

**European Citizenship Revisited**  
**Oxford June 23 2008**

**Session Three: The social gap**

Adrian Favell

Eurostars and Eurocities: Free movement and mobility in an integrating Europe  
Blackwell Publishing

*This is a scanned extract – apologies for the quality of the reproduction.*

**Contents**

Series Editors' Preface	Vii
Preface	Viii
Freedom- Vrijheid- Liberté	
<i>A Management Consultant's Tale</i>	
2 New Amsterdam	15
<i>A Logistics Manager's Tale</i>	
3 London Calls	30
<i>A Data Analyst's Tale</i>	
4 Brussels - Brussel-Bruxelles	46
<i>An Architect's Tale</i>	
5 Migration	62
<i>An Estate Agent's Tale</i>	
6 Mobility (1)	83
<i>A Social Worker's Tale</i>	
7 Mobility (2)	100
<i>A Landlady's Tale</i>	

---

8	Settlement	118
	<i>A Businessman's Tale</i>	
9	Integration (1)	136
	<i>A Graphic Designer's Tale</i>	
10	Integration (2)	153
	<i>A Media Manager's Tale</i>	
<b>II</b>	London Loves	169
	<i>A City Broker's Tale</i>	
12	Old Amsterdam	186
	<i>A Journalist's Tale</i>	
13	Anomie	203
	<i>An IT Consultant's Tale</i>	
14	Europa	220
	Postface	231
	Appendix 1: Summary of Interviews	232
	Appendix 2: A Note on Methodology	236
	Notes	240
	Bibliographical Essay	254
	Index of Interviewees	264
	Index	266

## 6

### **Mobility (1)**

The most obvious question sociologists would ask of the new European migration is to check the social background of movers and ask how their spatial mobility might be changing settled patterns of social mobility in the continent. Europeans are not necessarily interchangeable rational actors. All European citizens are free to move, but some are surely more free than others. Free movement of this kind might systematically correlate to being born lucky: into upper-tier class positions, endowed with family privileges that furnish the would-be mover with social and cultural capital facilitating mobility. The further suspicion is that there is nothing particularly European about all this. That we are talking here about a subset of the globally mobile: elites in their flat world without borders, hopping between global cities in a protected, golden space of flows, while the disenfranchised and disadvantaged masses remain trapped in their local, parochial environs, excluded from the world party.

#### **Movin' On Up**

The history of spatial mobility in Europe has in fact been intimately linked with the ambitions of the socially mobile, and therefore those ranked *Lower* on the social scale. If you were a part of the ruling bourgeois elite in one of the rich European urban city-states - the "burghers" of say, Florence, in the

time of the Medici why would you ever move? For sure, you might travel around on the grand tour, to get a taste of the intellectual and cultural fruits of a diverse continent, but you knew where your heart and spirit lay: in your hometown. This has not necessarily changed. Only in a more redistributive, democratic Europe, the feeling of already living in the best possible place the place you come from is quite likely to be widespread across much of society, North and South - at least in those places which have the public wealth and cultural depth of a long regional patronage. When I was first driven up by *motorino* to the hilltop in Fiesole by a bunch of heavily accented working class Florentine *mgazzi*, the only thing they said to me while motioning to the panorama of the city below, was: "Adriano, guardi ... Il paradiso." These guys were not going to be migrating anywhere in their lifetime.

Historically, these young Italians might well have had to consider migration as a key life option. The history of European movement is one of various stages and types of movement that have propelled Europeans across regions, borders, and oceans in search of a better life. There is a long history of two types of migration in Europe that are not date based. The extension of such opportunities down through society to ever broader swathes of the middle and lower classes is, in fact, a "massification" typical of European modernity. One, of course, is worker migration, from the country to the cities. Industrialization put factories and terraced houses in the cities, smog in the air, and workers on trains and buses. Karl Polanyi's famous description is a good reminder of what mobility used to be all about:

*An economic earthquake which transpired within half a century vast masses of the inhabitants of the countryside from settled folk into shuffling migrants.* 1

The phenomenal movements of the nineteenth century were internal as much as international within Europe, but they changed the social structure of the continent forever. Cities grew exponentially, the extended family structures and close-knit communities of rural village life were ripped asunder forever. The large-scale South-to-North guest worker migrations of the 1950s and 1960s were the last big-scale manifestation of this kind of migration on the continent. A kind of migration that left - to give a poignant example of a place I have seen first hand - empty ghost villages in the hillsides around Parma, Italy, and ice cream parlours called "Contis ices" in the streets of South Wales mining towns.

