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Eurocity London: a qualitative comparison of graduate migration from Germany, Italy and Latvia

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Abstract

This paper compares the motivations and characteristics of the recent migration to London of young-adult graduates from Germany, Italy and Latvia. Conceptually the paper links three domains: the theory of core–periphery structures within Europe; the notion of London as both a global city and a 'Eurocity'; and the trope of 'crisis'. The dataset analysed consists of 95 in-depth biographical interviews and the paper's main objective is to tease out the narrative similarities and differences between the three groups interviewed. Each of the three nationalities represents a different geo-economic positioning within Europe. German graduates move from one economically prosperous country to another; they traverse shallow economic and cultural boundaries. Italian graduates migrate from a relatively peripheral Southern European country where, especially in Southern Italy, employment and career prospects have long been difficult, and have become more so in the wake of the financial crisis. They find employment opportunities in London which are unavailable to them in Italy. Latvian graduates are from a different European periphery, the Eastern one, post-socialist and post-Soviet. Like the Italians, their moves are economically driven whereas, for the Germans, migration is more related to lifestyle and life-stage. For all three groups, the chance to live in a large, multicultural, cosmopolitan city is a great attraction. And for all groups, thoughts about the future are marked by uncertainty and ambiguity.

Keywords: London, Eurocity, Graduate migrants, Core–periphery, Economic crisis

Introduction

In his brilliant book *Eurostars and Eurocities*, Adrian Favell portrays London as the Eurocity *par excellence* (Favell, 2008, pp. 30–45). This is despite widespread British Euroscepticism, reinforced by the May 2015 election during which uncontrolled immigration from Europe was a hot topic, and an impending referendum on Britain's continued membership of the EU. London's Eurocity credentials are summed up by Favell as follows: 'no other city has been able to compete with London's cultural cool and economic clout, or its access to the English-language business, media and cultural worlds'. As a result,

> A quiet and unstoppable *European* invasion… has taken place in the latter half of the 1990s… London became increasingly *the* target of mobile young continental Europeans, in fact, the prime destination of European free movement for this

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particular generation. It started with West Europeans – from France, Spain, Denmark, Germany, Italy – and in the new millennium extended, with enlargement around the corner, to a new wave of East Europeans (Favell, 2008, p. 30, emphasis in original).

Favell's book stopped short of a thorough-going analysis of the effects of the 2004 and 2007 enlargements, and it was published just before the financial crisis struck in late 2008. Hence in this paper we mainly focus on the more recent migratory dynamics into the UK's capital region, shaped by EU enlargement and economic crisis. We speculate whether the Eurostar metaphor is as appropriate to these more recent arrivals as it was for those of the 1990s and early 2000s.

Based on 95 interviews with German, Italian and Latvian graduate migrants collected in and around London during 2009–13, we explore and compare how the interviewees articulate their motivations for, and experiences of, migration. The three nationality groups were strategically chosen: one from a prosperous country of the European 'core' economic area, one from the Southern periphery, and the third from the Eastern periphery. In terms of typologies of comparison (Martiniello, 2013), this study is an example of 'convergent' comparison, whereby the essence of the comparison is that between comparable people (recent graduates from three different countries) undergoing a similar experience (immigrating, living and working) in the same geographic location (London).

The idea of Europe as a core–periphery structure is central to our analytical framework. Two other conceptual domains underpin our analysis, both introduced in the above brief discussion of Favell's study. These are the notion of London as both a 'Eurocity' and a global city which attracts young graduates from many parts of Europe and the world, and the trope of 'crisis' which is much used when discussing European economic trends of the post-2008 years, especially in the peripheral states of the eurozone. These three conceptual frames are outlined in more detail in the next section of the paper.

Before we come to that, we set out the key questions of our comparative study. We ask, firstly, how recent graduates from the three selected countries narratively interpret and explain their motivations for moving to London and their experiences of working and living there. What are the similarities and differences in the narrative themes developed by the three samples of interviewees? To what extent do they justify their decisions and behaviours with reference to our three key framing notions of peripherality, crisis and global-city London? And for each of the groups, to what extent are economic motives – income, employment, career development – important, as opposed to the 'lifestyle' attractions of living in such an economically and culturally vibrant metropolis? Finally, how do the research participants envisage their future migratory trajectories?

Conceptual frames: core–periphery, global-city London, and the crisis

The above introduction made reference to the 'periphery' of Europe as being more severely affected by the economic crisis, and thus by the 'new' emigration of highly educated young adults. This leads us to rejuvenate the core–periphery model of spatially uneven development as a theoretical device to help explain how these flows come about.

This model, also referred to as 'centre–periphery', derives from the Latin American *dependencia* school of the 1960s (see Frank, 1969), which arose as a counter-thesis to the 'stages-of-growth' modernisation theory which dominated thinking about the development process in the early postwar period (Rostow, 1960). These opposed theoretical stances also frame very different interpretations of migration's relationship with development. On the one hand, labour migration from less- to more-developed countries helps to correct the imbalance between the two and enables the former to transition to a higher stage of modernisation via remittances and the factor-price equalisation of wages through rebalancing the supply and demand for labour. On the other, the extraction of migrant labour and human capital from the periphery serves only to benefit the destination countries of the core and to maintain the peripheral countries in a state of poverty and dependent development (De Haas, 2010).

Early dependency-school literature made little reference to core–periphery structures within Europe; this was rectified by Seers, Schaffer, and Kiljunen (1979), whose book *Underdeveloped Europe: Studies in Core–Periphery Relations* analysed the various lines of dependency connecting what they called the 'secondary European economies' with the industrial economies of the 'core'. Such lines of unequal dependency included trade, foreign investment, tourism and, of course, migration. Case-studies were made of Spain, Portugal, Southern Italy, Greece, Ireland and Finland – a roll-call of the main European countries of emigration during the early postwar decades, until the oil crisis of 1973–74. Geographers' flow-maps demonstrated the almost-perfect symmetry of the periphery-to-core migratory links which bound the continent together at this time, with the exception of Eastern Europe, blocked off by the migration barrier of the Iron Curtain (King, 1993; Salt & Clout, 1976).

