

**BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS OF FRICTIONLESS
MOBILITY AND COMPLEX REALITIES.
DECISIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF GERMAN
PROFESSIONALS LIVING AND WORKING IN
BRITAIN.**



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To my Grandparents

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of my participants for their openness to share their life stories with me.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the DPhil thesis is to explore the particular case of the migration decision-making and experiences of German professionals in Britain. Not only is the mobility of professionals an integral factor for the economies, but it is also promoted and facilitated on the national and EU levels. Mobile professionals may be regarded as the ideal type of mover: invisible, young, highly-talented, competent in the local language, well-integrated. Indeed, due to these characteristics, they are assumed to integrate easily and enjoy the mobile lifestyle. However, some empirical studies highlight the complexities of this mobility suggesting that even those highly-desired mobile professionals are not immune to challenges, which may lead to instability, insecurity, and stress, suggesting that such migration is not as frictionless and easy as may be suggested.

In this thesis, I aim to address these aspects. Based on the qualitative analysis of 64 interviews with professionals and some of their partners, I draw our attention to the complexities in the lives of these privileged mobile professionals. On the one hand, German professionals moving to Britain may exemplify the notion of frictionless mobility, as they enjoy the right to move freely, they are educated, young, competent in the English language, employed according to their qualifications, and well-integrated. On the other hand, their mobility is more constrained than it first appears and their migratory experiences are not immune to challenges or unanticipated obstacles, such as Brexit. Furthermore, having partners or children may present additional challenges for the households, and not only impact the relocation strategies of the household but also impact the migratory experience of each partner. Discussing these aspects contributes to our understating of the particularities of the experiences of mobile professionals relocating between affluent countries, as well as highlights the realities and complexities of mobility and the lives of these highly-desired professionals.

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Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of human migration has piqued academic curiosity for centuries; for me, however, this is more personal. My initial academic interest was sparked by the question on why previously employed professionals who reside in affluent EU countries decide to engage in relocation and leave their home countries where they had enjoyed employment and high standards of living. The existing body of literature on migration presents several possible explanations for the phenomenon such as desire of international experience (Stahl et al., 2002; Ognyanova et al., 2014), search for better quality of life (Stone and Stubbs, 2007; van Dalen and Henkens, 2007; Benson and O'Reilly, 2009), the structure of modern careers (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996), the demands of modern industries (Massey et al., 1993; Bauer and Kunze, 2004). Furthermore, research suggests that the legal framework of the EU, language competence, as well as transferability of qualifications (Heinz and Ward-Warmedinger, 2006; Nerb et al., 2009; Young et al., 2014; Carrozza et al., 2017) have also facilitated this type of mobility. Through my years of research, I found these theoretical explanations to be useful in explaining some of the reasons for and experiences of mobile professionals from affluent countries; however, they did not address all the complexities that I have observed.

Writing this introduction in the USA, I cannot but reflect on my own migration and experience of living in Ukraine, Israel, Austria, Germany, the UK and the USA. Through this migration I have met many people with migratory backgrounds, but it was in 2009 when I was a visiting scholar at the University of Graz, Austria, when I first attended an InterNations¹ meeting that I found myself in the presence of mobile professionals. While I found many of their stories to be interesting, I was fascinated especially by those who

¹ <https://www.internations.org/about-internations/> InterNations is an international network, a global social forum for migrants which organises social events in various locations on a regular basis. Accessed 11.06.2020

relocated between affluent EU countries. These migrants held university diplomas, were employed before the relocation and worked according to their levels of qualification and experience in the country of destination. As a sociologist and highly-skilled migrant myself, I noticed both similarities and differences between their migration experiences, those of my own, and those described in much of the academic literature. Attempting to understand such variation in migration decisions and migratory paths has guided my research since then. Indeed, it is not uncommon for scholars with some migratory experience, like myself, to be interested in and research migrant populations (see Ryan, 2008a; Carling et al., 2014; Nowicka and Cieslik, 2014; Nowicka and Ryan, 2015).

In order to address the question of highly-skilled migration between affluent EU countries, one first needs to account for the role of the EU. Many scholars suggest that the legal framework of the EU, such as freedom of movement and recognition of qualifications and diplomas, may simplify relocation within the EU (Favell, 2008, 2013; Young et al., 2014; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a,b; Koikkalainen, 2014). The concept of frictionless migration, discussed in *The Human Face of Global Mobility* (Smith and Favell, 2006), or Eurostars (Favell, 2011, 2013), further suggests that some mobile Western Europeans enjoy intra-EU migration through which ethnicity, inequality, barriers, and cultural disadvantages are removed. However, empirical evidence shows that the actual experiences of migration, even of such privileged groups, are more complex, and while they may enjoy some privileges, they may still face barriers and challenges associated with relocation (see Nowicka, 2012; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a,b; Weiss, 2017; Ryan, 2019). The question therefore remains: what is the experience of these professionals from affluent countries, and what are the opportunities and challenges that they face? Which strategies were adopted by these professionals to overcome both the anticipated challenges and those that were unanticipated but later experienced? From the theoretical perspective, by addressing these

questions I aim to contribute to our understanding of the complexities inherent in the migration of professionals between affluent countries in general and in the context of the EU in particular.

Second, addressing the topic of mobile professionals requires taking into consideration contemporary developments in the structure of careers and industries. This is particularly relevant for the study of professionals from affluent countries as the financial benefits or unemployment might not be the main motivators for the relocation. On the one side, bodies of literature suggest that professionals operate within the world of boundaryless careers and may choose less traditional paths for career development, such as international mobility (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Vaiman and Haslberger, 2013). This concept resembles what was suggested by Beck as “do-it-yourself biography” (Beck, 2002, 2014) where individuals shape their own lives and manage their own risks. Building upon these concepts, migration of the highly-skilled might be understood as professionals taking charge of their professional and private lives and choosing to change employer and relocate abroad for the benefit of their career. On the other side, migration of professionals may be an indicator of structural changes in industry and worsening of employment practices that are beyond the control of the employee. For example, seeking employment abroad might be due to a growing number of fixed-term contracts, dissatisfaction with jobs, and overall precariousness, even for professionals who traditionally held more favourable positions in the labour market (Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Carrozza et al., 2017). By examining the migration of professionals within the EU through these lenses, I seek to explore how it is experienced along a spectrum of voluntary (aspirations for international career) to involuntary decisions (shortcomings of industry, fixed-term contracts, unfavourable career structures in the home country).