A second form of European migration, however, was of a more upwardly mobile, "white collar" nature. The sons (and later daughters) of school teachers, clergy, and minor bourgeoisie would often equally set off from the peripheries in search of fame and fortune, adventure and romance, in the more metropolitan centres. These movements were driven by a paucity of work in the rural areas, and developing educational channels which were

increasingly efficient in siphoning off the more talented into administrative, bureaucratic, and clerical work in the cities. It was also driven by the marriage market, and an often desperate lack of suitable boys and girls among the [armhands and milkmaids back in the village. In the fluid mid-to-late nineteenth century much of this regional movement crossed notional international borders in the economically interwoven central regions of the continent. Much of it could be temporary and circular, insofar as some of the work was seasonal. As a life option, mobility increasingly became a norm not an exception, as the industrialization of the continent proceeded apace. New train, road, and canal networks [acilitated unprecedented mobility. And colonial empires and the new frontiers out west led to this regional migration stream bleeding into a developing global river of migrations around the world, to North and South America, and later East Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Australasia.

The underappreciated part of this story was the relatively late development of the European nation-state as an effective container and political-legal regulator of these regional population movements. Pasports and effective border controls only appear in the latter years of the nineteenth century as effective [orms of population control. Emerging nation-states thus sought to contain the fruits of ail this mobility, and hence monopolize its benefits, while controlling its unwanted dimensions. In particular, the notion of citizenship developed as states sought to build mass armies, moving more workers off the land. Education too was universalized to better harness mobile talents. Peasants were turned into Frenchmen, and by the same process regionally minded men and women from [arms - or their children were turned into nationalistically minded educators and bureaucrats. And to hold this ail together, nation-states developed welfare institutions, to pastorally care for and manage the lives of their citizens [rom cradle to grave - particularly the women and children left behind by mobile fathers giving them a passport and national identity in return for a lifetime's members' loyalty.

The citizenship offered by national welfare states was ail about systematizing and patterning these processes. It offered what came to be known as social security over the life course - hence stable payoffs [or the individual investments that one might make following a certain education, or choosing a certain vocation - as well as a safety net against the risks involved. These benefits were mobile within the bounds of the country, but never trans[erable outside. The nation-state mode! was institutionalized across ail of Europe, varying only in time and speed of the process. Different kinds of internai systems developed in regionalized countries such as Germany and Italy, compared to centralized metropolitan nations like England and France. Some countries that have later gone on to epitomize the pastoral welfare state - such as Denmark or the Netherlands - didn't

follow the same industrialization pattern as others. But all, in some shape or form, developed a pastoral notion of national citizenship -- bounded and rooted in the idea of the territorial nation, with a distinctive language and culture - and centred on the idea of a welfare state.

Mobility and migration in Europe continued to ebb sharply across this emerging container-based version of European nationhood throughout the nineteenth century. The international dimension of European mobility collapsed entirely with the world wars of the twentieth century, although mobility had already solidified before this. Internal regional migration remained a feature to some extent of European nations, but even this declined as the twentieth century wore on, as economic differentials between and within nation-states evened out. In the postwar era, Europe instead turned to immigration from outside. Southern European guest worker migration gave way to immigration from North Africa, Turkey, and former colonies, and when this stopped, at the end of *les trente glorieuses* in the

1970s, intra-European migration fell to an unprecedented low. An image was cemented that somehow "Europeans don't move" - that they are predisposed not to for "cultural" reasons, or because they have "roots" that Americans don't have.

One rare counter-current to this solidifying immobility - prior to the possible emergence of significant cross-border movements in an integrating EU - was the emergent baby boom mobility inside countries during the fast-moving 1950s and 1960s. The new younger generations of these decades grew up into social environments that took care of much of the needs of life, with state benefits standing behind their increasingly affluent families. This affluence and security could potentially root all social classes as comfortably as the richer "burgher" populations of Europe's cities. However, the growing number of bright, ambitious, socially mobile working-class and lower-middle-class children, educated in expansive state schools and new universities, led to a bottleneck in opportunities, and a frustration with the limited local options on offer. The "angry young men" in the Britain of the 1950s, for example who were typically provincial-origin, hungry for success, and not finding outlets for their education in their regions - were a new kind of restless mover turning to mobility.