Recent migration flows, since the 1990s and especially since the latter half of the 2000s, represent a reactivation of these same periphery-to-core patterns 40–50 years later (King, 2015). But there are also new trends. First, the removal of the Iron Curtain has opened up the whole of Eastern Europe as a labour periphery with strong migration flows to the core, facilitated by EU accession in some cases. Second, we observe the rise of the UK, and especially the London region, to a position of much greater dominance for current intra-European flows than it had in the past. This is especially true for graduate-level jobs (Favell, 2008, pp. 30–45; Favell & Recchi, 2009; Recchi, 2015, pp. 49–77) and reflects London's emergence as Europe's one truly global city (Sassen, 2001). A third refinement to the core–periphery model is to nuance its binary character by introducing gradations of centrality and peripherality. Some countries could be regarded as semi-peripheral based on their economic status and migration trends (for instance those with both immigration and emigration – like Italy). The sub-national regional patterning of migration flows and their increasing typological diversity (especially as regards new regimes of mobility) mean that a state-level classification of core and periphery is too crude (Williams, 2009). Italy is again the best exemplar: the North close to the Euro-core and the South more peripheral, with graduate outflows both to the 'core' of Italy in Milan and the the rest of the Italian North, and to London and other major Eurocities (Conti, 2012).

The second conceptual frame relates to London not just as a Eurocity (Favell, 2008) but also as a global city (Sassen, 2001). As a global city and former imperial capital, its

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migration dynamics have a long history and have evolved over constantly shifting geographical fields. Following Friedmann's (1986) 'world city hypothesis', London can be seen as a dominant component of a contemporary metageography of global-metropolitan nodes which generate their own spaces and flows of capital, goods, ideas, services – and migrants (Beaverstock, Smith, & Taylor, 2000). Sassen's analysis of the archetypal global city focused, amongst other things, on the dynamic polarisation of wealth, class, the labour market and social geography (Sassen, 2001, pp. 308–314, 321–323), with immigrants playing a crucial role in driving this polarisation, contributing both to the highly remunerated elites and, more massively, to the low-wage subproletariat. If this model of hour-glass social recomposition was laboratory-tested by studies of New York and Los Angeles, May, Wills, Datta, Evans, Herbert, and McIlwane (2007) and Wills, Datta, Evans, Herbert, May, and McIlwane (2010) show how the polarisation model also applies to London's 'new migrant divisions of labour'.

Fifty years ago, London's low-wage migrants came mainly from the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent. Nowadays, it is migrants from Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe who keep the mechanics of the city's economy ticking over – cleaning and caring for, and in many other ways servicing the needs of, the rest of the population, including tourists and visitors. Rather less studied are the young European graduates who have arrived on a large scale since the 1990s, and especially during the 2000s: some, yes, to become Eurostars *à la* Favell but the majority to get more modest employment as what Conradson and Latham (2005a) and others (e.g. Parutis, 2014) have labelled 'middling transnationals'. The literature on this new migration of graduates from the EU's crisis-affected peripheral countries is limited but fast-developing, either based on small-N interview samples or larger-N online surveys (see Bygnes, 2015; Labrianidis & Vogiatzis, 2013; Triandafyllidou & Gropas, 2014).

Crisis – our third framing device – is a word which is all-too-easily mobilised to describe important events. In terms of the unfolding migration and refugee situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans, the term is widely applied, even if, as in the past (e.g. Weiner, 1995), the 'blame' for the crisis is too readily and wrongly heaped on the shoulders of the migrants. In this paper we use the word in its economic sense (Bevelander & Petersson, 2014), and also as a discursive device which echoes through some, but actually surprisingly not so many, of the interview narratives. We will see that the London region's labour market, relatively immune from the crisis, provided a welcome refuge for graduates fleeing unemployment, blocked career paths or mere boredom in their home countries. The differential economic effects of the crisis across Europe are explored in more detail in the next section.

Background data

Intra-EU migration has been rising in recent years, although its overall scale in relation to total population remains modest. According to data from various sources summarised by Glennie and Pennington (2014, p. 19), the number of EU citizens living in another member-state increased from 10.2 million in 2007 to 13.4 million in 2012. This latter figure, however, represents only 2.7 % of total EU population. For the UK, the proportion is somewhat higher – 3.8 %, or 2.4 million people. The UK's position in the geography of recent intra-EU flows has evolved over three stages: before and since the 2004 enlargement, and since the 2008 recession. Before 2004, the number of EU

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nationals (excluding returning UK nationals) entering roughly balanced the departures of Britons heading for other EU countries. After 2004, when Britain opened its labour market to migrants from the new accession countries, the balance shifted to large-scale net immigration, far exceeding what was expected. Annual net migration from 'EU8' countries of Eastern Europe peaked at 80,000 in 2007 but then dropped to less than half that figure after the onset of the economic crisis. Since 2004 Poles have been the biggest group of EU8 entrants, but Latvians and Lithuanians have immigrated at higher rates when controlled for home-country population size. However, more recently net migration from the EU to the UK has increased once again (from 65,000 in 2012 to 131,000 in 2013) and its geography of origin has changed, now predominantly from the Southern EU countries (Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece), where job opportunities, especially for new graduates, have shrunk and unemployment has risen sharply.

Table 1 displays the profile of total and youth (under 25) unemployment for selected EU countries before and after the crisis. The figures are the averages of the 2 years immediately preceding the crisis (2007–08) and for the 2 years when, for most countries, the crisis was at its peak (2012–13). Countries are divided into 'core' EU economies and the three geographical peripheries. In the core countries total unemployment remained relatively stable and low across the crisis; in Germany it actually decreased. Youth unemployment figures are higher. For all of the peripheral countries listed in Table 1, both sets of figures (total and youth unemployment) are higher, as is the proportionate increase across the 5-year period. For total unemployment, most peripheral countries approximately doubled their rates, and for a few the rates tripled. For youth

Table 1 Unemployment rates in selected EU countries, 2007–08 and 2012–13

	Total unemployment (%)		Youth unemployment (%)	
	2007–08	2012–13	2007–08	2012–13
Core countries				
UK	5.4	7.5	14.6	20.5
Germany	8.1	5.3	11.2	7.8
Netherlands	3.3	6.1	5.6	10.4
Sweden	6.1	8.0	19.7	23.1
Southern periphery				
Portugal	8.7	15.7	16.5	37.0
Spain	9.8	25.4	21.9	53.7
Italy	6.4	11.7	20.8	38.0
Greece	8.0	25.8	22.5	56.8
Cyprus	3.8	14.7	9.6	34.3
Western periphery				
Ireland	5.5	13.4	10.8	27.5
Eastern periphery				
Estonia	5.0	10.2[a]	11.0	20.9[a]
Latvia	7.2	14.9[a]	11.9	28.4[a]
Lithuania	4.5	12.4	10.8	24.1
Poland	8.3	10.1	19.5	27.0
Slovakia	10.4	13.9	19.6	33.3

[a]figure refers to 2012 only
Source: Eurostat, October 2013

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unemployment, the rates are roughly double those for total unemployment, and once again we observe a 5-year doubling of the rate in many peripheral countries, with very high rates posted for 2012–13 by the Southern EU countries and Latvia.

