Why couldn't you get them? Is there any chance to get such jobs in future?
Was it more hard to do work at companies psychologically or physically? What are the risks of doing those jobs? Have you ever meet a person responsible for working conditions at the workplace? What he/she was doing? Is it helpful? Do you need it?
Have you ever signed a contract at work? Was it a collective or individual one? What was written there? Is it important to you to work by contract? How did you feel about working with contract? Any differences with working without contract?
Does employer help you somehow materially but salary? In what way? How do you feel?
Do you have paid holidays? Is it important to you?
Do you usually have a break? How long is it? What are doing during the break usually?
How and by whom are you paid? What are the differences between being paid officially and non-officially?
Did you progress in the companies? Did you become professional? Why? What changed?
Have you ever had probation period at your company? For how long? How much were you paid? Did you get a job? For how much your salary increased?
Do you have to compete with locals? In what sectors/jobs? What do you think about it?
Do you have to compete British ethnic minorities? In what sectors/jobs?
Do you have to compete other migrants? In what sectors/jobs? What you think about it?
How do you feel about competing with 'the others' in the labour markets? Is it stimulating?
Did you have to compete with the others at home? What was different?
What impact employers have on competition and the outcome of it?
Do you think the hierarchy between migrants exist in the UK/London?
Do you think your origin impact what position you occupy among other migrants workers? What is your position among the other migrants?
Do you think your compete with the other women migrants for jobs? What is your position among the other women migrants?
Have you ever visited a GP because of problems related to your work? What happened? Did the company pay for your treatment? What do you think about it?

4. Life/work 'balance'

Tell me please about your life outside the workplace…
Did someone from your family migrated? When? Where? Why? What are their jobs?
What are your attitudes to marriage and family? Is it important to you? Why?
How living in the UK changed your views on family?
Are you planning to marry? Why?

Would you like to have children? How many?
How do you think it might change your work prospects?
For how long have you been married? Do you know each other for a long?
Did you meet your husband in your country? Who had initiated migration?
Are you planning to have children? Is it important to you? Why?
How children changed your life? What impact your children have on your work?
What difficulties are you meeting combing your family life and work? How do you solve them? Are their any positive outcomes from being able to combine family life and work?
How do you think children might change your life/work?
What are your main expenses?
Who does contribute most to family budget? What do you feel about it? Could you call yourself/ your husband a breadwinner?
Do you send some money home? Why are doing that? What your partner think of it?
How do you send it? To whom? How much & how often? How are they spent?
How do you share home duties in your family?
Do your family responsibilities have any impact on your employment?
Do you belong to any community? Why? What does it give you?
Are you going to the church? What church? How often? What does it give you?
Are you addressing to some organisation which helps migrants or East Europeans? What is that? How do they help?
Is your ethnicity/nationality/region an important part of your identity?
Are you usually saying you are from your country of origin/Eastern Europe/FSU? What do you feel about that?
Are proud to be…? What is good about being…
Do you think you are a 'post-Soviet' person? Why?
Do you have some friends in London? Is it important to you? How did you meet them? For how long do you know each other?
Who are your friends in terms of sex, occupation, family status, citizenship and origins?
Do you know many East Europeans or post-Soviet people in London? What language do you speak with them?
Do they form their communities? Do you feel something in common with them? What is that?
Did you hear about Russian community in London? Do you belong to it? Why?
Have you ever heard about 'post-Soviet' community in London? Would you join it? Why? How would it differ from other communities?
Do you have some free time? How many days/hours per week? Would you like to have more free time? How would you spend it?
How do usually spend your leisure time? With whom?
Do you take part in virtual networks? Which ones? What does it give you?
How did you find a rented place? How much do you pay for rent?
With whom are you living? How did you meet?
Are you using NHS or private health services? How often do visit doctors? Is it expensive? Are you satisfied? Do you feel you are treated as locals at NHS?
Are you visiting your country? How often? What do you feel about it? Was is changing?
Are visiting some doctors in your home country? For what? Why? How often?
Are you staying in touch with your family and friends in your home country? How do you communicate? Is it important to you? Was it changing over time?
Are you feeling yourself at home in the UK/London? Why? Was it changing over time?
What do you feel about the word 'migrant'? Do you consider yourself a 'migrant' in the UK? What are the consequences for that?
Would you like help your children, parents, siblings to move to the UK? Why? How are you planning to do that?
Do you feel that immigration controls are increasing here? Why do you think it happens? Do you feel any negative from locals/British ethnic/other migrants in everyday life? How you know about that? Why it happens?

What do you feel about locals? British ethnic minorities? Other migrants? Was it changing over time? How? Why?
Do British authorities help migrants or cause problems only? In what way? Do you think it can be changed?
How migration issues and migrants are represented in the UK? In media particularly?
Do you see any 'demonization' of migrants in the media? What media? How often? What do they say/show? Why do you think it is the case?
Do you feel safe yourself in the UK? Why?
Do you think Britain is a classist country? How do you know? And you country?
What social position did you have at home? Same with you family? And now? What class you think you belong today in the UK?
Did you improve your socio-economic situation position in migration? Thanks to what?
What impact your family/partner has on your current position?
Do you think your job has any impact on your current class position? Do you think the job reflects class position in the UK? And there?
Do you expect to improve your class position? Are interested in that? What should you do for that?
Can you say that you didn't move to the UK in vein? Are you happy here? What should happen for you to feel happier here?
Do you think life and work in Britain changed you? How?
Were your life and work prospects changing in the UK? How and why?
Why are you doing this job? What do expect from doing this job?
Would you like to do this job all your life? Why? For how long are planning to do it?
What would you like to do next? Why? What should you do for that?
Does losing your job mean you would have to come back to your country? Are you afraid of that? Do you think you can easy find another job? Why? What job?
Have you ever run your own business? Alone? When & where? What was it? Was it big?
What were the pluses & minuses of doing business?
Would you like to start a business in London? Why? In what sphere? Why? What do you need for that? What should you do/have to succeed in doing business?
Do you think Britain is a better country for life and/or work? Why?
Are you saving money for coming back and investing in something at home? In what? For how long do you have to work for that?
Would you return to your country if the situation would improve? What should happen in your country for you to return?
Are you planning to return to your country? When do you think it might happen? What do you think would be your occupation at home?
Are you planning to move to another country? Which one? Why? Do you know somebody there? Why and when might it happen?
Would you like to live in the UK for all your life? Why? Do you think your children will feel themselves 'locals'? Is it important to you?
What are your plans for life and work in remote future? Why do you want that? How will you achieve that?

III. Research feedback:
My short biography (in case if an informant is asking anything about me)
How have you learnt about this research?
Why have you agree to this interview?
Was it interesting or boring? What you liked and what you didn't like? Why?
Did you feel comfortable during the interview?
How can I improve my interview skills?
Can I contact you by phone if I need some clarification for your reply?
Would you meet me again if I would like to continue to do this research?
Are you interested in reading any publications based on this study?
Could you please recommend me a person whom I could contact about taking interview?

IV. Reflecting on the following issues:

How & where we met
What was the reaction when asked about participation in this PhD study
Interview context – time and space
What the interviewer and an interviewee were wearing
What we were talking about before and after interview
What I was asked about
General feelings about participant before and after interview
How I felt myself during the interview
What was difficult to talk about for a participant
Rejected questions and sensitive issues: what and why
Were there unequal power relations? In what ways? Did I try to minimise them?
How a participant felt in terms of power relations
Did an interviewee feel herself comfortable? Why?
Do I feel we meet again? Why?
How relationships developed after the interview
Why we became friends with ones but not the others

Appendix 2: Laura's narrated story

Biographical note:

LAURA, a Kazakhstan citizen, was 32 when we first met. She was born in Soviet Kazakhstan and lived for 22 years in Karaganda. She moved to Astana (2004) and then to Almaty (2007). Her father died when she was 14. He was Head of Department of physics and mathematics. Her mother, an engineer-ecologist by education, lives in Astana. She had to manage some enterprise canteen in the 90s for family to survive. Laura's first job was assisting a cook at that canteen on summer holidays when she was a teenager (25£ p.m.). She taught English to pupils at home while her first year at college. She studied Finance and Auditing at college and then she went into a HE degree in Finance and Credit in Kazakhstan. She always worked while studying after she finished school. Therefore she took 'a leave' for a year and then switched to part-time studying at University.

Before moving to the UK/London Laura had different jobs at different workplaces and companies. After working in a small shop she worked as a sales person at a mall in Karaganda (1 year). When she 'turned 20' she was employed as translator/office manager at a road construction company (2 years). She lost her job and for a short time worked as PA before moving to Astana. This is where she made a career at another construction company progressing from accountant-'materialist' to chief accountant during 3 years (2004-07). Simultaneously she used to be a 'small accountant' for 7 companies offering her accounting services from home. One of these companies based in Almaty offered her to work for them on a full-time basis and this is where she moved next (2007). She worked there for around a year and this is where she met her boyfriend, who lived in Almaty temporarily. He is a Muscovite of German and Polish origin (35 y.o., Candidate in 'physmath'). By the time of the first interview he returned to Moscow and combined 'doing business' with part-time teaching work at school. Back then she decided to leave her job after her boyfriend left the company. Her last job in Kazakhstan as a project financial coordinator at a German-Kazakh consulting company (600£ p.m.) did not last long. During several years she together with her boyfriend developed buy-to-let business in Almaty what turned to be an additional source of income for Laura, her family (mother and sister) and her boyfriend.

In 2009 Laura moved with her sister from Almaty to London to study English, but then she decided to complete MSc in International Financial Management in London (2011) and MBA with specialisation in Global Marketing in Nice (2012). At the time of the first interview her sister lived in London. By the time of the second interview her sister moved to South Africa, following her partner she met at her workplace in London. The two sisters work at the same small British company (around 50 employees, owned by a Swiss national). The company provides E-learning services creating math games for children. Laura joined the company on her younger sister's recommendation and started to work under her supervision as an IT tester (FT, 22K). By the time of the second interview Laura became a content and R&D coordinator (FT, 25K). At first she rented with her sister a two-bedroom flat in Acton (1600£) and then she moved into a studio-flat on her own in North Kensington (800£). Later on she moved to her new partner's flat in Canary Wharf. He is a British national of Russian origin (PhD) who has a position of senior manager in an international consulting company. Laura was on post-study 3-year work permit visa when interviewed. She comes from a Kazakh family; her native language is Russian; she knows Kazakh as well; she speaks fluent French and English.

Methodological note: The flow of the interview conducted twice is not changed; a second interview was conducted in ten months. Due to time space reasons only a transcript excerpt with a focus on moving to London and initial work experience 'here' is presented below.

First interview:

How did you start to work at a German-Kazakh company?

That was my last job, I found it easy. I lived in Almaty by then. I didn't have a job, since my friend had different views with the company, I resigned as well. And in 2008 they had problems at the company too, they didn't pay wages anywhere. It's very simple [laughing] why people look for another job. No wages, the project has stopped. I started to look for a job, since I cannot sit just like that, of course. It looked like I found a job, I don't remember the company name, ether 'Kazakhstan consulting' or 'Kazconsulting', so I was taken into consulting.

What position?

I was appointed as a financial director of one of the projects…I worked there just for one month, at the end I sold my project and left. There were all women and one man, not a good person from all points of view… That's why I left, I cannot work with such people… He could molest young women, he is a German and thought that he was 'the first guy in the village'… He was also a mentor to the company director. I worked there just for a week and he offered to have lunch together. Personally I didn't want to go, but I had to because of subordination, I was a financial director and he was my boss. I was forced to have lunch with him *tete-a-tete* and I didn't like it. I complained about him to my boyfriend on phone… In London I feel myself very well with my Soviet background. As my mum said when she came, that it is like the Soviet Union, with all ethnic groups and no one oppresses the other, no one look down at anyone. Even in Moscow I can see sidelong glances, here no… But then I wouldn't live with someone if we are not married, this is connected with my Kazakh background. My mum wouldn't like it, if I moved to my boyfriend place even if we are in relationship since 2007. My mum wouldn't be happy about it. Perhaps another mother, with another background would take it easy and perhaps I will take it easier with my children…

Are you planning to marry?

It's a good question [laughing]. I will ask him and will tell you, meeting on Saturday in Nice.

[…]

How come you moved here?

I came here thanks to my boyfriend, he pushed me. You see I am kind of an active person, but information comes from all sides, not always from your head. We were talking on the phone and I cried. I said oh my God what kind of nasty people exist! I found a job but I had to sell the project. By the way I sold it to the Goethe – Institute. There is Goethe-Institute in Alma-Ata, here as well. Do you know? They propagate German language; similarly to Alliance Francaise propagate French across the world. So I found lot of mistakes in their financial statements, documented it and sold it. They were ready to sign a contract for three years and I had to be a manager of that project. I shook their hands and said 'thanks a lot, I am very glad, could you please pay me my salary, for my visa, I am leaving'. My sister couldn't find a job, then she found one at the Ministry of Justice. She finished MGU, it's a good University, but she came back to Astana. MGU with all its position promised a placement; they called once in a while with some offers. You know what a Ministry is like! You are taken for the lowest position and work there for ten years. Moreover, she started to work at the Ministry of Justice with her economic education, no clue. And I remember how she was crying to me on the phone at about 11pm saying she couldn't leave the office since her *superminister* needed some report on import-export. She said she didn't know anything about that and had to collect all data by tomorrow. It was something like if she wouldn't do that she couldn't work there. I said to her to leave the office. I am like that, if people are nasty at the workplace, I cannot stand that. I'd better 'gnaw the last crust', you see? I sent a taxi to pick her from work. I told her 'you are getting up, going out and not going to work tomorrow.