Third, through many conversations with mobile professionals I have observed that many have relocated with their children and partners, and had some caring responsibilities toward family remaining in their home countries. The literature shows different strategies in regard to how couples may deal with migration ranging from relocating together to engaging in long-distance relationships (Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2017; Murray-Close, 2019). In addition, available research has ample examples showing that relocating with a partner may not only impact the migration decision of the entire household, but also affect each member in a different way (Mincer, 1978; Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Hardill, 2002; Melzer, 2013; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015). Research on EU mobile professionals in context of the wider social environment of children, partners, and parents is, however, still scarce (see Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a; Vohlídalová, 2014, 2017). Applying family migration scholarship that accounts for partners, children and caring responsibilities towards family (see Baldassar, 2007; Ryan et al., 2009; Baldassar et al., 2014) to study migration of these mobile professionals from affluent countries may, therefore, provide a better description of the complexities of the actual decisions and relocation practices, as well as experiences of all members in these mobile households.

Fourth, through my acquaintance with mobile professionals from various EU countries, I have noticed considerable differences in relocation and migratory experiences between various groups of EU movers. In some cases, these differences may be attributed to historical relationships between the countries involved as well as specific nationality stereotypes. Such observations have led me to question how the cultural and national identity is experienced and how it impacts the outcome of these relocations. While research in the EU context also demonstrates the variation in regard to mobility and migratory experience between various EU members (Csedo, 2008; Nowicka, 2012; Ryan, 2018), little

is known about the influence of nationality and stereotypes on migratory experiences of those from affluent EU countries.

Having these thoughts and questions in mind, I have approached my PhD project. I chose the specific case study of German professionals in Britain as it can contribute to theoretical discussion on the migration of professionals from affluent countries. According to the theoretical assumptions presented above (Favell, 2008, 2011, 2013; Young et al., 2014; Koikkalainen, 2014), German professionals in Britain may enjoy relatively low-cost migration, where ethnicity, inequality, barriers, and cultural disadvantages are seemingly removed. At the same time, they may not be immune to problems that other types of movers experience, such as those associated with adjusting to a new culture, recreating family dynamics, and maintaining relationships. Analysing their experiences may help us understand the complexity of the migration of professionals, and advance our knowledge in this field.

The case of German professionals in the UK is particularly intriguing because of the complex historical relationship between the two countries. Germans have been migrating to Britain for centuries and until the early 20th century were one of the largest groups of foreigners in the country. Overall, the German population has enjoyed positive public opinion in Britain; however, this changed as a result of the World Wars (Panayi, 1995; Manz et al., 2007; Steinert and Weber-Newth, 2008; Duxbury-Neumann, 2017). Despite the anti-German sentiments, German workers were allowed to enter the British labour market as early as the 1950s. Moreover, public records show positive attitudes of the state and local employers who viewed Germans as good and well-integrated workers compared to other European workers who were allowed in the country (Steinert and Weber-Newth, 2008; Salt, 2009). Since then, economic and industrial ties between the countries have grown stronger, with numerous German companies having UK-based offices. Furthermore,

while Germany regained its financial and industrial position in the world, the UK remained one of the main destination countries for German professionals.

The question therefore arises: what are the reasons for the educated and previously employed German professionals to relocate to the UK, and what are their migratory experiences? One can approach such an examination from economic or labour market perspective. For example, one may assume that Germans move to the UK due to a lack of employment opportunities stemming from a smaller highly-skilled sector. Indeed, compared to Germany, the share of skilled non-manual workers is higher in the UK. According to German statistics, however, emigration rates are higher among the employed highly-skilled (BMF, 2015, 2019). Economic theory may also suggest that German professionals migrate to the UK because they are motivated by higher return or potential income after migration. However, even though working migrants who are most likely to benefit from wage differences are highly ranked managers, CEOs, bankers, these types of professionals constitute only a small share in the migration flow: The majority of highly-skilled Germans who move to the UK are engineers, teachers, managers and researchers (ONS, 2017). Furthermore, higher salary range in the UK compared to Germany is counteracted by higher living expenses. The question therefore is: what role do the financial incentives and industry size play in the migration of German professionals to Britain?

I was surprised to learn that despite the fact that the UK had been one of the main destination countries for German professionals and students for several decades (BMF, 2015, 2019), their relocation experience remains largely unexplored. While some historical research on the German population in the UK prior to and after the Second World War exists (Panayi, 1995; Weber-Newth and Steinert, 2006; Steinert and Weber-Newth, 2008), little research has been done on Germans who have relocated more recently. In fact, despite the annual increase in number of German nationals relocating to the UK since 2008, which

made them one of the largest, most educated groups in the country (ONS, 2016, 2017), Germans remain an under-researched group of highly-skilled migrants in Britain.

Beyond the research context of the UK, a few scholars have focused on the emigration of German nationals or their lives in destination countries. One such example is the edited volume by Schulze and colleagues (2008) on German diasporic experiences across countries and continents. Despite providing a wide range of empirical research on German communities around the world, the volume presents rather a historical analysis of migration, and focuses on the linguistic and cultural nuances of German migrants and their descendants (Schulze et al., 2008). Furthermore, only a few research projects have focused on the migration intentions of German nationals (Uebelmesser, 2006; Liebau and Schupp, 2011; Pantenburg et al., 2018; Samarsky, 2020) and experiences of those Germans who actually migrated (Meier, 2014b; Stahl et al., 2002; Ognyanova et al., 2014). These projects concentrated on specific occupational groups (researchers, managers, intra-company transferees), and explored migration from the mover's perspective. In contrast, I seek to explore and document both the opportunities and challenges that such migration presents for the general group of German professionals, as well as how their decisions are negotiated in the wider social context of partners, extended family, and children.

Focusing on the experiences of German professionals living in Britain, this thesis, using rich qualitative data, addresses four research questions:

1. What are the primary motivations for highly skilled migrants, who are already in employment, to move from one affluent European country to another?
 - a. What do they expect from such a move?
 - b. How are these expectations realised in reality?
2. Are there any national differences in employment practices or in labour market structure that impact the decision to move or the relocation practices?

3. How does the cultural and national identity is experienced and how does it impact the outcome of these relocations?
4. How do migrants navigate between migration and family life?
 - a. What role do partners have in migration and relocation decisions and practices?
 - b. What impact do children have on migration?
 - c. How do wider caring relationships impact it?

By addressing these questions, I contribute not only to our knowledge about migratory experiences of German professionals in Britain, but also to the current theoretical debate on migration and the experiences of highly-skilled migrants within and outside the EU.