Sources and methods

The three case-studies that form the basis of our comparative empirical analysis come from three independent studies, each carried out by a different co-author of the present paper. Whilst each study was an individually executed project, they formed part of a broad research initiative aimed at investigating recent graduate migration patterns within Europe.[1] Our focus on graduates includes those who had been to university and completed their studies (the vast majority of the participants) but also a few who were combining part-time study with work and another small number (in the German sample) who had pursued non-university post-secondary education in order to access professional employment.

All three studies involved in-depth face-to-face interviews in the London area with research participants in their 20s and 30s. Each study asked a similar range of questions about home-country background, reasons for migration, and the work and other experiences of living in the core region of the UK. Nevertheless, a key feature of all interviews was their essentially open nature, allowing each participant to narrate their own story in their own way, stressing the themes and perspectives they thought were pertinent to their own experience.

Interviews were undertaken in the native language of the participants: German, Italian, Latvian or Russian. With a few exceptions where extensive notes were taken, all interviews were recorded, transcribed and translated into English. Interview transcripts were subject to repeated reading and thematic analysis to extract comparable and differentiated themes highlighted across and between the three samples. In all cases, appropriate ethical procedures were followed: informed consent, permission to record, right to withdraw etc. Names are pseudonyms.

All three samples (39 Germans, 38 Italians and 18 Latvians) are gender-balanced and incorporated a range of interviewee ages between early 20s and late 30s; some of the older participants had been longer-resident in the UK. Since there are no accurate registers of the three populations being studied, the sampling was respondent-driven, including some recourse to snowball-sampling. Other participants were recruited via the researchers' personal networks and social-media sites. Given the enforced lack of true random sampling, we cannot be sure of the statistical representativeness of our groups of interviewees. However, we are confident that we have avoided any marked bias, since each study also included substantial time spent in participant observation. Although this does not form part of the analysis in this paper, we use this ethnographic experience to reinforce our confidence in the rigour and consistency of the analysis presented below.

The methods we employ are designed to create an explanatory bridge between the three conceptual frameworks set out earlier and the research questions specified in the concluding paragraph of the introduction. We were careful to avoid 'leading questions' in the interviews and hence did not use terms such as 'economic crisis' or 'core' and 'periphery'. Instead we analysed the variable use of these terms, or their close approximates, in the participants' narratives, drawing both similarities and differences between

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the three graduate nationalities. As we shall see in the case-study evidence which follows, these references to core–periphery, crisis and global-city London both resonate across the economic dimension of employment, salaries and careers, and also took in frequent mentions of culture and lifestyle.

Germans in London: Crisis – what crisis?

Despite the two world wars, Germans are a long-standing presence in the UK, yet estimates of their current presence vary: probably well in excess of 100,000, but not as many as the 250,000 German-born enumerated in the census, which includes substantial numbers of British nationals born in Germany, mainly to armed service personnel.

Reviewing the interview data and other ethnographic evidence, there are three theoretical reference-points which help to characterise young Germans in London. The first is Favell's (2008) Eurostar ideal-type: highly educated 'high-flyers' who are multilingual, interculturally competent and often career-mobile high earners. Whilst some of the German participants fitted this type, most did not attain such an elite status. More typical were Conradson and Latham's (2005a) 'middling transnationalists', described by Favell in another of his publications as 'skilled and educated [migrants such as] students, nurses, mid-level technical and clerical employees... upwardly mobile middle classes' (Favell, Feldblum, & Smith, 2006, p. 2). Such migrants do not feature high up the media or political agenda since their movement is largely unnoticed and uncontested. Nevertheless their experiences are highly relevant given their ubiquity in major European cities and their contribution to urban economies. This trend reveals a general shift in studies on skilled migration away from a focus on highly trained professionals to a more heterogenous graduate migrant group (cf. Scott, 2006 on the British in Paris). The third theoretical notion is 'lifestyle migration' (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009), typified by 'Brits' who retire to the south of Spain (O'Reilly, 2000) or to rural France (Benson, 2011). For Germans in London, the lifestyle attraction is not the peaceful landscapes of the rural idyll, nor the sun-drenched Mediterranean *Costas,* but the cosmopolitan vibe of London and its cutting-edge urban lifestyles.

Key themes from the narratives: cautious migration from 'boring' Germany

Taken in the round, the interviews indicate that many young Germans engage in a kind of 'cautious' or 'haphazard' migration to London (Armbruster, 2010, p. 1237). The UK is seen as a nearby destination, different from Germany, but not *that* different; it is abroad, but not *that* far away. As interviewee Hannes put it, 'You don't have the feeling that you have to leave everything behind, because you don't spend 12 h on a plane'. Hannes is making an implicit comparison with America here – the other main choice for many Germans (and other graduate Europeans) wanting an 'anglophone' work, business or life experience. This resonates with an interesting passage in *Eurostars and Eurocities* where Favell (2008, pp. 39–40) argues that part of the attraction of London is that it is like New York in Europe; it mimics America's capitalist and cultural hub, yet it is more accessible, friendly, humane and socially rich than New York or other big American cities.

The relatively short distance and the availability of budget airlines make both home visits, and visits by friends from Germany, a frequent possibility. Indeed, in the eyes of many young Germans, a move to London is seen almost as an internal migration, endorsing the 'free movement' ethos of the EU. Moreover, the mindset is to view the move to London as an episode in their lives akin to taking 'time out' from their regular lives, which they will resume sooner or later. Henrik put this nicely as follows:

> I quite like living in London… but I know that, in the back of my mind, this is not it, and that I can imagine going somewhere else… or going back to Germany… I'm flexible. When I moved here I thought, OK, I'll do 2 years; now it's been four, it'll probably be five; but I think that at some point I'll say… I've done it, I want something else now…

The pure economic rationale for migration is largely missing from the German narratives, and there is scant mention of the crisis, either in Germany or the UK.[2] Rather, paraphrasing Conradson and Latham (2005b, 2007) in their research on young New Zealanders in London, what is most relevant are the 'affective possibilities' of London as an exciting setting for a journey of self-realisation. Among Germans, living in an energetic space of global-city cosmopolitanism, improving their already-competent English, and escaping from the 'boring' and 'provincial' German way of life were key factors behind their moves to London. Two typical interview extracts:

> My life in Germany was super-boring… I was really stuck in a routine… You come home from work, like 5 pm or so, you sit down in front of the telly, and you watch telly until 10.30 when you fall into bed, and it was like that every day… Even if you went shopping one day, or spent an afternoon on the balcony reading, somehow it was always the same (Sandra).