These were the "social spiralists". Social mobility was blocked at home, in a self-limiting world where you worked hard, did what you were told, learned your trade, and got a solid middle-class living in a settled suburban world. Social spiralism offered an alternative: taking a risky move outwards, away from your home town to make a move upwards. In Britain the obligatory move to London was also a step on an upwards escalator. This was spatial mobility as social mobility; and social mobility as cultural dynamism. New universities, with radical new degree programs, thrived on the energy and activism. The cultural and political explosion of the 1960s was largely driven

by innovation from the upstarts below. In comparison, the decades since have been less fluid. Looking back, the social spiralism of the 1950s and 1960s looks like a lost romantic stage in increasingly class-stratified European societies. The opportunities that these pioneers opened up seem to have shrunk again, and social mobility has lessened. The egalitarian drive of expansive public education has been abandoned; elites seem more able than ever to reproduce themselves. Mobility patterns are very settled across Europe again. With one exception: European free movement. For those that still want or need to be mobile, the horizon is as likely to be move outside the nation as within it.

### Global Elites and Corporate Movers

So the question is: Has the form of spatial mobility offered by European integration made any difference to social mobility in the continent? Has freedom of movement altered the well documented rigidities of European society in some way? And who exactly has exercised this mobility opportunity, swapping a better European horizon for the predetermined career path and social position that their respective national social structures would probably have dealt them?

Looked at quantitatively, the comparison of movers and stayers in fact reveals little change to patterns of social mobility. On the whole, free movers are more likely to come from professional and service class family origins, and upward class mobility is not greater among international movers than national populations, with the exception of Spanish movers. Only Britain as a destination offers a clear escalator effect. European integration appears to be reinforcing, if not exacerbating, social inequalities. But the broad sweep of a quantitative survey may well be missing a lot of the real stories. A qualitative, contextualized approach offers a different view. The statistical marginality of European free movers is in fact highly significant. Clearly, some of the individuals I talked with were not upwardly mobile, but others were. The first step therefore is to distinguish who, among my interviewees, fits the bill in terms of social and spatial mobility. This subset of Eurostars might then be set apart from those whose mobility was clearly propelled by a more elite social background, and to distinguish a distinctively regional European mobility from a more obviously generic international or global mobility. Among these, certain types of free mover might also be distinguished.

Elite global movers certainly number among the people I interviewed.

Nour, for example, a French permanent resident, was born in Algeria, but comes from a more international background, a family of diplomats and officials working for international organizations. London - "the best jumping

board at the time" represented simply the next nodal point in a planned-out global career that went from Sciences Po in Paris, to journalist school at Columbia University in New York, to Washington, DC, to cable news in London. Pointedly, unlike the five French nationals in London, she is *not* benefitting from European free movement. The consequence of Britain's non-participation in the Schengen Agreement is that she cannot work here without a work permit. Being a high flyer, the company has taken care of this, but she is convinced she has to work that bit harder for it. These barriers are not the same as those faced by European citizens. In fact, they are the traditional immigration barriers that require much more human, social, and cultural capital to overcome. Her own mobility has thus been built on the reserves of capital she could access through her international background, mobility experiences, and the global horizon of her career and lifestyle. The crucial vector was her education opportunities. Nour is the image of the global mover, but relatively few of the people I met fall into this category. There are a couple of others (Norbert and Franz are examples) from families with international organization backgrounds, who grew up as the sons and daughters of UN workers, European commissioners, or diplomats. As elites get smart to the benefits of international careers, the high probability is that the *next* generation of Eurostars, fresh out of expensive private international schools and global business schools, will be more like this.

A slightly different category of privilege is the traditional national elite or bourgeois background: Rainer, who comes from the high bourgeoisie of Hamburg; Philippe, who was put through the ultra-elite *grande école* system in France, and used connections to avoid military service and instead work abroad; Saskia from Belgium, who moved to get out from the shadow of her father. Notably, all three are blue chip multinational employees, on self-consciously fast-track corporate careers. This kind of capital is even more typical of Southerners, and is related to the observation that the more peripheral a society is to the rich Northwest the more you are likely to need it - Carmen, Eva, Maria, and Valerio are examples. These are Northern Italians, Portuguese, and Spaniards from the urban metropolis: the sons and daughters of surgeons, lawyers, or businessmen. It is not typical of all the migrants from Southern Europe: Donatella from rural Puglia (pp. 42-5), for example, and the Spanish movers from provincial regions - Galicians or Northern Spanish such as Isabel, Pedro, and Raoul, and the Basques, Carlos and Susana. Anastasia, from Greece, comes from a peasant refugee family. On the other hand, traditional bourgeois family capital is highly noticeable among the non-European migrants on the fringes of my study. Like Nour, their global mobility was linked to exclusion from the more open, egalitarian benefits that a European passport bestows. Maria's Ecuadoran boyfriend, Isabel's Mexican boyfriend, and Raoul's Russian wife all had to have very high levels of human, social, and cultural capital to be mobile internationally.