Just like that?

Yep, she is a student, imagine, five years younger, and me, with all that background. I told her that we would come up with something, that we'd find something. So my boyfriend said: 'Why are you seating there?' My English is pretty bad, there is crisis in the country, isn't it the time to escape? Not to escape, but to improve English. At first we planned to come for English school, to study half a year and return. That's it.

So you thought about the language…

We came for half a year, we met others, they came like us. Some had finances, some didn't have anything. And we came with support of my boyfriend, he helped us during first half a year. I also had capital, somehow my flats helped, we paid mortgages there and let them. And I came together with my sister, that's about mentality. My mum would hardly let us move one by one, she'd say no. And we left with understanding that my friend would help us. So we could live without working for half a year. Then my sister found a job at a Russian company. I was doing something for my boyfriend, but it's not a job, since taxes are not paid anywhere. I helped him to promote his product in European market, so wasn't seating in vein. What was I trying to say? Ah, I met others here and very few were planning to go back. All talks were about what University are you planning to go, would you like to study, are you planning to stay for long, would you like to work here. So when you hear all that you think why should I? There is nothing there, even now, from stability and financial stability points of view. There is nothing what would lead me to make a decision for return. There is nothing what gives me hope that if I go back and open business no one will come tomorrow and oppress me like in 2007 when we tried to sell our bricks to all construction companies and were told 'sorry, the youngest President's daughter has a got a company dealing with bricks and we signed a contract with her for five years'. They told us that straight-forward, we worked with them for one, two years before. I mean my girls [partners], I joined them later… So they said: 'We know you, I understand everything, your product is cheaper and of better quality, but I have to sign that contract now.' It was such a blow given it's supposed to be 'open economy', open opportunities, I took mortgages [buy-to-let], it was a very inspiring situation. I had mortgages, it looked like I had a job, I thought that my sister would settle down, it was like that. I was planning to live in between Astana and Moscow where my boyfriend lives, that was the ultimate dreams… But now I cannot say that I will go back there where someone can put pressure on me, since I don't have any connections, I don't know someone at some Ministry. I also cannot do those things, alas. I would rather be an employee here up to the pension and then go to the sea as all pensioners here, you see? Unfortunately it is like that. Perhaps I could become a businesswoman there, but I am afraid of that, I don't have fangs for that.

[…]

What you like or don't like at your workplace?

I work at a wonderful company. Me and my sister, we work at the same company. She invited me to. You see how interesting? I invited her to [come with me] London, and she invited me to the company she works in London.

[…]

What do you foresee for your country?

Of course I foresee all the good in Kazakhstan and I always hope for good, but if to look realistically – no.

And what about Britain?

There is such a minus here, people are stressed out a little. Stressed out by work, taxes, and endless bills. There is a saying: in France people work to earn for dinner and London – for taxes and bills [laughing]… Yet welfare is much more developed in France than here… For example I lived in Nice, but why? Since I found the cheapest MBA in the world there [laughing] You cannot find MBA for 5000 euro in London… During that time my sister lived here alone. We let my room to another girl [laughing] Accommodation is also cheaper in France, I paid 500 euro for a one-room flat…You cannot find it here. And then the state compensated accommodation expanses partly as for all students in France.

[…]

Tell me about your typical day at work or what were you doing today?

In the morning I come to drink coffee [laughing] How my working day starts? I am doing, I am working.

Sorry, is it a British company?

Yes, Brutish company.

All employees are British?

Yes, there is one Italian, almost all are British, I am a foreigner and there is one girl from Russia.

Is it a big company?

It's small, less than fifty people. We are selling educational software, licence. How to say that in Russian?

Tell me in English

Now it's about 'subscription for math', 'for children from three to thirteen'. How we say it, it is licenced, so you buy subscription for one year, like with a magazine and you can learn mathematics online. It is made in accordance with the requirements of math education in the UK, Scotland, Ireland, New Zealand, Arab Emirates, the USA and Moscow. There are clients in Kazakhstan, Thailand.

So your sister came first?

Yes, my sister was employed first, they saw her CV, they gave her work, made visa for her. So the positive in this company is that they don't make in issue with visa at all.

In what sense?

So when you usually come for a job interview the first question asked is about visa. When you say that you are on 'post-study work' they say good bye to you. It's everywhere. Here they've seen my sister is a good employee, we need her. So they are so called 'soft solution founders' [in English]. They've seen she ideally fit that position. Perhaps she is doing more than needed. She is a QA coordinator [Quality Assurance] and I'm her assistant. Ye, you see how interesting. She's been promoted two times already. She is doing very well. So they found her, they invited her for interview, she fit. But she's got mathematical background, in economics, statistics, so she's got a job. And I was employed as recommended by my sister, what is very important.

Did they have a vacancy?

Yes, they had a vacancy, such a vacancy that it was there and it wasn't there, they could have it from the last year. Since I wasn't sure whether I would like to stay in London I went to France for MBA. Now I am back to London with full confidence, ye, I don't want to live in France; I want to live in London.

Why not France anymore?

It's not like I don't like it. I cannot compare Paris to London, I didn't live there, but Paris is dirty, I don't like Paris, I don't like it a priori. I cannot imagine myself in the tube there. And it's not possible to compare Nice with London, absolutely different Galaxies…

You would feel bored sooner or later?

I was bored there already, but everything is so relaxed in Nice.

[…]

Can the company make a visa for you as for your sister?

My approbation period is finishing on the 2nd January and I am sure that this is what will happen… They've never had foreign workers before.

Was your sister the first one?

My sister is the first foreigner. You see, and now when I had the interview now it was like that: 'what about visa? Ah, we've done for your sister already, so it's almost the same ye? Ok, we'll make it if needed.

So they make it if they are interested

Yes.

Who decides that?

I don't know. I think it's not because someone decides to do it, it's because no one does it. We've got such a relaxed company, people can miss deadlines, they can be absent saying 'I'm ill, I'll take off' like we had it today.

And you like it

You know it's somehow similar to the French relations, I was pretty shocked.

You mean it's not in London way?

Yes.

Maybe because it's a small company?

I don't know why it happens. In France it was annoying that people are so relaxed. After London regime I was used to the idea that all are very neat. And here even the time I come to work is not set, so I don't necessarily have to come be at 9:00 and nobody would criticise me that I came at 9:05. It means I can come at work at 8:00 if my soul wants that or because I have to leave at 17:00. Or I can come at 9:30 and sit there not till 17:30 but till 18:00. Usually I am sitting there until 19:00.

Any rate you have to meet targets?

Of course, but nobody is staying there with the red stick saying that I was late again.

And who is controlling what you have to do?

My sister controls me and she is controlled by managers. But I'm always in relations with those people, from whom my processes depend and their processes depend on me. It is not possible to say that someone controls me, it's continual exchange. For example, something is not working in the system; for instance a rabbit cannot jump into a burrow. I have to test this rabbit and see why he cannot jump into the burrow…There is a 'developer' giy, who is responsible for the system; there is another developer who is responsible for the programme itself; another one looks after the picture; another one looks whether it's relevant to the programme in Russia, Thailand or England. I am sitting and reporting. I say that this rabbit is not jumping because when I press that and then that. This is the scenario. And if I do like that the whole programme is stuck. And guys know who is in charge of it. Of course when I say that they try to solve the problem and they are waiting for me to check it again. So my sister is not involved actually, she is just my boss. So we have to find 10 such 'rabbits' by each Friday and register them, so we don't have that problem anymore. That's so simple, for you to understand. This is my work.

Do you like your job?

Pretty much. Firstly I like that I am filling my math vocabulary in English. I didn't even know how 'obtuse angle' would be, even now I cannot say obtuse and acute in English. At the moment I work in new programmes, three systems, Cells Ford, Djeera and CMS [?]. They are very developed for other companies, which work in any app, elaborated for internet users. These three systems guarantee employability at any company dealing with internet services and there are lot of these companies. So I switched to this from my financial background. And I cannot say it's a narrow specialisation. Since even now if they get rid of me after 3-month work or if I get married I will find another company and work easily. The company will see that I worked in these three systems and say: 'You fit our company'.

So it shouldn't be hard to find a job here?

Yes, and anywhere I think, since these licences for those 'software' are like SAP. Only SAP is in finances and this ones are for all, for E-learning. How many E-learning companies exist in the world? Millions, which provide education services on-line. So the spectrum is widened like that [showing with hand]. You see? In that sense I am very pleased.

[…]

What is the structure of the organization?

We've got a manager who is always moving back and forward. We always see him, our CEO. So he is not sitting business-like in his office and you have to knock at the door. He is around and asking 'Anybody would like coffee?' He is simple, well, maybe not that simple, but very open. And we are all the same room, it's an open space office. Sometimes there is glass and you can see everything but it's not that case, there is no any glass, just tables and we are sitting.

And the owner of the company?

I think it's some Dutchman and some Englishman too. Never seen them, they are just investors. They come once a year, checking and leaving.

Do you have good relationships at work?

Of course, there are some moments, but overall it's good. Nobody cruel anyone because you are a foreigner or since you just joined the company and don't know anything. It's very 'opened up'. For instance, if something is not clear I'll go and ask and someone will help me. This is what I was told, not to worry and not to be afraid. My sister came and brought me and when in two weeks she left for holidays and I was alone in the office for two weeks. I just started and everyone said that I didn't have to worry and if I needed something they would show and tell me what to do. Boys get up, approach me, stand next to my computer and do something. In that sense I'm lucky.

If they extend your visa would you stay for long at this company?

I don't know to be honest.

Do you think that you might be promoted after you get the document from France [MBA Diploma]?

The said that if I wouldn't need my position anymore they would consider another one for me.

They would like you to stay, ye?

So far nobody told me anything. You see, I came as an 'assistant' of my sister. So leaving and letting down her, it's…on the other hand perhaps I might have some career growth since my sister was 'promoted' two times. If they have the opportunity they might 'promote' me. But whether it would be interesting to me is another question. And then with all my background I am at the lowest position at this company, or one of the lowest.

Can you say that you are doing de-skilling job today?

Yes, absolutely, but unfortunately it's not possible to work as a financial director in Kazakhstan and then come and claim you'd like to work as a financial director in England. Even if my 'managerial qualities' are strong lack of 'experience' in management in England just closes the way to any manager position at any company here. And then it's the first company where I practise my business English. English you study at University and colloquial English are different things. When you talk in English with colleagues every day covering different topics and you take part in 'meetings' that's another 'experience'.

Do you know whether migrant women from the FSU face deskilling or they are ok here?

Of course, I think some are much more successful than me, I've got where to aim at.

And there are less successful ones?

No, I see myself in another way. I don't see myself as an employee for the whole life. I always wanted and I will be independent, having my own *delo* [business], which will be under my control and I wouldn't lose my way because of absence of logical decisions. Honestly, I would fire our CEO and run this company. It's not ok, if I have such thoughts it means that I can see many processes are done irrationally. It means A) that I occupy a wrong position, B) I cannot do something else since nobody will let me do that, C) it's time to do something on my own.

What are the possible spheres?

Sphere? Perhaps, my sister told me 'let's open a pastry shop, but for some reason I don't see myself as a chef. Maybe something like to buy-to sell. Actually I had an idea to leave England and to go to Kazakhstan and to open my own business there.

So it's also possible?

Yes.

On what it depends? When we talk about Kazakhstan…

In Kazakhstan, if I would do business there I would do non-profit one. I'd like to make such business which would allow our children to see something more, not just Museum of the first and last President Nazarbayev. We've got just one museum in our country. The museum of the President. I don't know any other.

It's a great idea!

I like it too, I elaborated a plan already. I am ready to sell one of my flats and instead to buy another flat on the ground floor to make an entrance and make children's club on Saturdays. I could bring their all posters and reproductions of all paintings from all galleries in the world and to hang them there. Let it be not real paintings, but it's for children to come and distinguish impressionists from the classic school or designers of this and preceding epoch. Since now all of that is not available. What are available are magazines with diamonds and bags. Nobody is popularizing pieces of art, contemporary art too. If some exhibition is opening, it means three paintings by Picasso and a ticket cost so much that you don't want to go there. If it's opera the tickets are sold only for elite class, and it's just one opera once in winter. This is what worries me and when I think what I'd like to do not for myself but for someone else, I would probably do that. I attracted my mum with this idea already, she is passionate about it, but without me my mum cannot make it.

Where does this interest come from?

I don't know, you know it's simple. And again why London again? Why not Nice even? I lived 10-min from Matisse Museum in Nice, I've been there 10 times; they had the same exhibition, the same audio guide in Russian. There are other museums of course, but they are dispersed across the region. What happens here? The

portrait gallery! Three exhibitions a year at least. Van Gogh and others are hanged at the National Gallery and you can look at them the whole day and for free. Historical museum please, British Museum please, Transport museum please. Then I think where to give birth to my children. We are debating that with my boyfriend. In Moscow? I don't want to have my children in Moscow. I will have a car and a good apartment there. I will drive my children to different places but they will live in the atmosphere of *ponty* (bluff/showing off/playing cool). My boyfriend is going to Pushkin Museums in the evenings. We are similar in that sense. He wants to hear some old painter story. And his friends think that he is crazy, that he plays aristocrat. They think that for him it's not enough just to show your car and apartment, and he wants to demonstrate that he belongs to the elite class. So they see it like part of the image… Some people don't understand how you can get up in the morning and be willing to learn a story of some old painter, forgotten and who finally became famous. It's also very strong in Nice. Russian-French relations are very developed since French bluff is very similar to Russian bluff… Over there you cannot come in jeans to an opera house, you need diamonds and fur. Here, yes it's pleasant to wear smart outfit to opera, but if you come in jeans nobody would kill you.