> I really wanted to live in a metropolis… that was the main reason… it wasn't that I was unemployed or anything to do with my career… I was kind of unhappy with my job [in Germany]; and living in that small city, it was awful… So at some point I just said, I'm going to do it, I want to go where I want to be, where I like it (Sven).

Indeed for some of the interviewees, their career progression took a back seat, or even regressed in that they 'traded down' to a job in London that was below their qualifications yet readily available and enough to live on. This was especially characteristic of the female interviewees. More important than direct career advancement (for some this would occur upon return in Germany with more-fluent English) was the preference for gaining life experience in a different city. This is not unique to Germans in the UK: both Scott (2004) and Conradson and Latham (2007), writing respectively about the British in Paris and New Zealanders in London, find the same syndrome: the career is put on hold in favour of broader objectives of enjoying a 'different' way of life at a particular life-stage.

In the absence of references to unemployment in Germany or the euro-crisis, the German participants talked more about their social lives, both in London and back in Germany. Some tried to maintain a social life in both places, a double challenge that was found to be more difficult than imagined. The short-hop flight to their local airport proved to be not that short, once times for travel to and from the airport, plus security

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and check-in, were factored in. Some talked about cutting back on their regular week-end visiting family and friends because of the pressure and cost of it all and the fact that, along with hosting weekend visitors from Germany, they had no time to develop new friendship networks or enjoy the cultural life of London (Mueller, 2015).

'Home' and 'belonging': London or Germany?

For the majority of German interviewees, their wish to remain connected to their friends and family in Germany was counter-balanced by their expressed desire *not* to become part of a 'German community' in the UK. However, many contradicted this statement by their behaviour, creating and inhabiting distinct German social spaces in and around London. These spaces included the '*Zeitgeist*' German pub, 'after-work drinks' sessions in Central London bars, and more informal and mobile social spaces such as clubs devoted to hiking and other shared activities (Mueller, 2015, p. 629). This co-national socialisation was done partly out of a need to get help to settle in, especially in the early stages, and partly as a reaction to the difficulty of creating a meaningful social network of British friends.

Participants were often ambivalent when discussing when, and indeed if, to return to Germany. As Conradson and Latham (2005b) found in their study of New Zealanders in London, decisions to return are often postponed and hence made progressively more difficult. On the one hand there is the desire to fulfil the original intention to return, and the pull and expectations of family that this will happen. But this is challenged on the other hand by the gradual embedding in a new life, with new personal and romantic relationships, and the consequent distancing from 'home' in Germany. Consider the following two contrasting quotes:

> Well, my mum is saying I should come back; and then again, there's not really anything holding me here. I have a job here, but it's not that great… it's not like it's a great career! And I don't have a boyfriend… And if I don't go back soon, my mother worries that the career window will close for me, and I'll be stuck here (Maria).

> Over the past 8, 9 years I've learnt that Germany as 'home' [he uses the word *Heimat*[3]], it doesn't work, it's not quite right – not when I'm with my parents, for example… Once I've been there for a day or so, I realise I don't belong there anymore, I no longer feel at home there… Of course it's nice to be home… but then I feel relatively quickly – that's not me (Lasse).

Meanwhile, in London, too, not all things are positive and several participants expressed frustration at the high rents and the fact that they had to share accommodation with others. They struggled with the social geography of the city, where the 'nice' areas were too expensive to afford, and the affordable areas were perceived as a bit too 'dangerous' or unpleasant. Their idealised plan to acquire lots of British friends and experience the multicultural atmosphere of the city was often thwarted by the reality of people's busy lives, living dispersed in different parts of London. In the following interview extract Sven reflects on how little contact he had with English people:

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Well, on the one hand it would be nice [to know some English people], just to get an insight into their culture and the life here, because I don't know at all what English people do all day long, what they do in the evenings… apart from going to the pub and getting drunk. But again on the other hand, I'm not forcing it, because I have lots of other friends, and I wouldn't even have time to meet them.

Sven's failure to acquire 'local' English friends is justified by two discursive devices. First, there is his moral condemnation of them as drunkards; and second, he claims he is too busy to meet them anyway! Most probably, Sven's aspiration was frustrated by the elusiveness of 'authentic locals' in a city where so many people are of minority background or are migrants from other parts of Britain and Ireland.

Perhaps the greatest sense of ambivalence surrounds the participants' relationship to other Germans in London. German migrants are almost celebratory in the way they claim not to want to meet fellow-Germans. Yet most, like Sven, had German friends and spent part of their free time socialising within German social spaces. The self-construction of Germans as independent and open-minded, anxious to blend in with the English and the wider multicultural mix of London, intersected with a generalised picture of other migrant groups as ethnically more compact. Participants would often say that 'we Germans' are not like 'the Italians' or 'the Spanish', who were portrayed as rejoicing upon meeting co-nationals, speaking their own language, embracing each other, and becoming instant best friends. According to Andreas:

Well, the Germans, they're not like the Spanish, or the Italians… who always hang out together; and that's a good thing. Germans abroad tend to do their own thing, they try to get in touch with indigenous people… Here in this pub [where the interview took place], there's a lot of Spanish people working here, and they live with other Spanish people, and then even after 10 years of living here, they don't speak any English.

Andreas' blanket characterisation of the Spanish in London is certainly wide of the mark, based on superficial observation and common gossip. Jendrissek's (2014) recent study of young Spanish graduate migrants in Southampton tells a different story – one of reasonably rapid progress in employment and of good ability to learn English. He did find them very sociable, with each other and with himself as a researcher. We do not have Spaniards in our three-way comparative study, but we do have Italians.

Italians in London: fleeing structural crisis

Although the Italian graduates interviewed in the London area have some similarities to the Germans – they can both be considered 'middling transnationalists', with a few 'Eurostars' thrown in – there are key differences. First, evident in all the interviews, there is a much more explicit economic and employment rationale. There are strong push factors driving Italian graduate emigration; as well as the perceived pull factors of the more open and meritocratic London labour market. Second, the Italian narratives make frequent use of the word 'crisis'. This is deployed less as a reference to the post-2008 financial crisis (though this is indeed mentioned by some), and more as a broader reference to the Italian structural crisis of a blocked future for young highly educated Italians in a society seen as hierarchical and corrupt, especially in the South of Italy.

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Table 1 showed that, across the 5 years from 2007–08 to 2012–13, both total and youth employment almost doubled. Data for 2014 shows youth unemployment at 42 %, and a staggering 68 % in the Southern region of Calabria.