They are an example of how much more it costs non-Europeans to move internationally in the same way. It can be speculated whether the EU enlargement to East European countries, or even the *de facto* association of countries like Romania (pre-2007) and Turkey - whose highly educated have already been given some of the European educational opportunities enjoyed by EU citizens - might over time lead to a socially expansive massification of opportunities to people of a more modest background outside Western Europe. For now, the East Europeans and Turks who are filling postgrad opportunities in Britain or Germany, or getting fast-track City jobs in London or in the Commission in Brussels, tend to be of a higher social background relative to their home countries than West Europeans in the same positions.

The specific impact of European integration for elites - although it may still have mattered in many of these cases - may be less because of the presence of other forms of mobility capital. A similar question hangs over many of the corporate multinational movers, whose international mobility has been organized within a global company. On the face of it, this is not the same thing as "getting on your bike" internationally to look for work in a free-moving Europe. Career mobility within corporations is, however, often conveniently parasitical on European free movement laws, in that the corporation is spared the need to worry about visas and work permits when it moves managers within the European space. The emergence of other kinds of international regimes such as the GATS agreement in the WTO is increasingly facilitating mobility of this kind within and for big corporations -

particularly in relation to service sector work when the person needs to physically move to do their job.

My investigations into the MNC world centred on a major food and household products multinational, Unilever. A highly European MNC based on an Anglo-Dutch axis, Unilever is an increasingly global corporation, with growing interests in the Asian, Latin American, and latterly, North American markets. A mark of the company's human resources concern with mobility was the encouragement it gave to my research efforts. The personnel offices in London and Rotterdam gave me excellent advice, and put me in touch with a range of contacts. They know how important these issues are to the success of their employees:> The Basque couple, Carlos and Susana, offered me the clearest view of the archetypal MNC situation. Their decision to move to London was entirely structured around Carlos's career as a specialized engineer and technical consultant. His work had taken them from Bilbao - where they are still deeply rooted - to work elsewhere in Spain, then the Netherlands, then London. They were now contemplating a new scenario with Carlos working in Dijon, while his wife would return to Spain. It did appear however that their children might be taking up the free movement opportunity of staying on for university in England. Each move

unfolded according to the career negotiation that Carlos pre-planned in great detail to take care of the happiness of the family: including housing, salary, distance to schools and airports, and social networks for his wife. There was a classically gendered division of labour, with Susana covering the family side of life. Even with all the help, the moves were still not easy, and it took remarkably open and flexible personalities, and a rock-steady marriage, to make it work. An individual free mover does not have any of these corporate structures to guide them.

One of the key aspects of mobility within multinationals that has changed has been the move to a more "supply side" mobility within companies." The Rotterdam-based senior personnel officer for Unilever, Martin de Jong, talked me through the logic. MNCs are now less likely to ask people to move as a condition of career progression. Rather, they are conscious that such movers ought to be allowed to self-select - which a percentage still do and that packages for mobility can be better tailored to individual circumstances. Companies are particularly sensitive to the fallout from this when things don't work out for following spouses. Young high flyers like Philippe in London and Axel in Amsterdam shopped around for the best career move, but it was notable that they opted in the end for European destinations where their wives could find work unproblematically, and where with young children to think about - it would be easy to get home to family and friends. Neither would be interested in moves further afield.

Rainer, a slightly older and more senior audit manager with Unilever, had moved to London with his family from Hamburg. He stresses all kinds of specificities about London that made the move work, but above all its regional convenience for Hamburg. Their family and friends connections there are still very much alive. Although he has exercised a good deal of control over his own mobility, he is not convinced that mobility in the company is entirely supply side and voluntary. Senior management "taps you on the shoulder" to suggest you should be mobile; yet many of his peers are reluctant to move or sacrifice their private lives to their careers. Rainer's move was tightly managed - albeit not without problems - by the human resources people, who found a house and helped with moving in. He recognizes that their corporate experience was quite different to some friends who came to Britain by their own means. The horizon in the country is quite short a few years - although their son is now established in school. He has had to fight to maintain his expat status, which offers higher remuneration to offset mobility costs: the company seeks to phase out the benefits by "localizing" you. Prestigious corporate destinations in Asia or Latin America are ruled out because of security issues or family concerns. In particular, ageing parents are a factor. We talk at length about his family's embeddedness in the local bourgeois social world of Hamburg, of the disruption it caused when they moved, and the disbelief that family and friends expressed.

situation took a lot of skilful PR - particularly with his mother-in-law. They invited her to help with the move, and since then she became the biggest supporter back home of their relocation to London. Rainer's move - that in every other respect was straight out of a human resources textbook - was, in the end, a specifically regional European move. That's why it worked. In this respect, Rainer's experience is a lot closer to that of a more obvious free mover. It is doubtful whether outside of the European possibilities he and his family would have really opted to go further abroad.