[…]

How do you feel yourself here as a migrant?

Comfortable, I don't feel myself as a migrant.

Do you think migrants are somewhat disadvantaged in the labour markets here?

I think it exists, but I myself didn't face it, I know it from my friends' experience. They always make an issue out of visa and English is important. And of course your 'background' is, although they say that they appreciate international [work] experience your 'background' doesn't help when you look for jobs.

Do you think networks are crucial in job search here?

Of course, of course, but they are more hidden here. I think 'networks' are important everywhere, it's just about the human factor.

Are you planning further education?

Yes, PhD definitely.

In what?

Given my 'background', I have to do PhD in Finances.

Why are you interested in doing PhD?

I love 'research', I like digging, I just like it, I'd like to find out something.

You've got many ideas about what to do in your life, can you combine them?

I don't know, but I'd love to do 'research'.

Do you think there jobs typical for women migrants?

More in services, I think, connected with languages. I've got many girlfriends, who work as office managers, translators.

Are they from CIS?

From other countries, no, no, from CIS, CIS. Translators, office managers, marketers, personal assistants, I've got acquaintances who work in oil and gas, two persons. I also know someone who works in a national company

which has their office here in England. They found their jobs there and then moved here. But you have to be really lucky to get such a position there.

Are there some factors of success in career-making?

Luck is crucial anywhere, it seems to me if you are hard-working, since my sister is a good example. If she wouldn't sit at work until ten and wouldn't show them results which were not expected from her. Instead of 100% she did 500. So she was 'promoted' two times. It's a good example in that sense that there are companies, there are people who don't look at your 'background', not at where you came from and your English, but her English is great though, they look at your diligence, at 'your 'devotion' at the company.

How important is English?

It's very important.

[…]

What do you feel when you have to say that you came from Kazakhstan?

First I felt shame. I felt shame since nobody knew about Kazakhstan and Kazakhstan was associated with 'Borat' film, very strongly for some reason. Although 'Borat' film is stupid and funny. And I didn't feel comfortable because of that, I don't know what else.

Perhaps since we are coming from the Former Soviet Union as well?

No, not because of that. For some reason I attached myself to the Russian Federation, maybe because of relationships with my boyfriend. I felt I was rather from Moscow than Astana, I don't know why. Maybe because when I said Moscow people took it adequately and fast, that if I said Astana or Kazakhstan.

Interesting…

But now when somebody asks I always say that I'm from Kazakhstan and many people make connection with oil and gas, it's very said though.

Why sad?

Since people don't know anything else. They also associate Russia with vodka and drunk. And about Astana, Kazakhstan, they think we still live in yurts.

[…]

Tell me if you were a man would you have the same path, the job you have now?

I would be married already and perhaps I'd have children. Given social pressure, and then again, in my 31 I'm perfect for marriage and there I'm 'outlet' already and nobody would marry me. I can tell than when I go to cinema with my mum they look awry, since my mum in her 58 should sit at home with her grandchildren. And since I didn't bear children I can take her only to cinema or a restaurant. And then if you put my mum into a pub here she would be a bride, and half of men would look at her, since she is younger than English old women.

Your mum lives in Astana?

Yes.

Is she visiting you?

Yes, of course.

So, are you planning to marry?

Of course, sooner or later it will happen, I am not a feminist, I am not a hater.

And children?

I'd like to have three children, but I don't know if I cope [laughing]. If a good man is next to me I should cope. And if not, I will have to give a birth for myself.

How do you imagine family life? What is important in your partner?

Perhaps it's important to be nearby, now we are not, so I cannot imagine it. It's important to have many touch points. Since when love ends and it ends, I mean it transforms into another substance. Love goes and misunderstanding appears, quarrels, accusing each other. So touching points are important at that stage. I can see that first of all my boyfriend has the same background with my father [Candidates in Mathematics]. He is also very interested in something beyond money, cars and somewhat social status.

Who are his parents by education?

Both parents are Candidates. I think the more Candidate the easier. His father is Candidate in Political Sciences, in Political Economy and his mother in Math.

Are you for long together?

Since 2007, but we meet rarely, we see each other rarely…

It's hard, I can imagine.

You know, I would be an ideal wife of a Decembrist. They all played piano and I play piano. He [boyfriend] likes to go to Museums and I like to go to Museums. However, his interests are broader than mine. He looks into Wiki till three in the night and I do the same. Reading bio of someone, let's say Leger. [laughing]

How do you see your relationship in future?

I don't know what will be next, I wouldn't be surprised if we live the same in ten years. But then everything is perishable, there is nothing better than waiting, it's better than the outcome, so I enjoy it.

Did you ever live together with your boyfriend?

Yes, yes in Almaty as well … We quarrelled, we met somewhere in the city [after work] and browsed together, went to cinema, did shopping, for cooking as well… He could bring me breakfast to the bedroom and clean dishes. He didn't allow me ironing and did washing on his own. This is how he entrapped me. He said that half of his friends when they are looking for wife or partner they first of all thing that she would solve half of his social problems. She would create cosy atmosphere, she would iron and cook at least sometimes. But he thinks, his idea was not to pull me to Moscow and make his wife, and to push me and tell me go-go and study English [in London]…

Is he a feminist?

Feminist in that sense that he would like me to be independent but simultaneously he can easy send me money or help me somewhat if I need it… He is mathematician, he teaches physics at school, he has his business, basically he is a businessman and he teaches math and physics.

It's very interesting.

Since business brings money and communication with people brings pleasure. This is what happens when you talk to children, profession of teacher, only now I understand why I also would like to do PhD.

Why?

I taught English when I was 16. I didn't have money to go to Karaganda, we lived 10 km from Karaganda. I had to pay 200 tenge every day to get to University around one year. So I taught English at home on Sundays from ten to 5pm. Children came and I worked with them one to one. I didn't create groups and I didn't earn much. Teaching on one to one basis was my credo or maybe I didn't know English very well. I couldn't work with five children of different age and grind English into them. It's better to work with each of them. So, I taught what knew at that time. And then in that company in Almaty where they employ me as an accountant and for working in SAP 50/50. They asked me to run courses for guys who also had to work with SAP…

[…]

Do you know anyone who returned?

Yes, I know three persons.

Do you know why they went back?

One girl said that she would like to marry, but she could get on with English men due to differences in mentality. She had relationships with an English guy, but she is absolutely disappointed. Imagine she is from Murmansk [Russia], lived in Moscow and then came here to study. She is strange though, she is also painting. She is working as volunteer at Sochi Games, she is not typical. And she left voluntarily; she said she was fed up. And the other two came from Kazakhstan, since they got Bolashak programme. We have that programme, which allows studying not for free, but taking credit from the state. So you pledge your apartment for 5 years.

To study abroad?

Yes, there is a big spectrum of Universities, Turkey as well, the States, England. So they pledged their or their parents' flats, so they knew they would come back. They knew they would pay off the credit for 5 years. No, it's not true, they won't pay off anything. They just have to work for the state for 5 years. That is the main condition – to return and bring benefits.

At the state enterprises?

At any enterprise, the main thing is that taxes and pension deductions are going. The programme is called Bolashak, it's great that it exists; it's a plus of our country. But there is a minus in another sense; it's very hard to go back with pecked heads, with all this society. I know that through them. They are still reading and discussing the information which is available here. They are reading less and less what is available there. That's it, their brain is expanded, they cannot go back. It's called woe from wit; Griboyedov was writing about it.

Better not to know?

Yes, better not to know: 'the less you know the, the better you'll sleep'. So they have to pay these taxes for 5 years. And what is 5 years? Five years is about marrying, having children and sedentary lifestyle and everything is different. In five years you don't have that energy as when you are 23. Look, I came when I was 27. It was already not easy, even to study. It's another thing when you are young and studying. Yes-yes I know by my

own. And I don't know what will happen to them in 5 years. But they left, the return was the requirement. I'll learn how they are there, I'll meet them at opera in Astana. We'll talk, perhaps they regret.

How the interview went? Did you feel comfortable?

Yes.

Was there something hurting?

No, I think you cannot make harm to anyone. No, it's not that everything is so cheerful as it might seem from my recounting. You become stronger and nothing frightens you, therefore it's not the time about thinking about the meaning of life. Once I had meaning in my life, the family, my partner, and love. Now I don't have that that anymore. Do I have to torture myself because of that? No. There are museums, exhibitions, wonderful opera. There are so many things in the world which can fill you and you never know where will be the next turn, so everything is ok. Of course my position is for the 20-years-old after BA.

Maybe it's good that you are developing in so many directions…

No, no, it seems like that, generally speaking all of that was out of despair, everything, out of despair. There wasn't something like I was sitting and choosing with five fingers where to go. A human being is always looking for better as the fish is looking for the deeper. And in this despair you are any rate trying to find the most comfortable and perspective. To stay in Kazakhstan and wait for the crisis to finish is utopian. Now when I go back to Kazakhstan I can see it. Really only if you make some project which will benefit you and society you can make such a move back. There are so many children in Kazakhstan who didn't see anything, nothing. And the ideology about the first President is thrown on them. I just would like without saying anything, without involving politics, I just would like to open something and give these children opportunity to see something else. And they pulled only to that Museum of the President...

Second interview:

You were 'assistant coordinator right? And now?

Now my job title is 'content & R&D coordinator. So I was an 'assistant coordinator' and now I became a 'coordinator' myself.

Since when?

Since January this year.

The vacancy opened up?

No, firstly they understood that I could do more, secondly my sister left, so she wouldn't need an assistant anymore, she is on her own. And keeping me as assistant without a manager is pointless. And we've got the EU project 'I talk to learn' as well. We had to collect data, we were looking for children's voices and emotions. So it's part of research already. Since it's a research and I cannot conduct it on my own, I've got a boss, 'R&D manager'.

Is it your new boss?

He was recently employed. He was appointed in front of me.

Is he British?

He is British but of Indian origin, Doctor of mathematics, from Oxford.

How are you getting on?

It's a very good chap. It's a man of 32 or 33. He finished University very early; he had some grants in math. He likes this project as well, it's closer to practice than theory. Plus the project is very interesting, since we try to make computers react not just to the person who is typing or replying or clicking, but to react to emotions and words of children. It's another generation, another generation of machines and in this sense the educational field is trying to keep pace.

You like it, is it more interesting than what you were doing before?

Yes, it's very interesting to me. I am not satisfied with my salary though, it's 1500 after tax.

Is it more than at the beginning?

Yes, it's more, I had 22, and now it's 25, but it's too low any rate.

Too low in London or for you?

It's too little in London.

If you were in Nice or Paris, it would be easier, ye?

It would be ok in Nice. It's cheaper to rent flats there and so expensive here.

By the way how much would be ok for you?

I think 35 000 pounds wage would satisfy me.

You think you should be paid this money for the work you do?

Yes, I think they have to pay me 35 for this job.

Do you feel underpaid?

Yes.

Do you think the company does it deliberately or they don't have enough resources?

No, I think that the first factor is that I came late to this workplace. If I would work two years by now, as my sister, I would also have a good salary perhaps. Plus I'm very peculiar about what I dislike. For example, today at work, there is some extra work and I understand that I could stay there for two hours to work extra and to meet the target, but I say to myself that I cannot do that for that reward I get. I'd better go and drink beer, wine or champagne. Way better than working two hours for free for someone, and English people don't understand that; they think that if you are sitting for two hours extra it means you didn't manage to do your work in your normal working hours and not like you want to help company to do extra. So if you are sitting and making presents to them, your time, they make their mind.

[…]

Sorry, what was your sister's wage at first?

When my sister came she received 22, now she is getting 30. She works slightly longer, so she gets a little more.

She left…

She moved…

To another country following her partner?

Yes.

Did she find a job there?

No, she works at our company on distance. The company let my sister work on distance. They understand that they love each other. That they want to be together, his father is ill. So this company decided to meet them half-way. Living there she is paid the same amount so far. It works for her since she cannot work there so far, she is nobody there. There are lot of procedures for work, documentation.

[…]

When you talk about time do you mean that it's the time for marrying?

Maybe this the time for marrying, I am 32 now. I've got a person, but it looks like he is not ready in his 35. And then he is not here [lives in Moscow]. I think if he would be here and he would like to live and be with me even without marrying, I would go for that… I'm ready for children, I think I will be ready in three years [laughing]. I explain it like that. My sister just left in December. I've been always responsible for my sister; I've always been a bit like mother to her. And now roughly speaking she is married and since December my own life started. So when someone tells me that s/he wants family and children I say: 'Leave me in peace! My life just…I just started to live. Basically I live enjoying my live for the first time for the last half a year when I've got a stable job, I don't move anywhere, neither forward nor back, I don't have to rush my career, I don't have to prove anyone that I'm somebody. I've got a job, my circle of interests, friends of mine and I want 'to stew myself' in all that.

Do you think you will work at the same company for the next several years?