The reprise of emigration from Italy and the other Southern EU countries reflects our earlier discussion of the role of migration in European centre–periphery dynamics, and the way that this new wave of highly qualified emigrants is but the latest stage of a historical model of Southern European migrations, coherent across Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece (King, 2015). In these southern eurozone countries, economic growth has stagnated or gone into reverse. The Italian economy shrunk by 9 % in real terms over the 6 years 2008–14. There has been serious debate in all these countries about economic strategies to move out of the crisis and about the seeming inevitability of the brain drain northwards.

In Italy there is an academic literature about *la fuga dei cervelli* dating back more than a decade (for some key studies see Associazione Dottori di Ricerca Italian 2001; Avveduto & Brandi, 2004; Becker, Ichino, & Peri, 2004; Morano-Foadi, 2006), with the brain-drain phenomenon itself traceable to the 1990s. There are several worrying trends revealed by findings in this literature. For instance, Becker et al. find a quadrupling of the share of graduates amongst total emigrants during the 1990s; at the end of the decade there were eight times more Italian graduates living abroad than there were foreign graduates living in Italy (Becker et al., 2004, p. 25). Graduate emigration from Italy was also found to be academically selective. Migration propensity is higher amongst those with top-class degrees from the more prestigious universities (Becker et al., 2004, pp. 25–26; Di Pietro, 2005, p. 20).

Another change noted by recent commentators on Italian graduate migration is a shift in the types of job graduates are willing to take when they move abroad. According to a recent *Economist* article unedifyingly titled 'PIGS can fly', the pre-crisis migrants arrived in London to take well-paid 'Eurostar' jobs in London's banks, hedge funds and consultancies, or to research and teach in Britain's universities. Now the migrants are more numerous, and more desperate. According to the *Economist* article, 'most new arrivals tend to start out in poorly paid work and live in the cheaper bits of inner London. Getting professional qualifications approved is expensive and finding good jobs takes time. Work in the catering industry, by contrast, is plentiful'.[4] Here, we see evidence of 'brain waste' since, like many recent graduates from the Eastern European accession countries, migration facilitates access to employment but often way below the formal qualification levels held by the migrants.[5]

As with all statistics on intra-European migration in the era of free movement, estimates of the number of Italians living in the UK are no better than informed guesses. The 2011 Census recorded 130,000 Italian-born, but many of these are long-resident and now elderly labour migrants who arrived in the 1950s and 1960s. Guesstimates put the real scale of the Italian presence as at least 200,000 – the opposite situation to the German case where the Germany-born total exceeds the 'real' German presence by roughly similar numbers.

Key themes from the narratives: gerontocrazia, mentalità, raccomandazione

All of the Italian participants spoke at length about the obstacles ingrained in Italian society and the labour market, frustrating the ability of graduates to get a well-paid job, build a career, buy a flat, get married, and have children. This multiple blockage forces them to

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live with their parents, often well into their 30s. Eurostat data show that 85 % of Italian 18–29-year-olds live with their parents, higher than any other major EU country.[6]

Many participants posed their critique of Italian society within the frame of it being a *gerontocracy*, with all the key positions in Italian business, politics, university and the public sphere monopolised by older men,[7] and too many economic resources geared to the needs and benefits of the elderly, including some of the highest pensions in Europe, especially for senior public servants. By contrast, the country spends relatively little on housing, unemployment assistance and childcare – expenditures the young depend on to develop their careers and 'adult' lives. Here are two short extracts from interviews which illustrate the above issues:

> There is a socio-political situation in Italy that I really don't like… Italy is an old society folded in on itself… There is no investment in young people, and you can see this from the country's politics, and what happens when you look for a job… It seems like they are doing you a favour by giving you a job (Arianna).

> I had always lived at home; I wanted to live away from home… I wanted to do something extra, and to do it on my own, without anybody to help me or someone to tell me 'Call me if you have a problem'… It's a test… You say to yourself: 'OK, but are you actually capable of doing something on your own?' (Mirco).

Two Italian words which recurred time and time again in the Italian interviews were *raccomandazione* and *mentalità*. Their English literal translations, 'recommendation' and 'mentality', fail to convey their true depth of meaning and social significance. Together these two keywords sum up the diagnosis of despair that young Italian graduates hold about their country. The culture of doing favours, 'pulling strings', and needing a 'patron' to press your case to get a job is pervasive in Italy, especially, it is often claimed, in the South where jobs are scarcer than in the richer North. Although most jobs, business tenders, public works contracts etc. are required by law to be advertised, in practice everyone knows who will get the job or contract – the person who has links to powerful people such as politicians, directors or administrators who either make the decisions or who have the power to influence decisions. Hence, *raccomandazione* is so much more than being 'recommended' for a job; it is a whole system of power brokering, nepotism and favours in which the best candidates frequently fail to get the post they rightfully deserve. Rita summed up the situation perfectly:

> If you stay in Italy, the only way to get a job is through *raccomandazione*. When you go for a job, everyone says that you need a *raccomandazione*. If you stay in Italy and try to get work without a *raccomandazione* then you are a fool because you either make it your life's goal to go against the system, or you end up living at home with your parents until you are 50.

Academic research on what Zinn (2001, p. 167) calls 'the Italian societal embarrassment' of *raccomandazione* approaches the phenomenon from two angles. The simpler interpretation is that it is the logical outcome of a mismatch between supply and demand – too many people chasing too few jobs. Because this mismatch is more acute in

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the South of Italy than in the North, *raccomandazione* is seen as a particularly 'southern' problem – from Rome down to Calabria and Sicily, where it is particularly associated with a 'mafia' mentality.[8] Angela, originally from Calabria, points to the widespread nepotism which she sees as endemic to the South of Italy:

> The entire work environment in the South is de-qualifying. For me it was a devastating experience. I felt I virtually had to grovel to my employer for giving me a job paying 300 Euros a month! Employers in the South really take advantage of people, especially graduates… The problem is the culture of *raccomandazione*… you really need to be connected to someone powerful… because if you have connections, at least you have a chance. The few jobs that there are, get hijacked in this way… There are five jobs available, and they are all already allocated, that's how it is.