### **Eurofamilies**

Minus the global elites or multinational movers, at least two thirds of my interviewees were not movers whose mobility could be accounted for by elite or upper-class capital or by a structured corporate environment. They came either from average middle class backgrounds, usually provincial, or from clearly working class or rural backgrounds. For example, among the 13 "talcs" I feature as archetypes of the new European mobility, David, Helen, Dario, Hedwig, and Dave fall in the former category; Donatella, Giulia, Federica, Laure, and Valérie in the latter. And, as has been shown, even among those from a metropolitan elite background or privileged corporate movers, much of the experience still remains distinctively linked to the new regional European space for mobility.

Regional integration facilitates cross-border mobility, lowers migration costs, and reduces the human or cultural capital needed. Economic barriers are reduced as prices go down on airlines and new fast train lines get built. Communication becomes effortless with cheaper phones and internet connections for all. The opportunities thus get massified, and the mobile turn out to be more middle class and regional than global or elite in their background. The other aspect of this is the clear transformation in European family structures made possible by the new spatial scale. Cross-national family life is facilitated by regional integration - with family networks a more universally distributed form of social capital. Families themselves are able to stretch over a European scale, and not in any way be undermined by a daughter or son going abroad. Nina points out the difference between her family relationships now she is in Amsterdam, compared to when she was studying in San Francisco. It doesn't make any difference if she drives two hours from Amsterdam to Düsseldorf, rather than two hours from Hamburg or Munich, and they love to visit her. Her parents had pressurized her, however, to come back from America.

The London-Ireland relationship has always been like this, as Siofra stresses; only now as Tom and Sinead point out, Brussels or Amsterdam are just as easy, and nicer to visit. A little distance, after all, can actually be a

good thing where family is involved. Rob and Rachel in Brussels point out that they are no further now from their families in Manchester, in terms of travel costs and time, than if they had been living in London. And they can pop over for an enjoyable weekend, without coming to stay for weeks - that would be "unacceptable", says Rachel, laughing. Sióra would agree: going back to live in rural Donegal is 'just not an option', but "moving to Australia that's a different kettle of fish". The capacious way Irish family networks manage the distance of children and relations is perhaps a good guide to the well-functioning spatial adaptation of European families more generally to European mobility, under the present easy conditions.

A mobile family background - which need not be of the elite global kind also helps explain why some middle and lower-class Europeans are predisposed to move. Family in the armed forces turns out to be a common background. Alan, the independent businessman in Amsterdam, grew up speaking a German he has forgotten on a NATO airforce base. He was "dragged around all over the place". An only child, he attended eleven schools in different countries, the longest time he spent in England being eight years at boarding school. He says it's impossible for him to answer the question: "Where are you from?" Jonathan in Brussels also had armed forces parents, as did Janet, the trade journalist, who also went to boarding school. Other interviewees of different nationalities reveal similar background stories. Sophie in Utrecht had a father in the French army; Isabel from Spain, a father in the Spanish navy. It is typical among the mobile French to have had parents who served for French businesses in North Africa or other colonies. Guillaume, whose parents had lived in Algeria and elsewhere in Africa, comments that at least they share with him the idea that France is "not the centre of the universe". They "failed in their integration" back in France, so don't want or expect him to come back. The parents of Saskia from Belgium - one of them French speaking, one Dutch ("it's more common than you think!") - had lived in the Belgian Congo for quite a while.

One additional factor noticeable among Southern European families with mobile children is that they made quite an effort to "train" the children to be internationally minded, by getting the access at early age and frequently to foreign language courses, especially in English. This is particularly noticeable in Spain, a country that has embraced internationalism and Europe vigorously in the last twenty years because of its long political isolation from the continent. The families of Eva and Carmen from Spain were very proactive in pushing them to go abroad. Carmen says although it seems common, it was not the experience her friends still back home had - and that she has been the only one who was curious enough to be mobile, as a consequence.