I think I will be at this company next half a year definitely. Recently, I've got a wish to try myself in real estate though. It seems to me that I could talk to people telling them whether some house fits them or not… I think if you work in it for 2-3 years you can start your own business but what I like most is that you can meet 10 different people daily. I am ready for that, I like it. I realized that when you are sitting in the office you don't see anyone. You go every day to the same office and see the same faces. There is nothing bad in that, but it doesn't suit my character… So I see myself in that. I think that my next step, even if they don't raise my salary, I will try. I am on a general visa now and I have to find a contract with sponsorship. I don't think that all companies have this licence, for sure some real estate company would have it. I'd like to focus on that and send out my CV to companies, so they could take me for some position. But I have to be able to drive and know the city by then.

Is there anything else what is required for that job?

Yes, the only thing is that I've got an English language barrier, but I think I don't have it anymore. I can talk fluent, calm. Maybe some training.

There are advanced two month courses to work on the accent.

This is what I was thinking about too.

[…]

Did you check wages in real estate sector?

I think it's from 25 plus commissions from sales. I'd suggest, particularly if it's an established agency. I think even not less than 30, I've got such a feeling. I was also exploring such jobs as PA or director's assistant, when he is flying and you are 'his right hand'. They get 35 and more in such jobs. Roughly speaking, it's just secretary work, but it's highly appreciated if you are on the same wavelength with the director.

Tell me, what is important for you at work?

I like interactivity, the opportunity to meet new people. Kind of not wild schedule; I don't like when people at work 'too much exaggerate'. So I don't like when people are so focused that your personal moments are ignored, if you are ill or you have to change a counter at home. So what I like in my work now is that my health or if I have to go home to repair a boiler they say: 'yes, yes, of course, you can work from home. People don't have to become animals, they have to remain humans, this is important. And of course I appreciate good salary. Not super big or super small, but the fair one. Since I can input 100% and or all 150%, perhaps, as all our girls, but I am not ready to input for free. For example my sister could input for free.

Why your sister could do it?

She's got another character. She doesn't look it at it as 'free', she takes it as learning. I am slightly older and I appreciate my own time. I always put on scales whether I'd like to work free two hours or I'd like to have a walk for two hours and enjoy the Sun. That's it. *Kollektiv* is of great importance too, a good *kollektiv*. But perhaps a good *kollektiv* in England is a such a notion… It seems to me all have good *kollektivy* here, since it's part of communication manners: everyone smiles, say hi and bye. Neither intimate nor distanced, no one moves into the personal.

If everything goes well is it possible that you could work at some company all life?

You see, usually I stayed at the same workplace for not longer than 2-3 years [in Kazakhstan]. However I worked in that company almost 3 years; I had big hopes. I didn't know they would bust and became nothing on the market.

Which one?

The construction one, where I became *glavbukh* (chief accountant). For that company I had big… just imagine, you are employed at a big company and understand that all your life will be connected with its name and it's not bad at all. But, maybe, from the other hand it is good that I've got such a range of various *del* [businesses/occupations/hobbies]. Perhaps it is the route to something, that I will open something on my own.

So it is possible you will start your own delo [business] some day?

Maybe. My mum [in Astana] is sewing now, she started very actively; she bought a sewing-machine and we sew together what I like. I think that maybe one day I will create my own collection…

Appendix III: Four trans-border career trajectories

INNA (b.1985, Yenakievo, moved to Donetsk in 2002; HE is Logistics (2008); moved to London in 2008; MA in Interpreting & Translation (2010 or 2012); company training): late twenties, working since 2009; Russian oil and gas consultancy company, 1 year; financial manager assistant (PT, 17K)

EDUCATION IN DONETSK

Inna studied Logistics in Donetsk (Ukraine) and never worked in the region. She married in 2007 and moved to London in 2008, the year she got a degree, as a skilled migrant dependent. By then her husband (Ukraine citizen) had a got a job in London after working in a bank in Ukraine and completing MBA in the USA. Her first job was a volunteer admin assistant at reception in an English language school where she 'was improving English' (half a year). She said: 'Logistics is about organizing shipping and managing auto-transport… Back then I didn't know what I wanted. My parents sent me there since then everyone studied to become either an economist or a lawyer and we wanted to find some niche, some new direction, developing one… I came by marriage visa in 2008; I finished my University that year…

ENGLISH: STUDYING + VOLONTEER

First half a year I worked on my English. I had 'advanced level' [in English], I took courses in Donetsk, but my speaking wasn't great for working. So I decided to improve it while adapting to culture and making friends. I had several hours of English every day and then I worked in that school as a volunteer, since I couldn't find a job. My Ukrainian education wasn't rated well; I wasn't invited for interviews. And I didn't want to work as a waiter or a nanny since I had a HE degree from Ukraine. I couldn't find a decent job, since I didn't have work experience. So I started to work as a volunteer as an option; I could put at least some local work experience into my CV. I worked at the 'reception' as an 'admin assistant' in that school… Only three years later I decided to study for Masters… Yes, he supported me in that [husband]… I worked there for 8 months absolutely for free… They told me that they I could become a member of staff. And then some day one woman left and there was a vacancy. She told me: I'm leaving and they will employ you most certainly', but they didn't take me. Then I learnt that after me they could take someone else for free work… But it was office work at the 'reception' and some kind of admin position… I improved my English, communication, you always communicate at the reception, I worked out some 'skills'… Yes, I left…

CLOTHING BOUTIQUE – "FIRST JOB"

After that I found a job in a clothing boutique, in a week or so, no break even. I just walked and saw an ad on a showcase, clothing for tall women. I gave them my CV, they called me, invited for the interview and took me straight away. It was just 'sales consulting'… I am tall, my English is good, I lived nearby and had some work experience in England. That was my first paid work… 5.60 p.h. and it was part-time… Don't remember, maybe 20 hours a week… I had to work on one of weekend days, from 9 to 4… I also worked there for 8 months… Yes, I had a contract… It was a very interesting job, communicating with clients, on the phone, 'fashion'… I was lucky since there was no hard atmosphere at the interview, I was interviewed by a woman from Latvia, we talked in Russian and English, it was good… I was just tired physically since you have to be on foot. The stock was downstairs, always up and down… I worked for 8 hours and had a break for an hour and I couldn't have a sit for a minute. And then it was just my first job, I didn't plan to make a career in that. And it was crisis so you grabbed any available job. It wasn't ideal but it was interesting at first, but then when you understand that you cannot develop anymore, you cannot learn anything new and your pay doesn't grow, you are just tired and there is no point in staying there… The main minus is that you are doing the same thing. I could become a supervisor, assistant manager, manager, but basically you are doing the same. I looked at that supervisor and assistant they also sell products, staying at the cashbox, talking to clients. They have more responsibilities, they fill in some documents but they are doing the same and have slightly higher salary. No room for development… they got 25K, twice more than the 'main staff'…

NETWORKING – "PROFESSIONAL JOB", PA/translator, oil & gas consulting

I found another job just after that, I was lucky, I had just one month break. I found a more professional job, it was an investment consulting firm, a 'start up'… It's registered here, but it's focused on Russian market since one of the partners was Russian. They looked for someone to help with, a 'personal assistant' and a translator... Networking, I heard about it, but it doesn't mean that somebody took my arm and brought me there. I heard from friends that there was a vacancy. And then it's a small firm, they don't want to take someone from a street, better through someone, the information is confidential in these companies… They were connected with oil and gas business in Russia, consulting in that field… I didn't penetrate into the business itself, I dealt with other things, I was a PA and a translator, I was translating a lot… PA for CEO and for one of his partners, but mainly I was a translator, all documents went through me, all business plans, presentations. I translated from Russian into English and from English into Russian… I started to do translation at that firm. I worked there for a year and I think it had an impact on my wish to get a speciality, I liked translation very much. So, I wanted to get academic basis, to know how to do it and to become a professional... 21K…We were just three in the office, me and two bosses and one partner. They had meetings with clients, they did consulting, and basically they connected people. We just had clients in the office… I know that at the end it all didn't work… I worked there for a year and I could see that their business started to decline, it isn't developing, they even didn't pay salary, so I left, they didn't pay me for several months… I know some lawyers and they offered me help, but I didn't want it. I wanted to solve it amicably. I can understand everything, problems. It's a shame that the director always promised that he would pay, so he didn't tell me what actually happened, but he didn't pay me at the end… I learnt to communicate with people on a higher level, solid people were coming, 'senior level'. I talked to businessmen… International, Russians mainly, British… No it wasn't, communication with them was minimal, I worked with CEO and his partner. At the previous jobs I was on a lower level and here I was closer to them, I met them and saw off them…

MA IN INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION (2010-2011)

After that I could see that there are no options for work, business was in decline, salaries are not paid, I had to do something else. I understood that I liked translation, I'd like to do it and to establish myself in the market. I decided to apply to University, I looked what programmes were on offer and I liked the one at University Z and its rating is good, top-five in the UK and they had speciality in Russian-English, not all Universities have that, usually they have European languages. I applied, I had interviews, it was such a long process, but I got a place… 12.000… I left a job in summer and started to study in Autumn… No, I didn't move, I still lived here but I put all classes into two days and commuted…

It was worthy, firstly I've got a document. I always wanted it, when I came I realised that British education was an issue… My University is not one of the leading Universities in Ukraine and then it's so competitive here. The one with British education is always the first. So to be somewhat 'competitive' I had to get it. And then if I return to Ukraine a British University is always recognised, the speciality is not important, the name of University comes first… I submitted my dissertation and I had to get results in November and graduation ceremony was in December.

OIL & GAS – NEXT Co, ASSISTANT FINANCE MANAGER, PT (?)

As soon as I took exams in June I found the next job, in F. (Russian state oil and gas company]… Since I had a speciality in Translation ideally I'd like to do translation, but with translation you limit yourself, since if you have 'Russian language skills' why not to sell it. So when I applied [for jobs] I looked for something where I could use Russian and I heard than F. had a vacancy… Through friends…

COMPANY's EMPLOYEES

They are here for two years… Yes, the head office is in Moscow… We were 12, we had three rooms… Yes, all speak Russian… From Russia, Georgia, Latvia… I came last, I am one of the youngest, most are 35-40 years old people with children. So during a break I could rarely talk to them but then I adapted somehow. All Russian-speakers, the same mentality, it's easier to join than if I came to a British company… Mainly women, one man and a boss… I think our boss is from Baltics, he is about 45. But I have to tell you that a decision was made to

transfer the office, so they will close it down and my job finishes by the end of this year… I think it's because taxes are very high here… It's a pity, very good *kollektiv*... I'm an assistant finance manager, preparing different financial reports, responsible for financial side… I had training… No I never had a probation period, only in that boutique… It was convenient for me since I was writing dissertation in summer and I couldn't work 'full-time', she [manager] had an assistant who moved to part-time working on her initiative, so they had 2 persons on the same position…

FUTURE

I'm at a crossroads now and I have to make a right choice. I don't want to apply for any available job since I can do it already, I've got work experience and education here. So either I have to go into translation and see what happens on the market or to become a PA again or to teach Russian. Initially I didn't do it since I didn't have a linguistic education; I studied Logistics what is more to do with economics, it's technical education. I could teach languages perhaps. But last time I like, I love different parties, 'event management' attracts me, I'd like to organise events. My friends think it would be good for me since I'm always out and why not to combine pleasure with income… And for my soul I am modelling, occasionally I work as a photo model. I think I can do everything a little, all these jobs are not 'full-time'. For example, if you are a freelance translator you go somewhere for a day, it's not 'full-time', even in the UN [within British MA programme], I've been there and there are other organizations which organize conferences…

NOT UN

But I need another language, I know only Russian, Ukrainian and English and you need two foreign languages for an international organization. I am learning French now, if I learn it well, than yes, it's very interesting there… It's connected with my University, they organized a traineeship for us in Vienna, of course we paid for living there, travel and the rest. It was the most memorable event in my life. Walking among delegates, politicians, to sit at the conferences? To translate, to be a personal translator, to communicate it was something. And the whole atmosphere is unforgettable…

PT WORK IS BETTER

Before I thought that it's better to have one job, but now I understand that it's better to do different things, rather spontaneous and it's better to combine to organise some event and then to be a photo model… 'Full-time' gives you stability and the same level of earnings. If it's 'part-time' like I have now it's the same but you earn less and you have more free time for yourself, classes, hobbies and so on. It's better. 'Full-time' wins only in earnings, in all other things 'part-time' is better since you in business, you are doing a professional career, but nonetheless you have time for another life, for something more interesting. But if you are a 'freelancer' there is no guarantee and stable earnings…

HIERARCHY OF JOB APPLICANTS

As far as I heard when you send your CV to some company they take British first, then those from the EU and then they look at the rest… It's harder for us to be noticed. On the other hand, if I know Russian of course I will outstrip, because I've got this extra skill… <..> Yes, of course, if they have to make visa for you, many students want to work here, they would rather skip you even if you have good education, you are clever and so on. They prefer to take someone whose visa issues are already solved. I didn't' have a visa issue and I worked full-time. And now moreover, I don't even need the right for work, I've got all rights… I needed five years to get IRL…' Inna completed MA in Interpreting and Translation in the UK in 2011.

HUSBAND'S NETWORKS

Almost all my husband's friends work in banks. They had to get good education for that. I'd say that those who studied here or in the West are pretty established, they work in financial organizations, rating agencies, marketing, nobody work in shops. However many don't work… I mean their wives… They either have children or don't know English, it's not easy for everyone.