The second interpretation of *raccomandazione* draws on what are argued as deeply embedded 'Southern' social characteristics arising out of a long history of colonisation, exploitation and marginalisation of the region and its inhabitants. In a controversial book, Banfield (1958) advanced an explanation of the 'backwardness' of the South based on the behavioural notion of 'amoral familism' – the prioritisation of the self and one's family over all else, so that society functions 'amorally'. Although Banfield's thesis has been subject to searching critique, condemned by many authors for its 'Northern', 'colonialist' interpretation of the moral geography of Italy (see, for instance, Goddard 1996, pp. 163–182; Piattoni, 1998), even these critical voices acknowledge the key role of familism in (Southern) Italy, and of the set of values that derive from the importance of family – including the third thematic term dominant in the Italian interviewee narratives, *mentalità*, itself a term of many nuances and scales.

At the national level, there is seen to be an overarching system characterised by gerontocracy, clientelism and bureaucracy, producing a response of disaffection and a general mentality of cheating the system. People observe how politicians behave and follow their example – seeking favours and kickbacks, avoiding paying taxes and fines, and protecting their own interests and those of their cronies. Then there is a provincial-level mentality, which leads people to strongly identify with their home city/town and its region, giving them a narrow outlook. In the Italian literature on migration and identity this is generally referred to as *campanilismo* – attachment to place or locality, symbolically represented by the bell-tower (campanile) of the town or village church (see Baldassar, 2001: 110–149). Finally there is the 'mentality of the family', which expects loyalty to the family above all else – (amoral) familism again. For most Italians, these various dimensions of *mentalità* are internalised through growing up in Italy. Railing against the Italian mentality may be a driving-force for emigration, but the true significance of *mentalità* is often only appreciated after having lived abroad. Rita expands on this point:

> There are two factors, no three [that caused her move to London]. First, the economic factor that, whether you like it or not, is a major pull. The second one is career satisfaction. And then there is the *mentalità* that I still notice today, probably even more when I visit home… Somehow I cannot see myself there anymore, neither myself nor my husband… You feel like a fish out of water… like you have nothing in

common with the people there... Here [in London] we identify much more with the way of life, with their lifestyle models.

Disidentification from Italy

Rita's interview extract clearly indicates her process of 'disidentification' with Italy and the Italian way of life as represented by the Italian *mentalità*. Unlike the German counterparts who, on the whole (although with some exceptions), have a high regard for their country and plan on going back there sooner or later, Italian participants' profound disillusionment with Italy approximates to what Dickie (2001) has called 'inverted patriotism'. Whilst, for some, this disidentification is so strong that it leads them to never want to live in Italy again, for others the reaction is more nuanced, even conflictual: they still identify strongly as 'Italians', but as 'Italians' who have left the country out of frustration and as a strategy of survival. The Italians in London thus see themselves as a different 'kind' of Italian – as having a different *mentalità* to those who live in Italy. As Rita's quote implies, they socialise widely outside their national group, and are selective with regard to other Italians, who generally need to have an allied ideological stance. They do not resolutely 'hang out together' only with other Italians, as stated earlier by German interviewee Andreas.

Our final point is to return to Italy's regional dimension. Those graduates who come from the South have a stronger economic push factor behind their migration, reflecting the extremely high graduate and youth unemployment rates in southern Italy and the sense of hopelessness and resignation behind the culture of *raccomandazione*. Graduates from the North of Italy, especially those from prosperous cities like Milan and Bologna, are migrating to London more for career enhancement. Rather than simply escaping unemployment, more often they leave their jobs in order to take another job, or to seek job opportunities which are more rewarding, either financially or in terms of the type of work and longer-term career satisfaction.

Latvians in London: from small-scale periphery to metropolitan urbanism

Latvian graduates migrate from an EU peripheral context which is quite different from the Southern one: theirs is Eastern, post-socialist and post-Soviet. The other distinctive feature of the Latvian case is the small size of the country; this adds a further dimension to the conceptualisation of peripheral status. The Latvian population, 2 million in 2011, down from 2.3 million in 2001, largely due to emigration, is much lower than those of the other countries considered in this paper. Nevertheless, informed estimates of the number of Latvians living in Britain range between 60,000 and 100,000 for 2011.[9]

Latvia's class and ethno-linguistic background has a strong influence over the patterning of emigration. One-third of the population is Russian-speaking, and they constitute an important subgroup amongst the emigrants. Latvian society lacks a traditional elite; they were either killed or exiled in earlier times. A 'new elite' has arisen out of privatisation and post-Soviet business enterprise, amongst whom is a small subclass of 'super-rich'. Meanwhile some of the Soviet-era middle-status groups – teachers, administrators, technical workers, health personnel etc. – have struggled to

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keep their jobs and status within a society that has progressively become more unequal, with widespread if hidden poverty.

Recent emigration has taken place in two main waves: a first one immediately after accession to the EU opened up new possibilities for much higher incomes earned abroad, in Britain and Ireland especially; and a second one triggered by the financial crisis and sudden spike in unemployment in the late 2000s. Some of the statistics of Latvia's boom-bust-recovery are remarkable. GDP grew by 90 % between 2000 and 2007, then fell by 25 % 2007–09, recovering by 18 % by 2013 (Blanchard, Griffiths, & Gruss, 2013). Unemployment figures are shown in Table 1. The large-scale emigration of the past decade has affected all classes and all parts of the country; most of it is destined for low-status jobs in agriculture, food processing, construction, domestic cleaning and care-work in the UK and Ireland; but there is a more urban-origin graduate emigration mainly to the London region.

Main narrative themes: crisis, smallness, and low ceilings for high-flyers

Amongst the Latvian participants, reference to 'crisis' was prominent, reflecting the two temporalities mentioned above:

- the general crisis of the initially liberatory but then difficult exit from the hegemonic control of the Soviet Union (1991) and subsequent transition to EU membership in 2004;
- the financial crisis of 2008–09, when the Latvian banks failed and had to resort to IMF rescue funds, a strategy accompanied by widespread job losses, pension and welfare cuts, renewed poverty and emigration.

Within the overall narrative arc of economic and personal crisis, there was constant reference to Latvia being a *small and peripheral country*: in one interviewee's words, 'a small, small, narrow place'. This subnarrative of smallness has two elements contained within it: one economic and the other cultural. The economic arguments are the well-known issues of limited economies of scale in production and marketing; the domestic labour market is 'truncated' and insufficiently specialised to absorb all the skills and specialisms of graduates' job aspirations. The cultural arguments are less well researched but equally relevant as push factors for migration: the country is seen by its younger inhabitants as small, provincial, conservative, culturally introverted and prone to racism and homophobia. By contrast, London is seen as a financial powerhouse where jobs, incomes and educational opportunities are all way above what is available in Latvia; and culturally London is seen as open, sophisticated, tolerant and ethnically diverse. The globalised appeal of London and the peripherality of Latvia are well articulated in the following quote from Alex:

> I was working in [names bank, which went bust in the crisis], the salary was good and the work was interesting, but I always knew I could achieve more… London is the closest financial centre and it's in Europe, the others are in the US or Asia… I knew that in order to develop contacts I had to study at the London Business School… it's expensive but it's an entrance ticket… you have a network of course-mates and an important line in your CV… London is a very central place globally. My parents live in [names town in a remote

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region of Latvia], and if I go to visit them... Honestly, I went to a wedding in Delhi recently and it was a faster trip than to [names Latvian town].