1.1 RESEARCH APPROACH AND DEFINITIONS

To address my research questions, I adopted a qualitative methodology using in-depth semi-structured interviewing with 64 participants comprising 53 German professionals and 11 partners. The majority of interviews were conducted in various locations across the South-East of England, mostly the cities of London, Oxford, Cambridge and the surrounding areas. This resulted in wide occupational representation among my participants ranging from academia to the automotive, gambling, financial, and publishing industries. For the purposes of my research, German professionals were identified as those who self-identified as Germans, have received their university education in Germany or elsewhere outside the UK, and had been employed according to their qualifications before and after they relocated to Britain. The preference was given to those who have relocated after 2008, and had lived in the country for less than seven years before the interview. I was keen to recruit professionals of both genders, which resulted in 34 male participants and 19 female participants. Because I was interested in wider family issues in migration decision making, I asked if my participants would consider putting me in touch with their partners. I have then conducted interviews with those of the partners that were involved in

the migration decision, i.e., not new partners acquired after migration, resulting in 11 additional interviews with seven female and four male participants.

Due to the size of the sample, I was able to include not only indispensable variation in occupation, length of stay, but also in relationship types and living arrangements. I conducted interviews with members of households who decided to relocate together, those who were also accompanied by children, and those who chose to engage in long-distance relationships. Such variation in family size and living arrangements helped me to address the role of family, partners, and children in migration and relocation experiences. This resulted in a multi-layered and multifaceted portrayal of migration.

As mentioned earlier, I use the term German to refer to a person who self-identifies as a German and has spent their socialisation years in Germany, but who is not necessarily a German citizen. Following my definition, I include in the sample those who spent their childhood and adolescence in Germany, e.g., went to school and university in the country, irrespective of whether they were born in Germany. As I interviewed German professionals living in Britain, I use the term migrant to portray their migratory background. Following the UN definition, a migrant is identified as *“any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person’s legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is”*². Within the UK, the definition of who a migrant is vary between the national offices and types of information they collect. For example, Labour Force Survey and Annual Population Survey use country of birth, National Insurance Number relies on nationality,

² [https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/migration/index.html#:~:text=The%20UN%20Migration%20Agency%20\(IOM,the%20causes%20for%20the%20movement](https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/migration/index.html#:~:text=The%20UN%20Migration%20Agency%20(IOM,the%20causes%20for%20the%20movement) accessed 12.06.2020

whereas International Passenger Survey uses length of stay. Because the data from the International Passenger Survey is used to provide annual net of migration, the British Office for National Statistics uses its definition and defines a migrant as someone who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year.³ While national statistics in the UK differentiate between the migrants coming from the EU (sometimes referred to as EU movers) and those coming from non-EU countries, these terms are not contradictory or mutually exclusive, and while EU movers are recognised as a separate category in the migration flow in the UK, they are accounted for within the general migration population.

In the text I use the terms “highly-skilled migrant” and “mobile professional” interchangeably. While I am aware that there is a distinction between “highly-skilled” and “professional” in regard to the existence of a professional regulatory body and accountability to this body, I use the terms to refer to my participants’ educational and occupational characteristics. The group included those holding occupations that require a degree or equivalent qualification, or a postgraduate qualification, and who were employed according to their education in the UK. I did not include individuals without completed formal tertiary education and those who were not employed according to their qualification. The UK uses a more elaborate definition of a highly-skilled individual: an employee under national employment law, who is paid and has required adequate and specific competence, as proven by higher professional qualifications. The highly-skilled categories include: managers and senior officials; corporate managers; managers and proprietors in agriculture and services; professionals; science and technology professionals; health professionals; teaching and research professionals; business and public services professionals; associate

³ <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/who-counts-as-a-migrant-definitions-and-their-consequences/> accessed 12.06.2020

professional and technical workers; science and technology associate professionals; health and social welfare professionals; culture media and sports occupations; and business and public service associate professionals.

Finally, while I initially started to work on the project in 2014, I finished the interviewing process in late 2016. Such a timeframe allowed me to interview a third of the sample during the preparations for the Brexit vote. As a result, some of my data includes a discussion on this specific event. Detailed information about the methodological approach, practical concerns and ethical considerations are discussed in the methodological chapter.

1.2 CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

Before approaching the empirical sections of the thesis, one needs to account for the wider context of the research that will help us to understand the environment in which the studied phenomenon takes place. In this section, I first discuss the EU environment which is followed by a discussion of the trends in German emigration and particularities of the German population in the UK.

1.3 ENVIRONMENT OF THE EU: FREE MOVEMENT

Germany is one of the first countries within the European community to actively participate in establishing and developing the legal framework for free movement within the area. Indeed, West Germany was one of the original six members that founded the European coal and steel community in 1951. Among the aspects mentioned in the Paris Treaty of 1951 was the right for workers in some industries to move within the community. However, the ratification of the treaty did not mean freedom of movement, but required some agreements to be implemented by individual members. In 1957, the Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community (EEC), also called the common market,

and provided practical steps and deadlines to ensure the right of movement for all workers regardless of occupation (Mass, 2003). Until 1968, the movement was only allowed for the workers; it was extended to family members by regulation 1612/68. This regulation allows family members to follow the migrant workers and to take up employment in another member state. While workers were allowed to move within the Community, until 1985 their movement was still complicated by the physical presence of borders between countries. In 1985, initiated by Germany and France, six countries signed the Schengen Agreement to remove their internal borders and ease free movement of people, capital and goods (Maslowski, 2016). The agreement was non-compulsory for EEC members who joined before 1997. Since 1997 the Schengen Agreement was integrated into the Treaty of Amsterdam, and became compulsory.

In 1986, with several countries joining the EEC after its establishment, the 12 members signed the Single European Act creating the Single Market. In 1992, the European Union (EU) was established with the Treaty of Maastricht, which incorporated the EEC. The main objective of the free movement policy was to increase the function of the integrated labour market and improve its efficiency by managing the supply and demand of workers across EU countries. The EU incorporated the EEC's concept of freedom of movement as its fundamental principle (Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). According to Article 45, members of the EU are entitled to look for a job in another EU country and work there without needing a work permit. It also allows them to reside in that country for that purpose as well as to stay there even after employment has finished. Finally, it aims to ensure equal treatment of the mobile EU citizens and nationals in terms of access to employment, working conditions, and all other social and tax advantages. Several directives have been adopted to facilitate migration and ensure fair treatment. The treaty was subsequently succeeded by the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997. In 2007, the Treaty of

Lisbon established freedom of movement as a right which is granted automatically through EU citizenship. In an effort to facilitate the movement of people, the European Job Mobility Portal⁴ was established in 1993. The aim of the portal is to provide information, advice, and recruitment and placement services for workers wishing to work in another EU member state.