GENDER AT WORK

There is no discrimination against women here, there is equality here. I think that all sort of minorities have even more chances to make careers. Firstly I wanted to be a housewife, but then I enjoyed independence so much. I could live without working, but I'd like to do something, not housewife, sitting at home, cleaning, washing, cooking. I mean something else, not to work but to do something, to develop yourself… She comes once a week [cleaner]…It's 20£ for two hours… She does all dirty work and I do some cosmetic work after that. *NB: Short after the interview INNA divorced (executive director in banking, HE + MBA, Ukrainian citizen) mainly because she met 'a new love' and turned into a self-employed combining translation with modelling.*

ELLA (b.1983, Astana, HE is Foreign Languages (2004); moved to Almaty in 2004, moved back to Astana in 2006; moved to the UK in 2008; MA in Tourism Management (2009)): early thirties, working since 2004; Swiss international touristic agency, 3 years; meetings and events coordinator (FT, 22K)

CHOOSING EDUCATION, LANGUAGES

Ella studied Foreign Languages (Philology faculty) in Astana (Kazakhstan). 'Turkish was my second specialisation we were offered at University. We had to choose between French, Arab, German and Turkish. I've chosen Turkish since back then it was timely; many Turks came [to Kazakhstan] and opened firms… I was studying English since I knew I'd live abroad most certainly. So I was also preparing for that… All my friends studied Law or Economics. I was the only one from my class who studied Languages; back then it wasn't that popular… I think it's because it's humanitarian, rather female and not bringing money. At that period I had a perspective to become a teacher either at school or University… My University was called C. in Soviet times… Yes, I studied in Russian, you can choose to study either in Russian or in Kazakh. Now they try to promote Kazakh and so on; perhaps now there are less Faculties in Russian, but I think there is that choice since any rate 95% of people speak Russian, even the youth. They prefer to communicate in Russian and perhaps it's easier to study in Russian.'

FIRST JOB THERE (ALMATY) - LEASURE CONSULTANT (TOURISTIC AGENCY)

During last years of studying at University Ella taught English to children or 'younger students'. It took Ella two months to find a job after completing HE degree in 2004. She worked as a 'leisure consultant' at a tourist agency for 8 months in Almaty. 'I found that job by chance, somebody suggested me to go the interview and I got it, very fast. There were three interviews and they just took me. At first I was learning and then I could work on my own… They only thing required was knowledge of English… I think that if I return to Kazakhstan today it would be a way easier to find a job… I had to consult those who would like to travel abroad, they called and asked questions. Basically I was selling tours… That job was in Almaty and I had to go back to home city, family reasons… I thought that there were more opportunities in Almaty and I wanted to leave home and become independent from parents… No, I became independent from them only when I moved here [to the UK].'

SECOND JOB/WORKPLACE: BACK TO ASTANA – REGISTRATION COORDINATOR (PHARMACEUTICAL CO)

When Ella moved back to Astana she found a job at a pharmaceutical company for 8 months: 'in another sphere since there were no other options at that time; they needed someone who knew English for registering medicine… Again my acquaintances recommended me, they learnt about the vacancy. I wouldn't say it was hard.

THIRD WORKPLACE – IN MINING: FROM TRANSLATOR TO HR ASSISTANT

And then I moved into mining… I started as a translator and in 8 months I moved into HR… I worked there from 2006 to 2009… No, I applied for other jobs, I heard about that international company … I learnt how to write CV in internet... I also applied for a stewardess job at 'AirAstana' but didn't get it because of health issue. I had lot of interviews, about ten… At first I liked my translator job, but it was slightly stressful, lot of meetings. It didn't suit me and I also had to go to the quarry, it's out of the city of course. These outs weary you. In our HR department a vacancy opened up, one girl left and I applied, it was very fast… translation is routine work, written translation took most of the time. At the meetings I had to be a synchronous translator. To be honest I thought I'd be very glad to do that and I was sure I could easily cope with it. But when I faced it, perhaps you know, it's very hard stressful to translate. You have to remember all elements, all technical words, how it's called… vocabulary… I understood it immediately but I thought that I'd got used to it, but it turned out that I prefer something more calm…

INTERNAL SHIFT: HR

When I moved to HR I thought that I did the biggest mistake in my life since head of department, now she is my best friend, she worked there just for a month and was 'paranoid' about everything; she was very strict. So it was hard for several months and then I got used to it, it was interesting to me, I don't know, it brought me

satisfaction, it's a specific process, routine… I started to do more administration work, I wouldn't say it's hard but it's slightly stressful since you have to work with people, different people, with their wages. It's important not to make a mistake. You have to learn to work in a specific system. Sometimes I stayed at work till 2 in the night not to make a mistake. It's important, big sums… It was interesting, to work with foreigners as well. But admin work is routine, you are doing the same things for which you are required… At that time it was owned by English and now Russians bought it, some company which deal with metals… We were 600 there…

ENGLISH
No, we didn't have it [synchronous translation] at University, we studied languages as philologists, literature, history of language, the language itself, stylistics… English was my favourite of course; I learnt the language I liked. History was not very interesting and then philosophy was not taught well…

IF STAYED IN KZ: Perhaps I'd work there for some time and started to look for another job if that vacancy wouldn't open up…

COMPARING 3 WORKPLACES
My first job was 'leisure consulter', second one is 'registration coordinator' and the third one was 'HR assistant'… I'd say that the last workplace [international mining company] was most comfortable since I had good relations with colleagues. And I felt most uncomfortable at that pharmaceutical company since it wasn't the case there. I didn't communicate neither with colleagues nor with managers or directors. Actually adapting to translation pharmaceutics documents, medicine was the hardest thing… But I got experience of communication with people of different profiles. I was sitting in a logistics department and learnt a lot about logistics through overhearing… We had 900 employees in our city [Astana], but they had many offices across Kazakhstan… It was 'open space', in two others we worked in offices… It was interesting to work in the first one [Kazakh touristic agency], it was my first job and it was quite comfortable… It was a micro company, 20 persons; we had just one office in the city… After working for three years in the same company I felt slightly bored. I understood that I had to change something in my life. I came here [to the UK] in 2008 just to look around and to see whether I could live here or if I'd like to study here…

FIRST TIME IN THE UK + STUDUYING IN THE UK (TOURISM M-T), ENGLISH
My acquaintance organized student groups which came here to study the language on summer. She offered me to be their supervisor. So I could combine that with the opportunity to see whether I could live here and so on… It was just for two weeks… I liked it very much… I came to Brighton, but we visited London often. At that time I didn't like London, I liked Brighton more. It was in 2008 and I thought perhaps I have to try to study here… <…> In 2008 I decided to study abroad. There is a state programme, they give stipends for masters, PhDs… Very few families can afford studying abroad it's not a Presidents' stipend [Bolashak programme]. I applied for it, but I didn't get it for health reasons… It was an idiotic reason, I had the low level of haemoglobin… I know, it's expensive, but my parents helped me and I borrowed some money, but I already paid it off… From my acquaintances… I paid 11.000£ [for MA in Tourism Management, UK]… It was hard only because education systems are different, you know. At first it was hard to write essays, etc. And then the language, I had a big break after University, I worked for five years and used English at some points, but my academic language wasn't that good, I had a colloquial one. Moreover, I wouldn't say that it was that good, even if I studied it at University [Foreign Languages]. So, during first semester I didn't go out, I was studying all the time. The second semester was more 'relaxed', I started to do my own 'research' and it became easier… The main difference is that in our countries you take a book, you learn it from A to Z and take exam, that's it. Here it's more about creative writing', it's more analytical, even essays. The form of exams is different and student's attitude to a lecturer is slightly different, it's another kind of 'involvement' in your studying. Basically if you want you can write it on your own. That's the main difference, it wasn't hard it terms of content… I learnt something new since I didn't have a BA in Tourism, but I could learn almost everything they study for two or three years on BA… I've chosen that programme since it was number in Tourism one in England and overall in Tourism they were in top-ten among the Universities here. A school of tourism is very developed, all professors are well-known, they publish books…

I thought about tourism, I always wanted to study it; it was interesting to me, I was keen to know how the industry works… After my first work experience at a tourist agency. I really liked it… If I could go back for four years and decided to study abroad I'd choose something else. Education is good, but I had to choose a more useful course. I didn't think about it, perhaps marketing, something more 'applicable'…

Ella completed MSc in Tourism Management in 2010 thanks to parents' support and the opportunity to borrow some sum from a friend. She didn't not work when she studied. After completing Masters she moved to London.

FIRST JOB HERE – SALES (SHOP) / BUSINESS SUPORT EXECUTIVE (TOURISM)?

After completing Masters she moved to London.

First she found a weekend job in a shop in Hendon, London. In two months she started to combine it with a full time job in a touristic agency in Farnborough: 'It was paid by hour, I don't remember now, but it covered my expenses for rent somehow... I worked in that shop for six months but it was not considered as work experience… My first job was in a touristic agency. I found it by chance, on one of websites. I just thought why not. They didn't have a vacancy for me so and I applied for a 'sales position'. It's a small touristic company but it is known in London more or less. I didn't get a job but they called me the next day and told me that they had a vacancy in administration and asked me to come for one more interview. I passed it and got a contract for six months. The job wasn't in London, about 40 min from London. So I commuted for 6 months… It was not easy and I had to cover travel 'costs'… No I didn't want to live there, it's a small city and I just moved to London, I didn't want to move just because of my workplace… It was called 'business support executive'… I had to work with guides, prepare packets for their next tours, answer calls, print out tickets, work with documents for visas and all that, all work after a client bought a tour… We were ten in the office… It's a team work, you are doing different tasks. It depended on how the manager would distribute a weekly schedule. For everyone to know each role…

LOCAL VS FOREIGN WORKERS

We had high volume workload so we didn't talk much. I also think it's the mentality of a small city, it was a female *kollektiv* and most were English. They lived in that city, knew each other and stewed in their own juice. And we outsiders, two or three foreigners, I cannot say that they treated us hostilely but they didn't treat us in a friendly way and even with some kind of slight fear. It was a good experience but relations were not good with colleagues… One girl was from Russia and another one from Romania… I left when my contract ended in 6 months and 'high season' finished in May… I had one month break…

SECOND JOB HERE – IN 'EVENTS' (OUTSIDE LONDON)

It was a similar company but they organized 'events'. My role was to work with clients who won prizes, usually it was about a travel. I was a 'travel coordinator'. So when someone won a tour I connected him/her and asked their preferences and offered a tour to Paris or some 'city break'… Just three months… No, it was a permanent position, but I was looking for another job on parallel and found a job in my current company… I looked for something better. And again that job was in another city, not in London. That was the main factor and plus salary was very low, 16 000 a year I think… Yes, it was in London and I found something I liked… Yes-yes, in tourism, it's the company I work at now…

CURRENT JOB – MEETINGS AND EVENTS COORDINATOR, COMPANY!

I had a six month contract first and then they extended it… The same job, 'meetings and event coordinator'… It's part of tourism industry… Yes, I organize different meetings when they come here but also to other cities of Europe, of Western Europe… The company works with Asian market mainly… The company used to be British but now it's taken over by Swiss… No, they have many offices in Europe… I don't know how many people work in all branches and here we are about 700-800 people… No, it's the only office in the UK…

MULTICULTURAL WORKPLACE

Since it's a touristic company many immigrants, I mean foreigners work there. I think more than half [of employees]… French, Italians, Spanish, Japanese… It's very interesting. I like that, you know some people at our company work with systems, they put in data, book everything and so on. It's very routine and not very interesting to me. I am looking for different, how to say that… I work with clients who want to have meetings here or in one of Benelux countries. They need a 'meeting space' or organize a meeting with other companies. I can organize a meeting in one restaurant or another and so on. I look for different options, negotiate prices with providers. So you start to work with clients and it all finishes with 'invoices'. From the very beginning to the end… Some clients are more complicated or exacting but you can adapt… Most are from Asia.

SUBORDINATION & RISK OF LOSING HER JOB (RESTRUCTURING)

I've got a supervisor, he distributes workload and does statistics, different 'reports'. So he is responsible for the volume of work I have to do and I am subordinated in that sense… He is Japanese. We were four but now it's just two of us… They embed a new system, so there are people who work within the old system and those who work within a new one… Today my job is less stable… I don't look for another job actively, but I am 'aware' that it can happen at any moment, that they can close down our department completely. It's a big chance 70 to 30. 70% that it will happen… Of course priority would be the same sphere, the same industry. But if time goes and I cannot find anything I'll widen search… I don't think I'll come back to it [translation] , only for earn something, but not 'full-time'.

RETURNING HOME?

London is a lonely city. It's hard to find friends since people are always coming and going. You feel yourself lonely also because your family is far away. Of course, if I'd have my own family here I wouldn't feel so… So far I cannot say that London is my home. Some people call and feel themselves Londoners in a year of living here. But it's a foreign city to me and perhaps it will stay so. However, today I feel myself more comfortable here than anywhere else. Maybe it's hard to get in touch with people who live here… There is a risk I'll always feel myself out of place here, but at least if I create my family here I will have some set lifestyle. Perhaps I'll see everything in a different way.

I would say that Astana and London are very different. Kazakhstan is still a post-Soviet country, which is developing. Over here everything is developed already, including infrastructure. It's more comfortable; however our country is developing with a great speed now… Mmmm, the contingence of people, perhaps, there is a big difference because of culture. Here you feel yourself more cultured straight away. Roughly speaking, here you cannot push apart people at least.