The notion of a 'low ceiling' was mentioned by several interviewees, both as a reason to leave and an obstacle to returning. Two typical quotes, both from recent graduates in their 20s:

I was working as a journalist in a leading Russian-language newspaper in Latvia... I was 24, and I was already head of the news department. I had a good salary, by Latvian standards. But the ceiling is just too low in Latvia; it is such a small country and so few newspapers (Nika).

Nobody has invited me to return to Riga and I am not sure I would ever be able to do it. My problem is that I am used to the level of salary here, and the quality of life. Moreover I like people here... whereas in Latvia I see that people are hostile; sometimes I feel that they almost hate me... Of course, I understand that this is related to poverty and differences in income (Katrina).

We next consider the case of Reinis, an intra-company transferee in his mid-20s, whose interview covered several key points raised in a more fragmentary way by other participants. We see how the financial crisis was the 'trigger' of a migration that had long been contemplated, and we hear of the opportunities offered by London for self-development. Latvia, meanwhile, is seen as 'simply too small' for an adventurous careerist.

Since childhood, I always wanted to live abroad, I was always interested in other people, other cultures. I was studying in Riga and got a very good job in banking and then in consultancy. At that time I felt the time was not right yet; that I could actually grow and learn faster in Riga. And then, with the crisis, my bosses said there is a chance to transfer to London, and I said yes! It was a win–win situation.

[...]

London is very cosmopolitan, it's like a state within a state. I realise that England is not like London, but I like it here a lot. In my team we are 19 people, and we speak 12 or 13 languages between us... Here, you are appreciated if you speak several languages.

[...]

[In London] I am trying to learn as much as possible. In Latvia I never had time for this, I was too busy with friends, parties, sports. Here I am investing in myself... I want to learn the maximum I can here.

In the final extract we quote, Reinis talks about keeping in frequent touch with Latvia through his business trips, his prospects for return, and other plans for the future.

I am going often to Latvia; I try to combine when tickets are paid for by the company so I can go home for free... If I return to Latvia, I want to do a job which is very

international… at least several trips outside of Latvia per month. The worldview is so different here [in London], much wider. And I want that taste of different cultures, diversity, colours… therefore I think my aim is beyond Latvia. I would be happy to get a job in Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, or Singapore… why not?… What Latvia lacks is pleasant positive communication, constructive discussion, sharing ideas and opinions. In Latvia it is often seen negatively if you want to debate… constructive critique is really lacking there.

A final narrative theme that emerged more strongly in the Latvian interviews than in those with German or Italian graduates (where, indeed, it was practically absent) was a more philanthropic desire to contribute to the development of the home country, either in terms of business development (mostly by males) or through charitable work (mostly by females). Santa had first gone to England to see a friend who was studying at university. This visit prompted her to follow suit, so she prepared her application, got in, worked hard 'doing typical guestworker jobs' to support her studies, and upon graduation landed a job with an advertising agency. She saw her future resolutely as being in England:

I just have to stay in London where I can see my career going straight up. If I stay here another 10 years I will build opportunities for my whole life. I will have my own flat, then my own home… a fully developed life. Wherever I go for work, I know it will not be Latvia… and that hurts a lot.

Santa's guilt at not contemplating a return to her country (for very rational economic and lifestyle reasons) is assuaged by a charitable desire to try to remove some of the deficiencies in Latvian society:

I am now thinking that I may launch a charity fund in Latvia, a cancer fund to get better treatment for the elderly… It's absurd how it is now in Latvia, that you cannot get adequate treatment and medicine.

Ethnic Russians: turning disadvantage into advantage

Latvian society, politics and the media are divided between the Latvian-language majority and the Russian-speaking minority. This divide is replicated throughout the Baltic States, though it is sharper in Latvia than it is in Estonia or Lithuania. After independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Latvian was declared the only state language, which meant that young Latvians did not learn Russian anymore, yet young Russians were required to learn Latvian. Many young Russians decided to prioritise English as their preferred 'foreign' language, realising that their unique status as native-Russian-speaking EU members gave them a comparative advantage in the London-based global labour market where knowledge of emerging-economy languages is important. Alex, who was the first interviewee quoted in the Latvian section of our paper, went on to talk about his particular qualifications for the job he now holds in an international insurance company:

They saw my CV, but the main question was whether I was willing to work in emerging markets… The important thing for them was that I spoke Russian fluently and that I know the [Russian] culture.

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Other interviewees who were from the Russian minority expressed frustration at the nationalistic turn of Latvia's post-Soviet governments. Unsurprisingly, there is a huge debate on this in Latvia, as well as an extensive academic literature (see Cheskin 2013 for a useful summary). What does this mean for young graduate emigrants from the russophone minority in Latvia? Two things, both illustrated in the interview extract of Dimitrij, who now works for an engineering company in London. The first point is that the Russians' sense of marginalisation and frustration in Latvia is a contributory factor in their decision to emigrate.

> The problem in Latvia is that it is moving in the wrong direction [i.e. towards ethno-nationalism]. I am Russian but I am a citizen of Latvia. The world is globalised...
> why are Latvian politicians thinking so narrowly?

The second point is about how Russian-speaking Latvians position themselves in relation to Latvia, Russia, Europe and the world in terms of their regional identities and future migration plans. Cheskin carried out focus-group research with Russian-speaking participants (students, postgraduates, and older residents) in Riga. He found that most, and especially the highly educated, saw themselves as quite distinct from Russians in Russia and able to integrate, at least at a pragmatic level, many aspects of Latvianness without, however, fully embracing Latvian culture, which is not 'their' culture (Cheskin, 2013, pp. 308–309). One refuge from this identificatory dilemma is to resort to a wider regional, global or European identity, part of which is used to differentiate 'backward', nationalistic Latvia from progressive, open, multicultural Europe, as Dimitrij does in the quote above. In the interviews with this subset of the Latvian participants, it was found that they do associate more with other Russian speakers due to linguistic affinity, but they also distinguish themselves from 'Russian Russians', emphasising the interviewees' Latvian/Baltic identity.