In addition to Article 45 mentioned earlier, several directives and regulations have explicitly focused on facilitating the mobility of workers across the EU. For example, Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professions came into force in 2007 and was adopted to ease migration and promote integration of the workforce across EU countries. Similarly, [Regulation No 492/2011](#) was put in place to ensure the [right of workers](#) of any [European Union](#) Member State to move to and access employment in another Member State, and enjoy the same social and tax advantages as national workers. According to the regulation, EU workers have the same rights and are employed under the same conditions as national workers, have access to training in vocational schools and retraining centres, and so on. Similar rights are also provided to family members through Directive 2004/38/EC. This directive is aimed at reducing and simplifying administrative formalities, and providing a better definition of the status of family members. In addition, it ensures the right of EU citizens to move freely and stay in another EU country for under three months without any condition. However, for a longer stay, individual Member States may apply additional conditions. Furthermore, while EU citizens do not need residence permits, Member States may require them to register with the authorities, and acquire permanent residency after a five-year period of uninterrupted legal residence in the country.

⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/homepage> accessed 22.10.19

Despite these directives, movement within the EU is still hindered on both local and governmental levels, leading the Parliament, in 2014 and in 2017, to call the Member States to comply with the Treaty provisions on freedom of movement. Similarly, in 2017, while another resolution was adopted on EU citizens' freedom to move and work in the internal market, the Parliament called once more for the removal of obstacles to the right to free movement. Despite the effort of the EU Parliament to facilitate freedom of movement, according to Eurostat, as of 2018, 3.4% of the overall EU population had lived in another EU country. Despite being a relatively low number, this is an increase from 2.5% in 2007 (Eurostat, 2018). The number is higher for those in the working age category, with 3.9 % EU citizens of working age having lived in another country than that of their citizenship. Within the working age population, 33.1 % were highly-skilled, which is an increase from 24.2 % in 2008 (Eurobarometer, 2018). However, for individual Member States, the share of highly-skilled among those of their citizens that migrate within the EU is considerably different. For example, of all their compatriots living in another EU country, 62.5% of French and 54.5% of Germans have tertiary education, whereas only 17% of Romanian and 16% of Portuguese hold this level of education (Eurobarometer, 2018). Such variation in the number of mobile highly-skilled citizens from each Member State suggests that intra-EU migration is context-dependent and not homogeneous.

The desire to understand the phenomenon of migration within the EU and its impact on individual Member States led to a growing body of scholarship on the topic (Fassmann and Munz, 1992; Ackers, 1998; Ahn et al., 1999; van Dalen and Henkens, 2007; Fouarge and Ester, 2008; Recchi, 2008, 2015). While many of these projects had a comparative perspective, a few projects focused explicitly on migration between Western and affluent EU countries. Among others, it includes research on the mobility of Western citizens to London, Amsterdam and Brussels (Favell, 2011), British nationals in Paris (Scott, 2006),

Finns in London and the EU (Koikkalainen, 2014) and French citizens in London (Mulholland and Ryan, 2014). At the same time, mobile German nationals in the EU remain largely under the radar with only a few scholars exploring their more recent migratory experiences within the EU (see Ognyanova et al., 2014; Wlasny, 2017). Indeed, despite being one of the first member states to participate in freedom of movement, we have little empirical research on the group.

Finally, in the light of Brexit and the end of free movement between the UK and other EU countries, such as Germany, the project may also provide a historical perspective, documenting how freedom of movement has impacted the migration decisions and experiences of mobile professionals. This can be then compared to post-Brexit examination of migration of Germans to the area.

1.4 EMIGRATION FROM GERMANY

In order to better understand the migration of German professionals to Britain, examining the historical emigration patterns of Germans provides us with the background and helps us situate this type of emigration within a wider context. While I use the word “Germany” to refer to the area that is now known as the Federal Republic of Germany, we should keep in mind that the borders, political unity and sovereignty status of the area have changed numerous times through the centuries. In practical terms, what is known as Germany was a segmented area of various small German states which were connected through various alliances. For example, the German Confederation (1814) which comprised 39 German states, North German Confederation (1867) which comprised 21 German states and the Kingdom of Prussia, and finally the German Empire (1871-1918) which comprised 26 states. Due to different numbers of states in each alliance, each establishment differed in terms of territory. Even within more recent history, and as a direct

result of World War I (1914-1919) and World War II (1939-1945), the area has experienced several geo-political changes, and until 1989, was divided into East Germany and West Germany. The finalisation of the current borders and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Germany stem from the reunification of Germany in 1991 and the ratification of changes to the German-Polish border.

Like many other European countries, Germany has a complex emigration history moving from a country of emigration (through intra-European and transatlantic emigration) to a country of immigration. The first official statistical estimates on emigration from the area that is now Germany date back to the beginning of the 19th century. These estimates were based on the census data, while the majority of emigration took place without the knowledge of officials (Burgdorfer, 1931). However, the practices in regard to collecting emigration statistics differed between each German state. For example, while Bavaria was the first state to attempt statistical estimation of emigration as early as 1809, some Northern German states started to include the estimates on emigration in 1816 (Burgdorfer, 1931). Until the establishment of the North German Confederation in 1867, there were no common statistics on emigrants from the area. Only after the establishment of the German Empire in 1871 was a census taken regularly across the whole territory of the empire which incorporated the North German Confederation and Southern States as well.

According to this statistical data, a first peak in the emigration rate was observed between 1847 and 1855, which was attributed to crop failure and famine that drove the German population, which was still mainly agricultural, to seek a better life outside the country. Burgdorfer (1931) suggests that the relatively low rate of migration after the 1855 period can also be attributed to external factors. For example, as many of these Germans relocated to the USA, their migration was impaired by stricter immigration laws in the US as well as the American Civil War (1861-1865). Another spike in emigration numbers

occurred between 1880 and 1885; during this period, almost a million people left the country, with a large share moving to the USA (Burgdorfer, 1931; Bade, 1995). This wave of emigration was also associated with financial hardships in Germany.

In order to have a better understanding of emigration overseas, in 1871, the German government started to collect individual-level data on Germans who took transatlantic ships. Such a practice was implemented across all sea ports by 1899 (Burgdorfer, 1931). Despite these advancements in regard to collecting information on overseas emigration, statistical data on movement in Europe was still limited. The challenge of estimating emigration to Europe stems from the difficulty of identifying those who emigrate and those who go to European ports for travel. As a result of a high volume of German nationals living overseas, in 1869, the North German Confederation appointed a Commissioner of Emigration to provide protection to German emigrants abroad from exploitation and deprivation of their rights (Bade, 1995). In 1924, this legal body became known as the Federal Emigration Agency which, in 1960, was integrated into the Federal Administration Office. Since the '60s, the Agency has been responsible for emigration as well as immigration.