CLASSES HERE AND THERE

You can recognize it by the way people talk, the way they look, what they wear, it says a lot…I think that teachers at Universities belong to 'upper middle class'. You compare them with people on the streets and you can see and feel the differences, they are also more well-off… I think that those English with whom I studied were 'middle', but they were few. They prefer to go to work, very few spend time for Masters or even BA. Perhaps 'middle class' prefer to get some education if they are interested in some sphere, they will spend time for it. And perhaps those who are lower go to work after school and then they 'get up', through career… Yes, they can make it. They don't have to spend time on Universities, writing dissertations. If it's not interesting for them and they cannot afford it they can make a successful carer even without having any 'background'… The difference is that there is middle class here and our middle class is very narrow. There are very rich people and then there is the poor, let's say… I cannot say, I didn't live in Kazakhstan for the last four years, perhaps, 20%-30% is middle class… If it's not a President's stipend very few families can send their child to study abroad.

NB: Short after the interview Ella returned to Astana, mainly for family and work-related reasons. Her department in the travel agency she worked at was closed down as part of company restructuring.

KIRA (b.1983, Kemerovo; HE in Social Psychology 2005; moved to Sankt-Petersburg in 2006; moved to London in 2007; MSc in Int. HRM (2009); company training): early thirties, working since 2004; American MNC brokerage company, nearly 4 years; HR officer (FT, 33K)

FIRST JOBS HERE – RECRUITING CO, LIBRARY

Yes, I came with my husband, he was offered a job here, at their company office in London… Yes, he is Russian… I was improving my English at first and then I started to work at a recruiting company, but not for long, I didn't like their approach. I worked there just for three months… I had to answer calls, it's not mine, I am not a recruiter and I left, I found a job in a library, I just went there and asked if they had some work. They told me to leave my CV there, I left it and forgot about it. They called me in a while and invited for interview. That work was not far from my home.

EDUCATION

I worked there and decided to apply to University since I wanted to work by my speciality, in personnel management and of course I was told that I needed education to work in HR, but it turned out that I didn't need it actually… My first education is a social psychologist, so it's not related to HR. Moreover, they said that local education is needed. So they were not interested in what I studied there, in Kemerovo. That's why I applied to University S. for 'international HRM'… First I prepared for IELTS, the test for English, I think I had it in 6 or 8 months. And then I applied in May, in June they confirmed that I had a place at University… Full-time, since… my husband returned to Russia and I stayed here alone. And I had to work to, to say here I had to get a student visa, I had to study full-time. I planned to study part-time but I was transferred to full-time and I worked in the library 'part-time'…

LIBRARY WORK - casting service assistant'

I worked there from February 2008 to April 2010 as a librarian… I was a 'casting service assistant'. I had to issue books, to take them and put them on shelves, to do 'reservation'… I liked it, I worked with people, I developed my English, it improved significantly. I had good English since I went to a special English school in Russia, so I came here with the language., but if you don't live here, it's kind of wooden. You know what to say and it's still not correct. And we were taught classic language and it's colloquial over here, something like 'stop pulling my leg'. That's what I liked and I liked *kollektiv* very much as well… I didn't like routine, in fact I never planned to work as a librarian, and most certainly I wasn't planning to do career there. I left Russia having quite a good position at F state enterprise in Sankt-Petersburg…

BROKARAGE COMPANY – CHAIR ASSISTANT, DUTIES, PROMOTION?

So basically I got a Diploma in November 2009 and started to look for a job, not even that, rather to extend visa since they give you a 'postgraduate visa' as a 'thank you' for investing into education. I had to get it. I got it in February and I got a job at this company. It's an international brokerage company with offices across the world, in Moscow as well, but my Russian didn't came in handy, just to talk to Russian-speaking colleagues… Brokers sell and buy shares, money, anything, different financial products. But I'm not related to them anyhow, I work in HR. We recruit, fire, discipline, recruiting is not the main thing… For three years already… I've got it long ago, I had a 'probation period' for 6 months and then I got a permanent job… It's my first job in management here. It was interesting to learn and now I think that I took everything from this company I could…. I came as a 'chair assistant', it's hard to move up. Basically now I am doing a chair officer job, I mean all my duties, but they cannot give me that position since I've got a chair officer already, so there no room for developing, the basic cause… Only if other people go… We've got several offices [in London], but most staff chairs are here, in the main office, in other offices they have just representatives, on in each…

COMPANY

I think about 2000 [employees in head office]… Yes, it's a big, we've got lot of 'entities', we've got many firms under the head office. The head office is in the USA where all this was created., so there are offices in New-

York, Las-Vegas, France, Spain, Russia, they had one in India but I think they closed it down, in Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, I don't remember since I am not dealing with that, in Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo…

DIFFICULTIES AT WORK – LANGUAGE,

I had some difficulties, of course business English for example, I didn't understand it. I didn't feel comfortable to answer calls. You pick up the phone, someone tells you something and you just don't get it and you smile. That was hard. But the whole paper work is routine, if you learnt how to fill in the form you just do the same with 15 forms. It's also not easy to write formal letters, for example you are fired for something or your wage increased since. There are 'samples' of course, but any rate each 'case' is different. What else?

NOT HARD – ANOTHER COMPLEX ORGANIZATION

It wasn't very hard to remember the organizational structure, since I told you I worked in Piter [Sankt-Petersburg], where we also had many subsidiaries, in that sense it was easy… You know you don't need two degrees for that and large experience. If you've got brains and you came with English, so you absorb fast…

HOW FOUND CURRENT JOB – THROUGH A COLLEAGUE

My ex-chair was a friend of my colleague at the library. She told me: 'Let's meet her, she will suggest you how to look for a job, maybe she'll have a look at your CV'. We had a dinner together and at the end she said that if she had a vacancy she would take me. I remembered that phrase but I didn't have much hope… We talked in February and she called me in April and said: 'Come to the interview'… Actually, it's rewarded in our company, you get bonus, 1500£ if you brought someone and that person went through 'probation period' and got a job. It's the opposite, it's very good… But my colleague at the library didn't introduce me for getting a job, but for the 'chair' to give me an advice how to look for a job in that sphere… Later on she said that she would give me a job even without my [local] MSc, just after talking to me…

WORKING REGIME, OVERWORKING

I work 5 days a week, from 9 to 5:30 officially but I leave rarely at 5:30. Today I knew that I had to live so I planned all work for today to manage by 5:30… No, I stay longer, and I'm not the only one… I can stay for half an hour, but it can be till 9… You know, nobody thinks like that: 'now I will give them 5 'newcomers', or there are two newcomers today.' It can happen in the morning or at 5:30. And if it's the latter stay there and finish your job, nobody cares. Of course, I've got my own life, I go to courses on Wednesdays. So I can leave at 5:30 if I need it and nobody will tie me to the place, but I know that I have to do this and that and there will be 15 other things to do tomorrow, it's better to do it today and leave at 6:30… We don't have an internal recruiter. There is no a person who is responsible for recruiting. We are doing something… managers recruit, that's why we don't have any statistics… Yes, it's some kind of security. I feel myself more secure. I work there for three years , they cannot fire me just like that, I've got entitlements which I didn't have before…

FIRST JOB IN KEMEROVO – CONSULTANCY CO

When I finished studying Social Psychology I went into a consultancy company in Kemerovo, it was close somehow… For sure I didn't expect we'd divorce. I thought that I'd improve my English and get a second education. So I knew that I didn't have a job here, so when we talked we decided that I'd get a second degree here… He left in a year and a half… I was absolutely independent person in Russia, but when we came [to London] I depended on him [husband], but not for long, we didn't live long together, he returned to Russia... But I started to look for a job before and I was planning to study, so any rate I wasn't planning to live at his expense… I don't think we'd live together if we'd stay Russia. Everything just became more complicated here and he didn't like the country [the UK].

I KNEW I'D LEAVE KEMEROVO – FIRST JOB AT CONSULTANCY CO

He didn't like the country, he didn't like people and other things, he had his personal reasons, but we could split and he could stay here, but he left… He was born in Sankt-Petersburg, but lived in Kemerovo… We know each other for long, we studied in parallel classes… We were friends for some time. So when I was moving here, I always wanted to leave Russia, when I lived in Kemerovo I knew, I mean I wanted it very much. I knew that I'd leave Kemerovo and I left. After a got my Diploma and worked in Kemerovo for a year to get work experience and I left to Piter [Sankt-Petersburg]… As soon as I finished University I got a permanent job of an organisational consultant at that consulting company. We worked with organizations, you know, we optimised their business processes, did 'assessment' of personnel and so on…

'I HAD A PLAN' AND THE ONL JOB IN RUSSIA - PITER

No, no, I had a plan: I will get my Diploma, I will work in Kemerovo for a year just to get a formal work experience and then I thought, I planned to go to Moscow, to a big city. I had that idea from kindergarten I think… My ex and at that time my future husband coaxed me: 'Moscow is a crazy city, let's go to Piter [Sankt-Petersburg], we'll find a job for you fast'. At the end I found a job there on my own and without any connections, I didn't know anyone there. I came on 25th of July and started to work on the 7th August. So I've found a job during two weeks, it was advertised; perhaps you know that website 'HH', headhunter.ru… I uploaded my CV there. I was in Kemerovo when they called me and asked: 'When can you come to our office?' They thought that I lived in Piter. I said that the tickets were bought for such a date. I came for the interview and they gave me a job. By the way, many people couldn't believe that a job was advertised on a website since Z is a closed organization, it's a strategic enterprise, not a military one, but strategic… If someone would get access and pour some powder into water the whole city and its suburbs would be poisoned. We came into the offices by chips, our eyes were checked… They said at the interview that since I was not local I'd work very hard, since metropolitans are spoiled…

NATURE OF WORK IN PITER – INTERNAL RECRUITER

I worked there for a year. I worked there until I left [to the UK]. '*Kollektiv*' was wonderful; I'm still in good relationships with my Chief. She is a godmother to us, girls. It was interesting but also complicated, it's not like you are sitting in a 'raspberry garden'…I was an internal recruiter, I recruited personnel, I looked through CVs, conducted interviews, etc. We did research as well, who works how, effective or nor, the whole department dealt with those issues. We prepared reports, how many we fired, employed…Yes, it's a state enterprise.

A SECRET JOB IN KEMEROVO – TRADE HOLDING

And in Kemerovo I worked in a private company. After working from May to October at that organisational recruiting company I moved to commercial sector… It was a trade holding, you know, they have all supermarkets, restaurants, production workshops, they made *pelmeni*, it was huge… I worked there, Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, march, April, may, June, Jule, for 9 months! Basically I never had breaks between jobs in Russia. I left a workplace on Tue and found a new job on Wed… It's because I did everything in advance, so if I was going to leave for Piter, I'd say that I'm leaving to *tovarish* director two weeks before or what was 'notice period'. But if I decided that a year before, I, for example, created CV, translated it into English, uploaded it on particular websites…For example, when I studied at University and was writing my dissertation and on parallel I was looking for a job. I knew that I've got 3-4 months and I have to go to work. I submitted my Diploma on the 7th May and started to work on the 8th. About eight years ago, it's like that in my case…

SURVEY INTERVIWER:

No, my very first work experience was at the last year at University, I was a survey interviewer.

IF GOING BACK – MOSCOW, X-INTERNATIONAL CO

If I am fired now I would have to go back to Russia. I'm not afraid of it, but I wouldn't like it happen, I had lot of things in my life. And I would take it offensive… I would go to Moscow. I don't want to go back to Piter [Saint Petersburg] and definitely not to Kemerovo. To Moscow because…it would be easier to find a job, I

would be more in demand. Maybe Piter, but I would keep Piter as a second option… The weather is also not pleasant there. And in Moscow I'd have more opportunities to find a job in an international company, where they would need my English, Russian and work experience abroad. Needed more than in Piter… Any rate I feel myself more secure in Europe and that is important to me. Not as much financially, but like a human. In Russia everything is against a human, and here in most cases everything is made for a human.' **(Kira)**

WHY TO WORK – VALUES

Work gives you income of course. When I lived with my parents in Kemerovo they just told me: 'You got a degree, try to find a job'. Why to sit at home? I cannot imagine myself as a housewife, that's first and second is that work gives you income, financial independence. And any rate I was going to leave Kemerovo, and I knew that if I'd sit in Kemerovo without work it would be harder to find it later… I knew I needed some work experience, I knew that if I'd go to Piter or Moscow straight after University I'd have just a beautiful paper. But if I'd have even one year work experience that would be another story. I also knew that if wouldn't find a job it would mean that I was not ready and I'd return to Kemerovo. To be honest I said to everyone that I had holidays in Piter, but actually I left my job in Kemerovo. But situation could be different if I wouldn't get that job in Piter or it could take me longer since most jobs on offer were middling, I could find something like that in Kemerovo…

NO TO MEDICAL EDUCATION

My parents told me that they would help me with application for Medicine Studies and I told them: 'I won't apply for your Med!' Deliberately I applied for a one-year course at our Gymnasium where we could take final combined exams. So if you take them successfully you are automatically accepted at University. They've chosen 10 out 30. So first I took exams to get into that group and then to get one of those 10 places to be able to take combined exams… I had a silver medal at school and I finished University with a Red Diploma and of course it was harder to study here, it's not in my language. And I worked three full days and studied full three days. I had Sundays to recover and then again… My mother came two times, my father not once. We just applied for visa for him, let's see.

NB: By the time of second interview, in a year, Kira was promoted to HR officer at the same brokerage company in Canary Wharf. She took a mortgage for a two-bedroom house in Beckton, London.