The other very small subset of the my interviewees who might be thought of as endowed with a certain kind of family related mobility capital are the

sons and daughters of successful migrant families. This is to say, their background one generation back could be very modest, but that they do have international mobility "in the genes" as it were, perhaps because of the dramatic ambitions and trajectory that their parents had. They are second generation migrants in the classic assimilation story, where the family's success is here transposed up and out into the international environment. For example, Dario from Rome (a Jewish Sephardic family, with roots in the Middle East), Giulia (Italian immigrants to the US), Joannet (Polish businessman father in Netherlands, highly assimilated), Rachel (Italian businessman father in Switzerland), Dominic and Valérie (Italian migrant families in France). You have a different kind of view on spatial mobility when you are from this background. Movement as a life option becomes more a matter of course, is expected and valued. Norbert - whose parents were German diplomats - lived in Brazil, Greece, and Japan as a child, and puts it nicely: they have been very supportive because "they can hardly demand anything else!"

### Social Spiralists

One noticeable background that many of the Eurostars have in common is that they are from the provinces and driven to move - whether by ambition, frustration, or boredom. These are the new social spiralists. Among the parents mentioned are numerous farmers, engineers, and especially school teachers. They would not have moved were it not for the new open EU free movement opportunities. Instead, they tried to use Europe as an alternative trajectory to the classic one through the national capital a route that builds on the energy of feeling an "outsider" with a "point to prove". Social spiralism against the new European backdrop is most marked among French and British movers - the two countries with the most obviously centralized social mobility structures. Europe is finally providing an alternative route for provincials who found the competitive route through the capital blocked monopolized as always by the same national elites, going to the same elite schools and universities. Guillaume missed Sciences Po in Paris by a quarter of a point, but was happy in the end: "I would have become this self-centred arrogant monster like most of them!" He says he would have been forced to hide his lower social origins there, whereas moving to Strasbourg "everything became possible", especially opportunities to move abroad.

The leap abroad can make a difference in terms of trajectory, acceleration, lift off. The careers of the French women in London again proves this point: Laure (pp. 165-8), Valérie (pp. 182-5), and Nicole. Some were encouraged by their parents to move away. Others have to fight. Jeroen was lucky. It wasn't his parents' experience, but they encouraged him to have the independent experience abroad. He remembers friends at school who had to

fight their parents to go away, who'd accuse them of thinking themselves "better than me". And others who instead got a job at 18, and end up driving around town showing off in their cars. The ordinary boys. The break can be rough: families can also be over-protective. A career move abroad - albeit not 100 far away can provide the right kind of distance, especially for daughters.

Being born in the heart of Europe the central regions along the DutchBelgian-French-German-Swiss axis of the continent also generally predisposes people to think in more regional European terms. Sophie, the French scientist in the Randstad, grew up in Strasbourg, then built her career moving to Basel ("one hour's drive"), then Heidelberg, then Utrecht. One thing was always ruled out: Paris. Nationalized capitals like London and Paris still serve an "escalator" function, but now they also play this role for international movers opting out of the standard career plan.

The most useful way to conceptualize the migration of those looking for a new horizon to their lives and careers is in terms of an emergent European "field" of mobility. The logic of the rational actor approach to explaining the lack of intra-European migration suggests more account be taken of the specificities of migrants who do move. What kind of calculation do they make when they put themselves among the 1 in 50? Where the rationalist account runs into problems is over the kind of information about opportunities that is supposed to feed into the calculations of individuals, couples, or families. With the exception of developing migration systems that fulfil this function or offer examples of successful peers, many of the migration stories here seem to suggest that the moves were a "shot in the dark", adventurous, speculative, "see what happens" types of move that did not involve any particular clear calculation about consequences down the road. Much of it was spurred on by curiosity, of an openness to possibilities. Sometimes this feeling is associated with self-consciously internationalizing oneself, or in other cases, an explicit kind of European idealism.

Caterina is a good example. One of the older Italian movers, she left her small home town in the North of Italy for a very speculative move to Brussels. Brussels was not a specific destination: she was looking for "somewhere", but had not been interested in visiting before. And this was not a simple rational migration; rather, she came to "see how it was", knowing she could leave and "look for something else". But she did want to "challenge herself in a different environment ... discover and enrich my life". Many of the interviewees express this kind of attitude. It is a kind of "pioneer" attitude: self-consciously risk-taking and unique, projecting a possible life onto a new European backdrop. The move abroad involves a break with the more definite, mapped out social trajectories that staying at home would give. It is often indefinite, both spatially and temporally. But it is not like going abroad as a tourist, with a clear, delimited expectation of return. Rather, it is seen as a genuine career move, although there may well be some vague longer-term plan to return.