According to historical analysis, between 1816 and 1914, around 5.5 million Germans moved overseas, while only 850,000 people relocated within the European region (Ette and Sauer, 2010). Despite a large number of emigrants, according to statistical records since 1895-1900, Germany became a country of immigration, with more people entering the country than leaving. Indeed, as Germany started to transform from an agricultural into an industrial state, regional emigration became more widespread than transatlantic (Martin, 2002). Furthermore, as suggested by Burgdorfer (1931), despite the desire to emigrate to the USA in the period between 1910 and 1925, many were unable to do so due to legal restrictions in the US and insufficient means to finance a journey to America. While some

emigration continued until World War I, during the war, emigration stopped almost entirely. A relatively low emigration level remained until 1933 when emigration from Nazi Germany resumed due to political and racist persecution. While actual emigration numbers are incomplete because a large number of refugees crossing borders without proper documentation, according to estimates around a million people left the German-speaking area between 1933 and 1945, with half of this population being Jewish minorities (Bade, 1995).

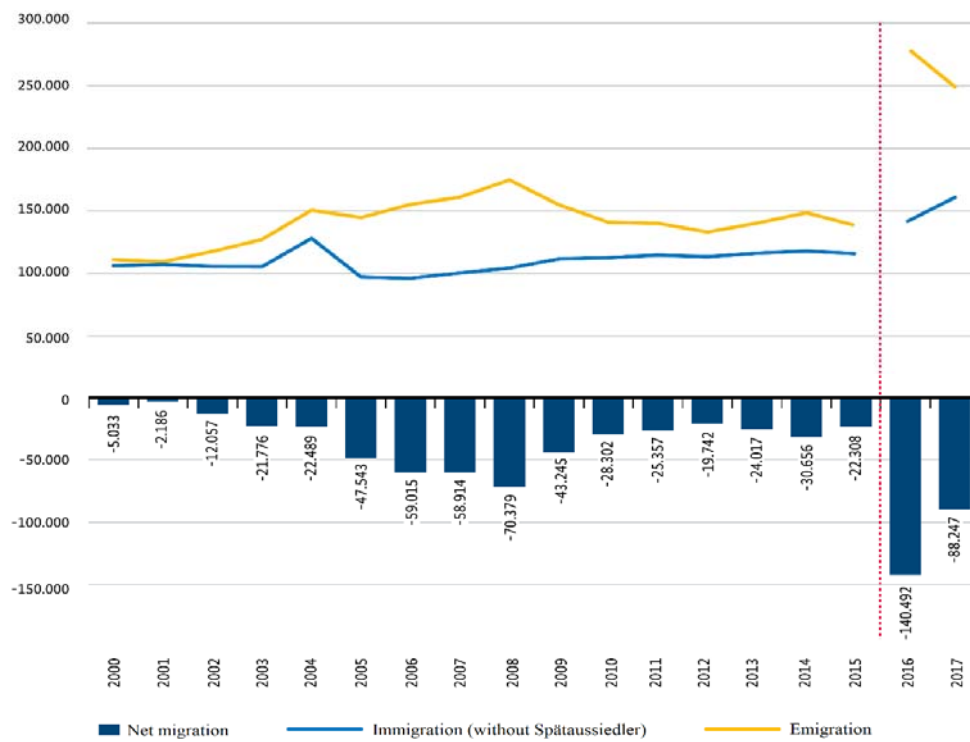
Immediately after World War II, emigration almost stopped with only a few able to leave the country. Emigration resumed slowly and peaked in 1952 with 90,000 movers. The number of emigrants decreased slowly due to the betterment of the economic situation in Germany and the provision of full employment. At the same time, the division of Germany into the German Democratic Republic (or East Germany, GDR) and the German Federal Republic (or West Germany, GFR) also affected emigration rates and direction. For example, while emigration from West Germany was mainly oriented toward other European countries, emigration from East Germany was characterised by intra-German direction, from East to West Germany. According to statistics, between 1961 and 1988 almost 600,000 Germans emigrated from East Germany to West Germany (Martin, 2002). At the same time, emigration from Western Germany was around 50,000 to 65,000 annually (Sauer and Ette, 2007; BMF, 2011).

During this time and as a result of the betterment of the economic situation in West Germany, there was a shift in the overall migration situation in the country, with a lower rate of emigration of German citizens and high rates of labour immigrants coming to Germany. In a similar manner to other European countries, Germany, once a less affluent migrant-sending country, became an affluent immigrant-receiving country. While the topic

of immigration of non-ethnic Germans has been widely discussed and studied in the academic community, it is out of the scope of this research project.

Since 1989 and until early 2000, emigration of German nationals was relatively stable at an average of 100,000 persons annually. However, some fluctuation exists in the migration flow with around 140,000 emigrants in 1994, 70,000 in 1995, and 90,000 in 2003. Figure 1 presents the immigration and emigration statistics of German nationals between 2000 and 2017, and indicates two peaks in 2008 and 2016. The number of emigrants peaked in 2008 with over 175,000 German nationals leaving the country (BMF, 2011, 2016) (see Figure 1). Although in 2016 another peak was registered with more than 280,000 German emigrants (BMF, 2016, 2019), the BMF 2019 report attributes this high number to a change in statistical categorisation introduced in 2016 by the German Migration Office, rather than a depiction of an increase in numbers.

FIGURE 1: IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION OF GERMAN NATIONALS, 2000 TO 2017



Source: BMF 2019

According to the German Migration Office, the actual net migration of German citizens remained positive until 2000 due to a large number of “Spätaussiedler” - descendants of ethnic Germans who immigrated to Germany from the late 1980s. The majority of those ethnic Germans were born in former Soviet Union countries (Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Uzbekistan), as well as Romania and Poland. While Spätaussiedler are still present in the migration flow, since 2000 their numbers have been considerably lower, and as a result the net migration of Germans is now negative, meaning more Germans are leaving the country than entering. Among those who enter the country, the highest share is highly-skilled German nationals who have spent several years studying, living and working abroad (Ette and Sauer, 2010; BMF, 2015, 2019), who identify family reasons as well employment as the main reasons for their return migration (OECD, 2015).