SOFRONIK (b.1982, Perm; HE in Foreign Languages (2004); moved to Moscow in 2005; moved to the UK in 2008; MSc in Corporate Communications (2009)): early thirties, working since 2005; British non-profit organization, 3 years; network officer (FT, 30K)

FIRST JOB – MOSCOW, PA FOR A FOREIGNER

After studying Foreign Languages in Perm (Russia) Sofronik moved to Moscow. She worked as a PA for a Canadian national for about three years. She had a relationship with a British citizen. She was 'fed up with Moscow' and thought about moving abroad. She applied for several programmes in the UK mainly since her boyfriend lived in the UK. In 2008 she moved to the UK to study for MSc in Corporate Communications (loan) while her boyfriend was offered a job and moved to the USA; they split.

WHY MOVING TO THE UK

'By then I was tired of Moscow so much that I wanted to leave. I didn't want to take a credit at some bank in Russia to study abroad and then return. For some reason I thought I would have more perspectives here, more opportunities. I always liked English, foreign languages. I was interested in communication, in living in a foreign country, communicating in a foreign language. My boyfriend was born in USA, but he is English. He lived in England almost all his life, his parents moved there. It had an impact on me as well. I think everything happens to us with some purpose. I think he appeared in my life in that moment when I needed some additional pushing… I was thinking about the USA too, but Masters takes two years there. So I would spend more time and money. And it is just one year in England. But by the time I got a visa my boyfriend had finished University and found a job in the USA. He left the UK in August, I moved in September…' **(Sofronik)**

2 INTERNSHIPS

During studying she worked part-time as an executive assistant at an international company consulting on pensions and investment in London (20K). She didn't like 'the atmosphere' and 'managers' approach to temporary employees'. At the end they extended the contract for two out of five temporary employees at her department. Meanwhile she combined that job with internship at a British non-profit organization 'with clients around the world' in 2010. She was doing 'simple and primitive work, connected with 'monetary fees' and making sure that 'we knew all our signed clients e-mails and that they that all get the info, basically nothing intellectual'. In a month or so she got 'a letter from financial director for 2-3 month paid work [PT, 22K] to help different teams with different tasks, so that was more 'concrete oriented'. Of course, I agreed and at that period they were not satisfied with work of the director; perhaps they planned to ask her to leave at some point. So they gave me another chance to see how I will work. In January they offered me to become an 'executive assistant' for that 'executive director'. Sofronik was offered a full-time job of an executive assistant (25K) and in 2001 (?) she was promoted to a network officer (30K).

HOW SHE LEARNT ABOUT THAT JOB

She learnt about this organization while working at the previous one; they provided similar services. In Sofronik opinion her 'previous work experience at that company helped' to get a job and 'back then one girl who worked with me at that company worked in this one'.

DUTIES and SWITCHING TO NETWORKS TEAM

As an 'executive assistant' Sofronik had to 'organize meetings, book tickets and hotels, plus to assist the board of directors, something I never did, to go to meetings with them, I went to Munich for example, to New York. She gave me that role, something new with something for what I had 'skills' and work experience. How to behave with the board of directors, how to behave on those meetings. It was interesting but I understand that it's not something I'd like to do in the 'long term'. Either I was lucky or it was a coincidence a vacancy in the team 'networks' appeared and I was asked whether it would be interesting to me and I said yes, I find it interesting. Maybe that 'executive director' himself was not sure what would be 'executive assistant's responsibilities, he didn't have a clear 'picture' yet. So in May I 'joined networks team'.

COMPANY

By the time of first interview Sofronik had a position of a network officer at a developing company with 40 permanent employees in London's 'head of networks' and some temporary 'network managers' in 10 countries 'on the ground'. The company provided consultancy for 'responsible investment' 'across the world'. It started to work with 'support' from the UN and in a year while it still had that 'support' they 'legalised in the UK'.

WORK CONDITIONS and WORKING REGIME:
We are sitting in front of computer and eating. Sometimes we get together in a separate room talking and eating, maybe we spend half an hour for that and then we continue to work. It's because we have lot of work and we don't want to stay after work, it's better to work during lunch, but at least go home on time, more or less… <…> Yes, from 9 to 5:30, I like that we have 'flexible hours', but it doesn't mean that I can come at 12 and leave at 6 every day. But it's calm if you have to leave at 5 or come later. I mean nobody will never tell you anything or control what time you arrive and leave. You have absolute freedom, you 'manage' your 'workload'… Yes, we can work from home what I like since when I am tired of commuting I can stay home.'

PLANS – PROMOTION: + VALUES (RUSSIA)
'Recently I had 'appraisal' and 'setting objectives for the year ahead' with a new manager mentioned that vacancy [network manager] and said that both she and director are 'keen' for me to grow to it. So I have to make sure that I orient my energy into grasping all that 'knowledge' to be ready for that role which might open next year… Can I add something? What attracts and keeps me is that we don't have clients in Russia so far. I knew that it's a complicated market, but I think there are some first steps for 'responsible investment' there and it attracts me. I hope so much that I could be 'involved' with Russia. Alas, Russia is not among our strategic plans but maybe in several years that will change. I'd like to see this contribution to my country.'

IF I WERE A MAN
I would perhaps work in corporation, where finances, bonuses, career. I would do this job for sure… No, it's not because that world is interesting to me, to be honest I don't see myself there. Maybe, I don't know, it's hard to say why… I don'd have education in Finances, if my first education would be related to Finances, maybe, I would go there. But it turned out that my education is in Humanities, that was a starting point, so I'm in that.

NB: Sofronik is one of few interviewees with whom the researcher lost contact.

[1] **Fieldworker / junior member of a Moldovan team**: *Trade Unions in Post-Socialist Society: Overcoming the State Socialist Legacy?* (2004-2007), INTAS project, P.I. Prof Simon Clarke, University of Warwick, UK; **research assistant**: *Transition in Question: Case studies of Labour Relations in CIS Selected Companies* (2004-2007), British Academy Research Grant, P.I. Dr C. Morrison, University of Warwick, UK; **key interviewer / researcher in the region**: *International Migration and Labour Turnover* (2010-2012), P.I. Dr Devi Sacchetto, University of Padova, Italy

[2] **'East-West migration: Post-Soviet women in the UK'** at *Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe: Before, after, in the process?* 10th PG Conference (Jagiellonian University); **'Employment and work-life balance: Post-Soviet women in London'** at Post-socialist Labour Studies Group seminar (Middlesex University); **'Post-Soviet women and I: Ethical issues in doing gendered labour migration research'** at *Whose politics? Politics and moral dilemmas of social research* CEELBAS workshop (University of Warwick); **'Professional women from the FSU in London: How did they get 'there'?'** at WES Annual Conference (University of Warwick); **'Post-Soviet umbrella' for migrants in London: 'The researcher' and 'the researched'** at the 11th IMISCOE Annual Conference (Universidad Pontificia Comillas); **'What can we learn from migration of post-Soviet women professionals to London?'** At informal workshop organized by Eleonore Kofman (Middlesex University); **'Londongrad': A new 'home' for 'migrants' from the post-Soviet space?'** at RC31 Sociology of Migration, Third ISA Forum of Sociology (University of Vienna)

[3] **Attendee**: *Research Ethics and the Practicalities of Doing Fieldwork in Russia, Central and Eastern Europe*, (CEELBAS workshop, UCL); *The impact of migrant workers on the functioning of labour markets and IR*, ESRC seminar (Keele University); **co-organizer**: *Beyond methodological nationalism: Transnational perspectives on working class mobility in Europe* (PLS Group seminar, Middlesex University); **session chair** (int. workshops): *Post-socialist economies, nationalistic conflicts and labour in CEE and the FSU* (Middlesex University); *CEE employment relations in perspective – history, geography, variegation* (University of Greenwich)

[4] ***Jane***'s and ***Noa***'s stories reflect huge migration trends in early 90s across the former Eastern bloc. It is estimated that by the end of 1980s at least every fourth Soviet citizen lived outside the place of origin (Brubaker 1994). Therefore many families moved back to their countries of origin after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Jane grew up in Karaganda (Soviet Kazakhstan) and in 1991 at the age of twelve she had to move to Orenburg (Russia), her parents' homeland. Before that her parents were allocated to Soviet Kazakhstan as part of the state allocation programme of young specialists, 'raspredeleniye'. Many of those who returned to their 'homelands' found themselves detached from local populations and were considered as 'others' despite speaking the same language and/or sharing the same 'ethnicity'. Noa's story is even more complicated: as a teenager she had to move from St. Petersburg to Gdansk (Poland), a country with quite different history, social life and language. Her mother followed her second husband, Polish citizen. Both Jane and Noa did not want to talk about those disruptions in their lives.

[5] All forms of mobility increased in post-Soviet context as the result of huge structural changes. From a legal point of view both internal and international migration has not been restricted since 1991. Moreover, big cities and capitals turned into places of highest concentration of capital, work places and services at the background

of transition from planned to market economy in the 1990s. Meanwhile medium-size and smaller cities as well as provincial areas were not subsidised as in Soviet period and underwent catastrophic fall in quality of life.

[6] ***Olesya*** and ***Sveta*** moved to the UK after living in Denver and Tel Aviv respectively with their families. Their stories fit one of the key trends in post-Soviet migrations of the 1990s, the Jewish migration from the FSU to Israel, the USA and Germany. They also show that 'ethnicity-motivated' migration out of the region can precede other forms of mobility and further migration to the 'West'. Two cases of summer works abroad reflect another regional migration trends for youth in 2000s. ***Diana*** went to New York on 'Work and Travel' programme. ***Eva*** went to South Korea with her dancing collective. ***Liza*** lived for some time in Angola, one of the Soviet Union strategic partners in Africa, where her father was serving as a commercial diplomat.

[7] All interviews including the ones with migrants from Ukraine were conducted before military conflict began.

[8] 1) ***Liza*** came to the UK when she was 15 and lived in London from 2000 to 2003. Her father worked for the Trade Delegation of Russia. Then during her BA programme in Moscow she returned to London for an exchange programme (2006). In 2008 she started to study for a Masters in London. Liza was interviewed when she was finishing her PhD and working part-time as a seminar tutor and fitness trainer. 2) ***Eva*** came to London in 2006 on a student visa for 'language practice' and 'strawberry picking' as part of exchange programme at her University. She was studying English at a language school and working part-time at a night club in Soho. This is where she met her future husband, a British citizen with Romanian roots. When her 1-year student visa expired she moved back to Sumy, her home city. The process of receiving a marriage visa took about two years. She re-migrated to the UK in 2009. 3) Being a student in Nikolayev ***Zoriana*** came to the UK in 2003 as a seasonal picker to work in Surrey where she met her future husband, a Bulgarian citizen. He worked at the same plant as supervisor. She finished her BA in Ukraine and they married. They tried to settle in Bulgaria and then returned to the UK in 2006 mainly because she did not have the right to work in Bulgaria for 2 years. 4) Doing her doctoral studies in Minsk ***Zina*** received a Master scholarship and lived in the UK in 2004-2005. She returned to Belorussia and started to look for PhD scholarships in the UK. She succeeded and moved to London in 2007.

[9] ***Saule'***s story shed light on how 'student migration' from Kazakhstan can turn into a 'family' one. Her mother ***Leila*****,** another participant and her younger sister 'followed' ***Saule***. Meanwhile, ***Laura*** shared a story of 'sisters' migration' from Astana. Both ***Saule***'s and ***Laura***'s sisters moved to third countries (France and South Africa respectively) for educational and family-related purposes after living for several years in the UK. ***Yesenina****'s* brother migrated to the UK from Belorussia through a different route before she moved to London on a marriage visa. Meanwhile, two years after ***Diana*** moved to the UK with her husband as transferees of a MNC her sister came from Moldova to study in the UK on a scholarship. Finally, sisters ***Alice*** and ***Ada*** migrated to the UK from Moldova in 2003 and 2004 respectively. ***Alice*** came on a 'tourist' visa while ***Ada*** travelled with a marriage visa.

[10] The following three stories look exceptional against the rest. **Alice**, a Moldovan citizen, came on a tourist visa, received in Romania in 2003, but she planned to live and work at her 'co-ethnic' (meaning from the same country) friend's home as a nanny. **Noa**, a Polish citizen, came on a tourist visa in 1999 and stayed undocumented up to 2004 when Poland became an EU member state. **Edita** came to London from Moscow (1999) with her husband and two children on tourist visas, received in Latvia. Then they asked as for asylum. Her husband ran a trade business in Moscow and received threats from criminals.[10] They all received the status of refugees in 2003 what facilitated **Edita**'s access to public funds for studying in the UK. There are two common features in these three stories: 1) all came as 'tourists' what was a typical pattern for accessing the EU in the late 1990s and early 2000s; 2) visas were issued in one of 'future' EU member country.

[11] For instance, ***Nika*** came to the UK in 1999 as a trainee on a language course and met her husband, a German citizen. ***Anjela*** came for professional training in 2008 and met husband of Bulgarian origin. ***Zoriana*** came to the UK in 2003 as a seasonal worker and met her future husband at work.

[12] Methodological note: This study has a longitudinal dimension. Twelve women were interviewed for Masters dissertation (Summer 2009) Five of them kindly agreed to be interviewed again for this research (Spring 2012-Autumn 2013).