Thinking of this European space as a kind of protean "field" helps draw the contrast to the more fixed national economy of established rules, values, or payoffs. The historical account of European nation-state formation underlines how modern national welfare states stabilize and structure mobility opportunities. They establish clear educational paths, institutionalize careers, offer welfare guarantees and benefits, and generally try to manage the trajectory of individuals through society. The national framework was also a guarantee of returns to effort: a guarantee that everyone is part of the same collective game, with the same (just and fair) rules. In part this is what the idea of democratic citizenship is meant to express. The European Union falls far short of the nation-state-society in this sense: European citizenship based on free-movement rights is a quite different proposition. The EU offers only a weak identity, and few of the standard pastoral guarantees or assurances of justice. However, it does offer an alternative context in which to project one's life, albeit a broader, less defined, and more unpredictable one. One can begin to see one's career in different European terms, and crucially one does not have to opt out of the national and regional benefits of being close to home either, or even having access to some of the benefits of national citizenship.

European pioneers thus are moving into a field in which the values, rules, and hierarchies are not yet clearly established, as they are in the national context. They don't necessarily move with clear information about the destination or the consequences for their careers. Nor do they have clear feedback about some of the barriers or dead-ends that they might face unexpectedly down the road. Under conditions of uncertainty, the emergent field may offer different payoffs. This is the game they are playing: *un jeu sans frontières*. Maybe if you change yourself, your location, and hence your position in society, you will find an alternative route. Eurostars project themselves into the unknown. The absence of clear information or any assurance of an alternative "European" identity thus becomes less of a puzzle. And opting out of a national system and national identity offers an immediate benefit in a liberatory, denationalizing sense.

European free movers are pioneers in this sense, particularly those not driven by an elite family endowment or an MNC framework - which itself functions like an alternative welfare state. The problem is, the pioneer mentality is not something that can endure indefinitely. Individuals in the long run do need the identity over time of comparing self with self against a stable background. Longer-term calculations based on stable returns do eventually become imperative. As with the deals that expats get when they move abroad, there is probably a "sunset clause" to the benefits of playing the field. Expats are eventually "naturalized" by their companies, and treated just like one of the regular "local" workforce. Similarly, any new European

Opportunities will solidify eventually into institutionalized systems, which will

tend to go back to reinforcing the pre-existing order in Europe. You can only be a pioneer for so long, and when there are few other people doing this. Successful free movement thus inherently has to be a marginal phenomenon. This begins to explain why so many people do not move. It points to why free movement as a transformative force in Europe is a finite phenomenon.

This is certainly not how the economic Theory of European Integration is supposed to work, or how the European Commission imagines the future. A more dynamic Europe will not be achieved simply through more and more people moving. Dynamic people will only feel the benefits of moving when there are not too many of them. Highly talented and original people will only move as long as their originality is recognized. The system will stop selecting for this "unobserved skill" as soon as it is no longer a pathbreaking move. Mobility capital of this peculiar kind, in other words, gets devalued the more people pile into it. European integration opened a window of opportunity for a generation of social spiralists. But it is doubtful their movement prefigures a dramatic replacement of the stabilized national structures for a fully massified and thereby Europeanized system.

### A Social Worker's Tale

I met Federica at a typical Brussels house party. While sitting outside *Café Belga* in Place Flagey, I'd run into a Croatian friend I'd known at university in England. She invited me over to her housewarming that evening. They'd just bought a great little converted place in a rough Ixelles backstreet, off rue Malibran, a somewhat liminal road lined with Halal butchers, cheap telephone and internet shops, North African *épiciers*, and thrift stores. The party was a mix of international types working for NGOs and longtime Belgian residents of the neighbourhood. The talk was all politics and cultural life. Federica was suspicious of my project, but agreed to an interview anyway. She reminded me of so many of the independent educated women I'd met in Florence, Bologna, and Rome: attractive, intelligent, articulate, a little gruff. We met again in the archetypal cosmopolitan Brussels café *L'Ultime Alome*, one of those classy spaces where urbane Belgians, European residents, and hip students would eat and drink; it's always full. With the multinational chat and the struggle to make a decent recording of our conversation, that talk took place in French, with a little Italian thrown in for fun.

*la mia personal woder. It has been five years now soon. I work hard! time!! It's personal choice~*

*domestic violence - working with families and children touched!! It's il. I work 4ÇtQ\$\$*

*~rtJIIOk ciry, or sometimes at a ho!, pilal. I came to B/ussels eight years ago, and haiJ~*

*be~ 4QÛJ\$tJt~t!J0rkjàr five years. I did 11!J' studies here, University "shorter" here*

*than in*

*It's Y~il tqpk tfreeyears. During my final stage [work placement], I had the luck toQ*

### A Social Worker's Tale-cont'd

be offered a job. I hesitated a lot. Do I stay, do I go home? But then I decided I wanted to do some postgrad studies at Louvain-la-Neuve. And then I had the chance to work for the city.