According to analysis of the current emigration flow, German emigration is a positively selected process, i.e., mobile citizens differ in their characteristics from the less mobile population. Germans who engage in migration are, on average, younger, employed, and occupy white-collar positions (Ette and Sauer, 2010; OECD, 2015; BMF, 2011, 2015, 2019). Data is also consistent in showing that German individuals with a higher level of education are overrepresented in the emigration flow (BMF, 2015, 2019; OECD, 2015). Following the latest BMF report, 53.5% of all emigrants are of working age, between 25 and 49 years old. Similar characteristics of the mobile population were recorded in a few projects on the migration intentions of the German population (Uebelmesser, 2006; Liebau and Schupp, 2011; Pantenburg et al., 2018; Samarsky, 2020). Indeed, various projects examined the intentions to migrate of different groups within Germany, such as intentions for regional migration (Busch and Weigert, 2010; Bonisch and Lutz, 2010; Stauder, 2018), emigration intentions of German students (Diehl et al., 2008; Liebau and Schupp, 2011), German academics (Remhof, 2008), people holding intermediate qualifications (Verwiebe

et al., 2010) and German physicians (Pantenburg et al., 2018). According to these projects, those who consider emigrating from Germany are more likely to hold a higher education diploma, to be younger, fully employed, single, and live in West Germany.

Within the EU context, Germans constitute one of the largest groups of intra-EU movers. According to Eurobarometer (2018) data for 2018, 8.9% of all the residents born in Germany were living in another EU Member State, which is the third largest group within the EU after Poland (22.0 %) and Romania (13.7 %). Moreover, data presented by Eurobarometer also demonstrate that within the mobile German population, more than half have at least a tertiary level of education. Indeed, following their report, 55% of mobile Germans in the EU have this level of education with only 7.2 % of all mobile Germans having a primary education level. These characteristics of the mobile German population make them the fourth largest group of mobile citizens within the EU with at least tertiary education after Finland, France and Ireland. Reflecting on these characteristics of the mobile German population within the EU context, one wonders why, despite being one of the largest and most educated groups of EU movers, their migratory decisions and experiences remain largely unexplored. In my thesis, I am to address this gap.

According to the available data, the majority of German emigrants re-settle in the European region, clustering in capital cities (OECD, 2015). In 2017, the main destination countries within the European region were Switzerland, Austria, the UK, and Spain (BMF, 2015, 2019; OECD, 2019). While these destinations have been the main destination countries for over a decade, the German population in each location differs in their characteristics. For example, the UK and Switzerland have the highest share of highly-qualified German emigrants, while Austria, the Netherlands have the highest share of students (BMF, 2019).

While more is known about the education level and destination countries for German emigrants, little is known about their occupational characteristics. While German statistical records do not allow for differentiation between German emigrants based on occupation, they collect additional data on emigration of doctors, managers and academics. According to these data, the emigration of academics and physicians is mainly characterised by temporary relocation, while those employed in managerial positions are more likely to move permanently (Diehl et al., 2008; Seidler et al., 2010; Ette and Sauer, 2010; Pantenburg et al., 2018). The available data on short-term mobility of academics and scientists allow an examination of length of stay in the destination country. In 2016, while the US remained the main destination country for short-term mobility of German academics who go abroad, the UK was the second main destination country, followed by the Russian Federation and Japan. Despite minor changes in the number of German academics going abroad and some changes in preferences, the UK has consistently been one of the main destination countries for their short-term mobility.

Various projects have investigated the reasons for emigration of German citizens, especially after the first peak of emigration in 2008. Among central themes raised in various projects is that German emigration of those with highly-skilled or intermediate qualifications stems not only from personal or regional economic situations, but also from a lack of professional opportunities and blocking careers in Germany (Knerr, 2007; Remhof, 2008; Erlinghagen et al., 2009; Erlinghagen and Stegmann, 2009; Seidler et al., 2010; Verwiebe et al., 2010). This led to some to describe this trend as a “brain drain”. While these projects examined the migration of Germans almost a decade ago following the first peak in emigration numbers, more research needs to be done to examine more recent trends and explore to what extent the aforementioned factors are still relevant in explaining the migration of Germans. My thesis aims to address this aspect.

1.5 GERMAN POPULATION IN BRITAIN

As can be inferred from the previous sections, UK has been and remains one of the main destination countries for German highly-skilled workers. In this section, I present a general overview of the historical migration between Germany and the UK. I then proceed to present more recent data on the German population in the UK, which provides us with the context and environment in which German professionals operate.

There is a long and rich history of migration from what is now Germany to contemporary UK. Historical records dating back to the 10th century show migration routes corresponding to the established trade route between Northern Germany and London. In the 17th and 18th centuries, emigration of Germans to Britain increased due to political and religious developments in Germany. Finally, German nobles and royals relocated to England as a result of marriage between German and British noble families, including the royal family (Duxbury-Neumann, 2017). As a result, various cities had large German communities, such as Liverpool, Manchester and Bradford, with the largest community of Germans in London. During Victorian times, half of all the German population in Britain lived in London. The German population varied in terms of socio-economic position and occupation, including teachers, governesses, university lectures, but also bakers, and barbers. During the 19th century, many German emigrants were employed in the sugar and banking industries (Manz et al., 2007). Due to the large size of the community and available economic resources, the German community established charities and churches. Schools were founded across the UK, many of which are still in operation today, providing services for both German descendants as well as newcomers. Until 1891, the German population in Britain was the second largest following the Irish population (Ellis and Panayi, 1994; Panayi, 1995). This population included both ethnic Germans as well as German Jews who relocated to flee from economic hardships and persecution in Germany. Indeed, while

contemporary migration of German professionals to the UK may be viewed as migration between affluent countries, until the 1960s, emigration from Germany to the UK was rather associated with overpopulation and the harsh economic situation across German lands.

Until the 20th century, the image of the German emigrant in Britain was a positive one, with some admiration for German science; however, this image changed dramatically in the wake of World War I. A more negative image was reinforced before and after World War II. During this time, the German population in Britain, as well as newcomers, were regarded as a political threat. During World War I, Germans were prohibited from living near military bases and naval ports, and some were placed in detention camps across the country. As a result of such practices and violence against German nationals, the size of the Germany community reduced from around 58,000 in 1914 to 22,000 in 1919, with many leaving the country on their own (Ellis and Panayi, 1994).

The size of the German population in the UK remained relatively stable until the beginning of the 1930s, when the UK received a large number of newcomers who were German Jewish refugees and left-wing activists. Between 1933 and 1941, between 50,000 and 80,000 Germans relocated to the UK (Panayi, 1995; Duxbury-Neumann, 2017). However, due to anti-German sentiments and overall concern over the loyalty of the German population in the UK, the government took several actions to manage the German community. Those resembled the actions taken during World War I. For example, across the UK, several detention camps were established, there were government-established protocols to check the loyalty of German newcomers, and some German newcomers were turned away or deported to other countries (Panayi, 1995).