Conclusions

This paper has had a broad conceptual, empirical and comparative agenda and, in conclusion, we bring our empirical findings back into conversation with the three undergirding concepts specified at the outset – core–periphery, global cities, and the economic crisis.

First, we have rejuvenated the *centre–periphery spatial framework of uneven development and structural inequality* to shed light on the migration decisions and movement patterns of young graduates from three countries located in the centre (Germany) and in the north-eastern (Latvia) and southern (Italy) peripheries of Europe. Each of the three migrations examined represents a different geo-economic and cultural positioning. The consciousness of being from a peripheral and under-privileged part of Europe was recurrent in the narratives of participants from Latvia and from the southern part of Italy, but almost entirely absent from the Germans' accounts. In Italy and Latvia these 'push factors' for graduate emigration were also discussed in the context of a developing 'brain drain' – another syndrome of peripherality and subjugation to the pull factors of the 'core'. For the Germans, there were only coded references to cores and peripheries, expressed more in cultural and lifestyle terms: the 'boring' life in small-town Germany contrasted with the vibrant social and cultural life in a global city. A

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similar case of cultural peripherality was found in Southern Italy where, in the eyes of many interviewees, the still-powerful mechanisms of clientelism and 'recommendations' were symptomatic of backwardness.

Second, we found that many interviewees tapped into the essence of *London as both the economic hub of Europe and a city of truly global significance*. As a global city which seems to capture the imagination of graduates the world over, London functions as a magnet for many types of highly educated mobility: for some it was a place to build a future life long-term; for others, a place to stay awhile and then move on or return home. Although there were some tough challenges – the high cost of accommodation, the travel times across the city for work or to see friends – most were able to find in London what they were looking for. Above all, this meant remunerative employment, the chance to further their career with international work experience, or take 'time out' in a less demanding job. A minority of participants from each group filled the Eurostar mould, but most followed more modest lifestyles in middle-range office and administrative work, or had come to continue their studies. This more 'middling' trend adds an extra layer to Sassen's (2001) portrayal of the global city as increasingly polarised socio-economically through immigration of both elites and low-wage workers in a new division of migrant labour.

Taking each group in turn, German graduates rarely prioritise the economic rationale of moving to London: for them it is mainly about the city's cultural and social attractions, its cosmopolitan and multicultural atmosphere and other urban lifestyle attributes. For Latvians, the story is almost the opposite. Whilst not unappreciative of the city's cultural scene, their migration is couched very much in terms of pure economic opportunity, contrasted with the restricted options and low incomes for graduates at home, due to the small scale and rigid nature of the graduate labour market. Italians are driven to London by their moral condemnation of the 'Italian system', against which the deregulated and fairly transparent labour market of London offers them a wider range of opportunities to those who are 'good enough' to get the job in question.

Third, there is the keyword, *crisis*. The relevance of the financial crisis in migration decision-making and behaviour emerged unevenly across the three groups: hardly mentioned at all by the Germans; featuring frequently in the Italian narratives, but more in the sense of a historically embedded systemic crisis within Italian society; and occurring as a common element in the Latvian accounts where the suddenness and severity of the economic crisis was a trigger for many young adults (and others) to migrate to the UK and elsewhere.

What does this triple comparative study tell us about contemporary graduate migration? Why is graduate migration important? Recent Eurostat data reviewed by Recchi (2015) and King, Lulle, Moroşanu, and Williams (2016) reveal that half of all intra-EU migration between the 15 pre-2004 member-states has been made up of graduates. For the 2004 accession states, the figure is lower – 22 %. EU enlargement had the effect of dramatically increasing the share of intra-EU migration compared to the in-migration of third-country nationals. Moreover, the migrants, especially those moving from the southern and eastern EU countries into the EU15, are more than twice as likely as the host populations to be youthful (under 35 years of age).

Evidence presented in this paper reveals, however, that graduate migrants follow heterogenous career paths and equally variable spatial trajectories. The 'pull' of

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London's graduate labour market does not provide graduate-level jobs for all. Whilst some in-migrants progress their high-level careers, others are content to 'mark time', and yet others forced to trade down to menial jobs, at least for a while. The heterogeneity of employment outcomes appears to have increased in the wake of the economic crisis in the peripheral states of Europe. For all but a few, country and place of origin continue to loom large in their imaginaries of the future; however, return is by no means taken for granted and for some it is even forsworn. Both economic factors and the lifestyle and culture of London generate widespread ambiguity about the future. Such ambiguity is indicative partly of the relative youth of our study population, but also raises a broader question-mark about the degree of permanency of these new intra-European skilled migrants.

Endnotes

[1]The Italian and German samples were drawn from PhD theses (respectively Conti, 2012; Mueller, 2013) and the Latvian one was a separate study undertaken alongside, but not an integral part of, a PhD on Latvian migrants in Guernsey (Lulle, 2014).

[2]However, in Meier's (2009) study of Germans employed in the banking/financial sector in London, there is more reference to salaries and careers.

[3]The German word *Heimat* is very difficult to render in English, not least because the English word 'home' is equally difficult to pin down because of its multiple-scale meanings, but also because *Heimat* is heavily laden with political baggage and ideological myths about the ethnically pure German 'homeland' (Huber & O'Reilly, 2004: 330). As used by our participants, *Heimat* generally referred to the region of childhood and family origin in Germany, rather than the actual bricks-and-mortar home, and was spoken of with feelings of nostalgia as an imaginary space of the past, but also sometimes of rejection as something left behind and too boring to return to.

[4]See the article 'PIGS can fly', *Economist*, 16 November 2013. PIGS is an unfortunate acronym for the four Southern EU countries: Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain.

[5]There is a growing literature on the phenomenon of brain waste: see, for example, Mattoo, Neagu, and Özden (2008).

[6]Malta's figure is 89 %, but Malta is exceptional because of its small size, dense population and limited housing market.

[7]A few years ago, when the Italian interviews were being carried out, the combined ages of Italy's three most powerful figurehead-leaders, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, President Giorgio Napolitano, and Pope Benedict XVI, summed to nearly 250. An equally symbolic departure came when Matteo Renzi took over as Italy's youngest-ever Prime Minister in 2014, aged 39.

[8]However, this 'southern' or 'mafia' interpretation has been likened to 'orientalism' by Schneider (1998) and needs to be at least nuanced if not challenged; see, especially, the essays by Eve (1996) and Piattoni (1998) for more critical insights into the subtleties and also the mistaken assumptions imbricated in terms such as 'corruption', 'clientelism', etc.

[9]Estimates from the UK Home Office, the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Oxford Migration Observatory.

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