I'm surprised that social work could be a mobile profession in Europe.

res. In terms of professional equivalences, I needed to ask the consulate for official recognition. Everything can be equivalent apart from the Law courses. I informed myself about that. For the rest it's similar. I always need to explain my work to people in Italy. The studies, the technical concepts [are different).

I wanted to do studies abroad, and I considered England, and French-speaking countries. But I knew some friends here from other countries. I hesitated a lot between Paris -Bruxelles, Bruxelles-Paris... For me the first few months were very difficult. After that I began to get to know the city really well, and I realized that I didn't really want to go. It would have been much more difficult to integrate in Paris. Big cities like Paris or London, these are cosmopolitan, for sure. But what I like about the Belgian context is that it is a small city, but a small city that itself is very cosmopolitan. In terms of the meeting of Belgians and

foreigners, or Belgians and immigrants, it isn't always 100% multicultural - but I would call it cosmopolitan. Sincerely, if there had only been Belgians here I'm not sure I would have liked it! Because I like a lot the fact you can meet people from all kinds of countries. This wasn't necessarily the case in Italy.

Why was it so difficult at the beginning?

Because I knew a few people, but not many, and then the ones you get to know at first aren't necessarily the people you would choose. I didn't know the language very well, the climate was very different, and the way people live here. The rhythm of life is 100% different. I had travelled, yes, a lot, but to live somewhere, that was different. This is a city of the North [une ville du nord] and I was not used to that. I think I was quite young at that time, 22. Plus, the city centre, when I came here eight years ago, the neighbourhood where you have lots of (cafés and restaurants now [Sint Katelijne), it was not like that at all. It was all demolished, wrecked buildings, and for me that was strange. In my native city and other cities, there the centre is beautiful and that's where all the life is: in Rome, other cities in Italy. Here nearly everything was destroyed, but little by little it has been restored. But at first you didn't know how to find yourself here, where to go out, what to do.

She lives with her boyfriend, Hassan, a Belgian-Moroccan.

My boyfriend didn't want to live in the centre, and me neither. If you Italian friends live in rue Dansaert (in Sint Katelijne). But I wouldn't want to! We in Uccle [out in the suburbs], no way at all! Or other neighbourhoods that are just residential. We looked in three quarters, in Ixelles, Etterbeek, and Saint Gilles. The trade-off between quality of life is good, compared to Rome, Paris, or London. You can find things better, even on a modest salary - if you don't always look in the areas that are most popular with the eurocrats. We wanted a quartier with accessible shops, and a nice view. The time I've lived in an Italian neighbourhood. There are cafes, shops, a restaurant. 17 years ago, they didn't have pasta. I remember the first time I saw pasta, it was ugly. You know, pasta with meat balls, overcooked and covered in (fatty), horrible.

### A Social Worker's Tale-cont'd

*I get 10 Rome. I need 10 go see my friends and family, especially places that I miss. S/qqyillg in touch with parents and Family is fine. But it's tougher with friends - tho/s one thing I regret. Maybe my Family will ask the question differently as ~ get older. 771~ are now retired. My Jather worked hard, he had health problems, and in those moments it is not so e~. **JI** I was close I could telephone more often or go there more. Hlhen things are difficult you want people who are close 10 be there.*

So, will they stay or will they go?

*At the beginning we discussed it. As the time passes in fact I realize that for him it would be much more difficult. He is much more attached here, his Family and parents are all here, people he is close 10. He is a foreigner, but he was born here. For me it's not like that, there is an asymmetry [décalage]. Sometimes I say to him, "you could find work elsewhere in Europe". He is an accountant, but working in the social field. We could go 10 Rome, but he says there's not much work for him there, although there might be for me. Then I say, "Milan? And he says, "If it's Milan we might as well be in Brussels". But from time to time, I say, "Well~ Milan wouldn't be bad you know!" From time 10 time, I regret it.*

Do you think of yourself as a migrant?

*I don't know what it is exactly you mean by that word. But if I respond just like that, then yes, I am a "migrant", I have migrated, yeso It's not the same as other Italians fifty years ago ... But, yes, there is an immigrant's heart somewhere here [oui, il y a un coeur d'immigré quelque part].*