Following the World Wars, emigration of Germans to Britain had some distinct characteristics that set them apart from earlier German migration. By 1951, around 60,000

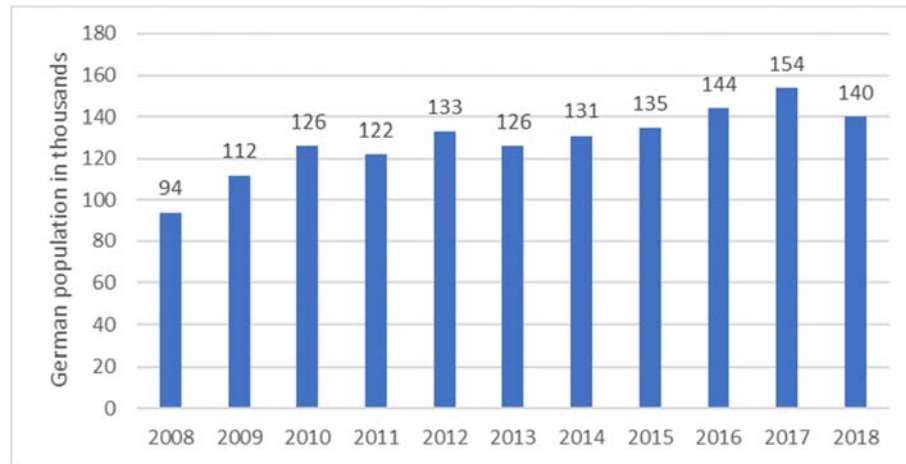
Germans had relocated to the UK, of whom more than half were female movers, with a large number of war brides and female workers. These female workers were recruited for the health system, domestic work, and the textile industry. Moreover, around 15,000 German war prisoners were allowed to stay, mainly to work in agriculture (Weber-Newth and Steinert, 2006). The decision to recruit German workers stemmed from a labour shortage in post-war Britain. However, the presence of German workers in post-war Britain may be surprising taking into account the devastating outcomes of the war. In their research, Steinert and Weber-Newth (2008) present official governmental records showing clear preferences for German workers despite some hostility from the local population. Accordingly, in a governmental statement of 1947, the British foreign office described German workers in following sentences: “They are of good stock and more easily assimilated to the British economy than other foreign immigrants” (Steinert and Weber-Newth, 2008, p.221). Similar governmental reports can be found through late 1940s and early 1950s. These reports narrate the commonality between the German and the British people, as well as good language skills of Germans and the ability to integrate more easily, which set them apart from other foreign European workers. Such historical records are valuable pieces of information for my project, as they may also help us to understand the current attitudes and public opinions in Britain towards the German population and newcomers.

Since the 1960s, the migration of Germans reduced drastically, and remained relatively low throughout the years. For example, between 2001 and 2003, around 10,000 German nationals entered the country. The numbers slowly increased and in the 2007-2009 period when around 24,000 Germans entered the country (ONS, 2016). According to the latest 2018 statistical data provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), 140,000 German nationals are living in the UK (ONS, 2017), with the numbers growing each year (see

Figure 2). However, the number for the German-born population is much higher, standing at 309,000. This makes them the sixth largest group of foreign-born residents (after Poland, India, Pakistan, Romania, and Ireland in decreasing order) and the fourth largest group among EU migrants. The large discrepancy between the number of German-born and German nationals is explained by historical developments. Partly due to a large presence of British troops in Germany, some of those German-born are British who were born in Germany to British parents. In other cases, they are German-born spouses of British military personnel who were stationed in Germany.

The following review presents the available statistics on German nationals residing in the UK and not the overall German-born population. Such an approach was chosen due to the fact when examining the available data of the ONS, it was apparent that the two populations differ considerably. For example, the German-born population is more dispersed geographically across the UK, with many living near military bases. Moreover, the majority of those who were German-born relocated to the UK before 2001. In contrast, the majority of German nationals relocated after 2001. Indeed, while the number of German nationals residing in the UK was estimated to be around 63,000 in 2001, it almost doubled by 2010, reaching 126,000. Examining the population of German citizens in the UK (see Figure 2) demonstrates positive and relatively stable migration peaking in 2017.

FIGURE 2: ESTIMATED NUMBER OF GERMAN NATIONALS RESIDENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (UK) FROM 2008 TO 2018 (IN 1,000S)



Source: Statista 2019

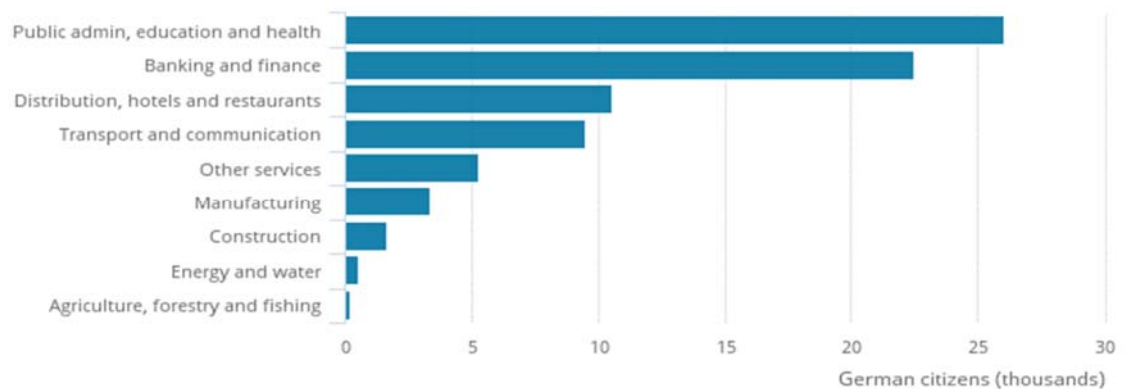
The population of German nationals in the UK is characterised by a higher share of women in the general migration flow and in the labour market (Salt, 2012) with an average age of 34 years old for both genders (ONS, 2016, 2017). As suggested by the ONS report, a large proportion of German women in the UK could potentially be partners of British servicemen who have returned from a posting in Germany. Indeed, examining ONS data from 2011 and 2015 supports this claim, showing that the two main reasons for relocation stated by German nationals are employment and accompanying a partner.

According to the Annual Population Survey (APS) 2016, 76% of German citizens in the UK (80,200) aged 16 to 64 years old were in employment between 2014 and 2016. At the same time, 3% of those aged 16 to 64 years (3,300) were unemployed and 21% (22,100) were estimated to be economically inactive (students, retired). Of those who were employed, 61% worked in “higher level professions”. Those included managers, directors and senior officials, professional occupations and associate professional, and technical occupations. This is one of the highest proportions which is second to only French citizens in the UK with 65% working in higher-level professions. This stands in contrast to the 44%

of highly-skilled individuals in the local workforce. The educational and occupation characteristics of the German and French populations in the UK has long been noticed. In the Sopemi 2009 report, the author highlighted that within the UK, French and German citizens are generally more skilled than other groups of migrants, both from EU and non-EU countries (Salt, 2009).