[13] ***Diana*** was complaining about commuting from 'a very good and safe city', Horsham: 'We would like to move to London someday… I am getting very tired; I don't even want to see my friends in London on weekends. I am four hours on a train daily, reading.' She and her husband work in the same MNC. By the time of the second interview her husband was transferred to London's office and they took mortgage for a two-bedroom house in Reading since they 'couldn't afford something good in London'. ***Diana*** emphasised that commuting didn't take long anymore. Meanwhile, ***Zina*** moved with her husband from St Albans to London (Edgware), to his sister flat who left to the USA.

[14] Both divorced ***Kira*** (HR officer, brokerage company) and ***Vera*** (senior clinical scientist, private clinic and a single mother) got mortgage for two-bedroom houses in Beckton and Islington respectively. Meanwhile, **Sveta** (technical lead, IT company) took primary responsibilities for a house in Wendover where she lives in with her husband and two children. ***Edita***'s case (project manager, NHS) is unique in that sense that mortgage responsibilities for a four-bedroom house in Croydon were shared between her, her husband and two working sons, 24 and 26 y.o.

[15] Participants' parents own properties mainly as the result of mass privatisation which included privatisation of accommodations Soviet citizens lived in before 1991. They paid a symbolic sum for privatisation itself. There is a joke that 'it is the only good we've got after the collapse of USSR'. In fact, it allowed most families in the region to escape mortgage and, perhaps, to invest into other things such as their children's education at the background of radical shrinkage of welfare, which included free education and healthcare in the Soviet period.

[16] ***Noa*** received a Polish passport as the result of following her mother who migrated as spouse from Russia to Poland in 1991. ***Diana*** entered the UK in 2011 on Tier 2 visa as a Moldovan citizen; however, as many other Moldovans, she received a Romanian passport (2012). It reflects one of the key citizenship/migration trends in Moldova, one of the top emigration countries in the world. Most Moldovans can apply for Romanian citizenship claiming that one of their grandparents used to be 'Romanian'. Formation of the Union between Romania and Moldova took place between 1918 and 1940. From 1991 onwards more than 100.000 Moldovans turned into 'Romanians'. Most of them use it to access work, education and travel across the EU.

[17] ***Olesya*** lived in the USA before moving to the UK and ***Sveta*** lived in Israel. They held the US and Israeli passports respectively. ***Olesya*** also had a Belorussian passport, but she could not use it after internal changes in Belorussia regarding citizenship in 2000. Both came on work permit visas to the UK.

[18] Methodological note: The author has to emphasize originating from the post-Soviet space (but Baltic countries) as well as migration to the UK after 1991 were one of the key selection criteria for migrants in this study. Meanwhile, citizenship and previous migrations were not considered at the research design stage. They were rather discovered in the processes of engaging with and interviewing migrants. The decision was made to incorporate into study those who lived in a third country before moving to the UK to have a more complete picture about migrations from the FSU to the UK.

[19] ***Noa*** and ***Alice*** represent rare cases among these migrants. Both came to the UK on 'tourist' visas and stayed 'undocumented' for several years. ***Noa*** held Polish passport and her status was 'legalised' in 2004 after Poland joined the EU. ***Alice*** married a British citizen; she re-entered the UK on a marriage visa after making an official return to Moldova on so called 'white passport'.

[20] ***Margo***, daughter of head of school, is the only participant who originates from a single-parent family. ***Laura*** lost her father when she was 14 in the early 1990s.

[21] ***Sofronik*** whose mother is a librarian and father is a highly educated engineer represents an exceptional case in this respect. In other two cases parents divorced after participants became independent.

[22] 'Prodavets' (Sg.) is a sales person on the floor, however 'prodavtsy' (Pl.) had a particular position in Soviet society known for 'poor' consumption culture and restricted access to some goods and services. 'Prodavtsy' had access to some goods most Soviet citizens did not have what in some cases put their families in a more privileged position and had an impact on quality of life. And what is more importantly, having access to (deficit) goods 'prodavtsy' and their families could develop social connections.

[23] After interviewee's pseudonym their parents' occupations and educational degrees are indicated. Mothers' occupation comes first. HE stands for HE qualifications obtained by participants' parents at Universities and other HE institutions. 'PTU' stands for qualifications obtained at professional-technical colleges in USSR. Parents studied at 'PTU' for one to four years to become qualified workers in one field or another.

[24] 'Normalinyi' (adj.) and 'normalino' (adv.) is a colloquial Russian expression and is not easy to translate. Usually it suggests that something is 'OK', 'standard', 'regular', 'widespread', 'decent', 'acceptable', 'rather good', 'not bad', 'could be better'. The root of the word is 'norma' is equivalent to 'norm' in English. Although everyone might have own understanding of what is 'normalino' when it is used in socio-economic terms it has to be interpreted as neither unprivileged/the poor nor the rich/well-off, and what is more importantly it stands for something in between the two. Many post-Soviet people think that they lived 'normalino' in Soviet Union and they live 'normalino' today. 'Normalino' is often used in evaluation of one's quality of life. However many participants emphasised that what is 'normalino' in the region/home country is closer to what is 'lower middle class' in the UK. 'Normalino' will be translated as 'normal' in quotes.

[25] In the 1990s many families 'tried to do business', but in reality it was 'chelnochestvo' or called later on with irony 'kupi-prodai' (buy-sell) practise. Since there were no restriction to cross own borders anymore many representatives of Soviet intelligentsia travelled to Central and East European countries or Turkey to buy products and sell them in their countries.

[26] In the 1990s ***Edita*** who used to be a sport trainer became a housewife after she gave birth to two children and her husband turned into a businessman. Meanwhile, ***Masha*** re-skilled from a music teacher into a lawyer trough 'learning by doing' and studying part-time. ***Leila*** moved to another city in Kazakhstan with her two daughters after divorce and started her own small business in retailing books for University students.

[27] In this section participants' level of education is indicated first. 'HE + MSc' means HE degree obtained in the region and MSc degree obtained in the UK.

[28] Yet, ***Laura*** and ***Zina*** had 2 'Western' Master degrees. The issue of 'over-education' is addressed in 7.3.

[29] Five women used English at work in the region while the other four practised it with their 'foreign' partners. Two went to the USA on 'Work and travel' programme. Some women could practise it on holidays. Others took English language courses and watched English-speaking films and news (usually Euro news, BBC and CNN). In several cases mothers or aunts worked as English teacher what is one of gendered professions in the region and beyond it. Computerisation and internet also had some impact on learning English process.

[30] ***Diana***'s first language is Moldovan while ***Kate***'s first language is Ukrainian. Three out of four bilinguals originate from 'mixed' families. Yet, those who originate from Moldova, Kazakhstan and Ukraine have basic or good knowledge of Moldovan, Kazakh or Ukrainian respectively. Therefore non-Russian citizens are more likely to speak three or four languages. Some women speak more than the regional language(s) and English as the result of studying it at University or on a leisure time as well as of living in a related country or learning it from husband: Bulgarian (1), French (3), German (2), Hebrew (1), Italian (2)**,** Polish (1), Spanish (2) and Turkish (1).

[31] After interviewee's pseudonym their parents' occupations and educational degrees are indicated, first of her mothers' occupation and then of her father's one. HE stands for HE qualifications obtained by participants' parents. 'PTU' stands for PTU qualifications of their parents. PTU were professional-technical colleges in USSR.

[32] Grandparents' educational and occupational backgrounds represent one of the emergent themes in this study. At the initial stage of fieldwork the participants of the research were not asked to reflect on their grandparents' backgrounds in order to reveal any impact they might have on the participants in educational or occupational terms.

[33] It can be stated that women from the FSU are biased against 'non-Europeans' on the basis of imposed 'clash of civilisations' which is also rooted in religion. Although only half of participants considered themselves to be believers (Saule practiced Buddhism) they all were brought up in a rather 'Christian' culture which survived in Soviet times and flourished during Transition.

[34] ***Masha***'s partner, a former military pilot, could not find a job related to his profile in the UK/London. ***Sveta***'s husband geodesist by education (Kiev) res-skilled into programmer (Tel-Aviv) and then re-skilled again into a homoeopathist (London) mainly because he could not find a job related to his profiles while one of their children needed particular care and treatment.

[35] ***Edita***'s husband did not pursue further education after finishing secondary school in Moscow. He used to try different trades in the 1990s and became a successful entrepreneur. This led to threats from 'a criminal group' to him and his family in Edita's words. They made 'tourist visas' in Lithuania and came to the UK in 1999. They asked for asylum for themselves and their two children and got refugee status. Edita's husband started to work in construction sector (informally) and by the time of interview worked as a foreman.

[36] For space reasons 'prestigious' and 'non-prestigious' jobs are used without quotes in this section only.

[37] ***Margo*** who did not complete her studies in Marketing (Chelyabinsk) was interviewed when she was about to complete an MA in International Political Relations in London; she worked part-time as a project manager in a charity organization providing care for elderly people. ***Jane*** who had a degree in International Communications (Chelyabinsk) studied part-time for MSc in Digital Marketing. By the time of the second interview she completed a five-month internship as a search engine optimisation executive and was looking for a full-time job in Digital Marketing planning to combine it with private hair-styling on weekends. ***Inna*** (Logistics, Donetsk) completed MA in Interpreting and Translation, but worked as a financial manager assistant. ***Zoriana*** (BA in International Relations, Nikolayev) tried to re-skill through accountancy courses and work in a Bulgarian financial service firm first and then as an account manager assistant at an international hotel chain. ***Alice*** (Foreign Languages, Chisinau) was combining entrepreneurship (selling Orthodox icons from Moldova in London) with self-employed event organizing after completing an 'intensive' 9 month course in event management. She has found her first job in this field at in Jewish ethnic company through her husband. Finally, ***Masha*** is the only participant who tried to re-skill in the region and then returned to her initial background in London. After completing Music PTU in the Soviet period she worked as Music educator in Kaliningrad and later in Moscow. In the 1990s she started to work in a law firm and study part-time for a HE degree in Law. She successfully re-skilled into a lawyer in Russia and moved to London as a company transferee. Her five year contract expired and she returned into teaching Music mainly with Russian-speaking children and organizing music events in London.

[38] Work permit holders include those who came to the UK 'independently' (mainly from third countries) or as transferees. For example, ***Sveta*** and ***Olesya*** moved to the UK from Israel and USA for an IT job and post-doctoral fellowship. Meanwhile, ***Masha*** (Moscow) and ***Diana*** (Chisinau) came as transferees of a Russian law firm (lawyer) and of and international company (IT tester).

[39] ***Yana*** worked for two years as a junior interior designer in a small British firm while studying for BA in Interior Design. Reorienting she went into studying for another BA in Graphic Design while working as a freelance graphic designer mainly with Russian-speaking clientele. However, her objective was to gain full-time employment and 'to have a stable income'. Similarly, by the time of their second interviews, both ***Alice*** (event organizing) and ***Jane*** (hair styling) combined self-employment with paid internships. ***Alice*** was on apprenticeship in management while ***Noa*** worked a search engine optimisation executive in a British marketing company.

[40] ***Kate*** studied for MA in Branding and Industry in London after studying Graphic Design and working for several years in illustration and graphic design in Kyiv. The only job she could find in London over a year was a two month contract in game design (400pw) with a Russian-speaking client. She was about to borrow the required sum from parents and friends in Kyiv to register as an entrepreneur in the UK (Tier 1) after her post-study visa would expire. By the time of the second interview she registered as her partner's dependent (American citizen); they studied together for MA degrees. They moved to Newcastle since he has got a job in an American corporation in game design. It has to be emphasised that most participants worked full-time, but only half of them had permanent positions.

[41] ***Alexa*** whose last occupation in Moscow was coordinator of trainers (1000-3000$ p.m., 2008) started to work as a volunteer administrator at reception of one of colleges in London (2009). She was a manager of a tiny Russian department in a British recruiting company (2013) by the time of the interview. She was satisfied with pay (£28K) and there was an opportunity to become a regional manager, however she said that the working environment was 'professional, but not intelligent enough' giving an example that one of colleagues did not know 'who Freud was'. ***Alexa*** is the only woman who had a Candidate degree from the region (Psychology) and was working towards a certificate of a life coach hoping that she could return to the field related to both her education and pre-UK work experiences.

[42] ***Nika*** (Foreign Languages) started to work at her acquaintance's private language school in Volgograd and came to London as part of training. Her acquaintance in London helped her to get a job at a reception in a model agency (700£ p.m.) where she worked '8 hours a day, on Saturdays as well getting cash in hand'. After that she had a job at 'National Lottery Charity'. She saw an ad and passed the interview, but she 'worked there only for half a year, since it wasn't interesting'. She 'tried to find a stable English company' where she could earn 'at least £12K'. Through a Russian acquaintance she found a job at a shoe shop where she worked for four years 'by contract' (FT, 15-16K) having 'paid holidays'. However, she wanted 'to work in office' and found a receptionist job at a law firm (FT, 1000 p.m.) where she had paid holidays but 'not paid sick leaves'. She left it as well: 'I didn't like to work at the reception, I wanted more responsibility'. From 2004 to 2010 she worked at a small British architecture firm, which she found via internet. She entered as 'administrative assistant' and then became a 'finance assistant (FT, 1500 p.m.). During interview in 2009 she concluded: 'at the very beginning both positions were very interesting, but I don't have career opportunities at this company. I have to look for another job... I have to continue education in finance field, but my boss doesn't need it since they'd have to pay for it and after that they'd have to pay me more.' It looked like after having different jobs ***Nika*** re-skilled into an accountant through working and completing relevant courses. However, at the time of the second interview in 2013 she was on maternity leave with her second child planning to become a self-employed translator, what is closer to her initial educational background.