In regard to employment, German citizens most commonly occupy professional, associate professional, and technical occupations and work in public administration, education and health sectors, as well as banking and finance. According to the Office of National statistics around 12,600 German citizens were estimated to be working in education, of whom 7,000 were employed by the higher education sector, with over 6,000 were estimated to work across various health-related facilities (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: GERMAN CITIZENS AGED 16 TO 64 YEARS AND IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK, BY INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, 2014-2016



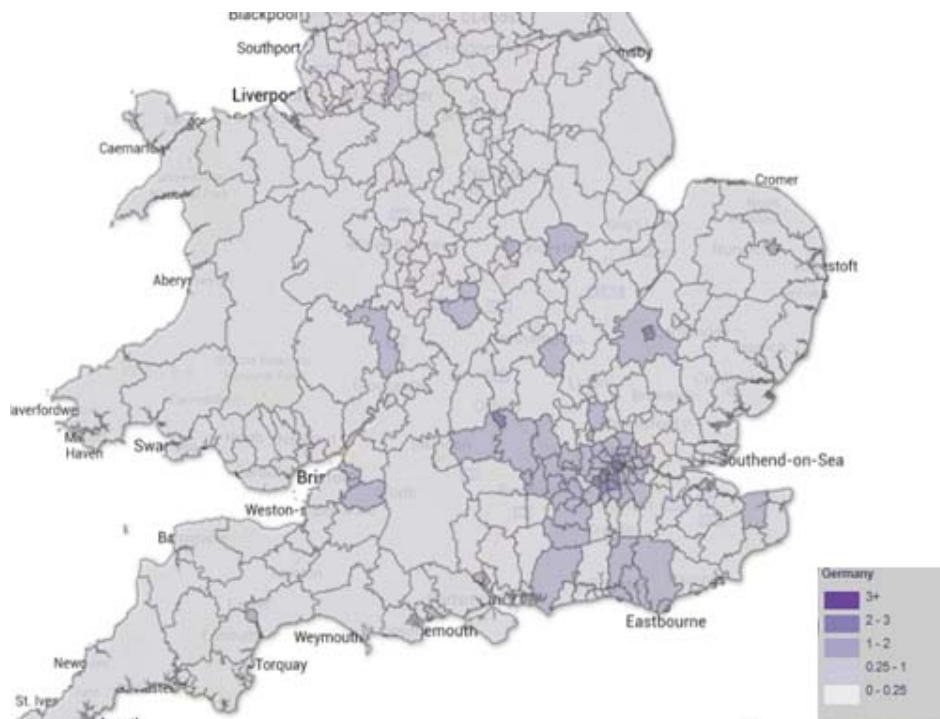
Source: ONS, Annual population Survey 2014-2016

According to the ONS estimates, 139,700 German citizens were living in the UK between 2014 and 2016. A large German population chooses to reside in the city of London, and other large cities in the South of England (ONS, 2016, 2017). Indeed, following the

latest estimate, 92% of those 139,700 were living in England, 5% in Scotland, with the remainder living in Wales and Northern Ireland. Similar data were also registered in the 2011 census. Examination of the interactive maps, following the census data of 2011, displays the clustering of German nationals in East England, with large shares around London, peaking in the city of London, Oxford and Cambridge.

This geographic clustering may be attributed to the presence of German companies, such as Deutsche Bank, Siemens, as well as several BMW plants. According to German Industry UK,⁵ while German banks and the consulate are located in London, the majority of other German companies are located outside London in South East England and in the Midlands. It can be suggested that some of these companies may transfer their employees from Germany to the UK on expat contracts, which may explain this clustering.

FIGURE 4: RESIDENCY GERMAN NATIONALS CENSUS 2011



Source: ONS 2017

⁵ German Industry UK is a private organisation established in 1975 that advocated for German business in the UK.

While the statistical data provide some information on the particularities of German citizens in the UK, highlighting their professional occupation status, identifying affiliated industries as well as portraying their location preferences for South East England, relatively little is known about their everyday lives. Indeed, the life of German nationals in the UK has remained largely under the radar for German and British scholars alike, despite the size of the German community. One of the rare examples is Meier's (2014b) comparative research on German financial managers in London and Singapore. However, the study focuses specifically on the experiences of German managers. Another example is presented by Wlasny (2017) who examined the nexus between identity and migration of the general German population in South East England. While her research touches on the everyday life of Germans, it examines the overall population regardless of occupational characteristics, length of stay and residency (permanent or temporary). In contrast, in my project, I focus explicitly on German professionals, who have spent on average seven years in Britain. By exploring the specific timeframe, I seek to contribute to our understanding of the motives and experiences of these more recent movers. Indeed, national statistics show that the number of German nationals in the UK has been increasing since 2008. As such, exploring their migratory experiences contributes to our understanding of the rationale and motives behind this trend.

1.6 DISSERTATION OUTLINE

Chapter 2: Literature review. This chapter provides the theoretical background and helps us to situate this study within the contemporary academic debate. As this project takes place within the environment of the EU, I first present the available empirical research on the role of the EU legal framework on the movement of people. Turning to this body of literature demonstrates how not only legal but also cultural and geographical characteristics of the EU shape the migration decisions and relocation experiences of EU citizens.

Moreover, I discuss the literature on boundaryless careers and do-it-yourself biography. Consulting with this literature allows me to examine the motives and experiences of professionals taking into account aspects related to modern employment and career structures, and allows me to go beyond the discussion on Eurostars and the EU. In addition to this body of scholarship, I also present and discuss available research on the overall experiences of mobile professionals in other non-EU contexts. Such data indicate that migratory experiences of mobile professionals may be challenging. For example, adapting to new languages and culture, and maintaining transnational family relations may be challenging for some mobile professions. Considering this literature may highlight the challenges that such migration and relocation may present for German professionals. It may also help us understand whether the specific experiences of Germans are similar to or differ from what is already observed in the literature. Finally, the literature review provides a discussion on the social aspects of migration, such as the role of partners, children and extended family. The review includes available empirical evidence on living arrangements of mobile households, the impact of relocation on the entire household, and individual experiences of male and female movers within these households.

Chapter 3: Methodology. This chapter presents the reasons behind choosing a qualitative methodology, interviewing techniques, as well as the rationale behind interviewing couples. In a practical manner, I explain why I use retrospective in-depth interviews and conduct separate interviews with German professionals (53 participants) and partners (11 participants). Among others, in this chapter I address recruitment strategies and discuss ethical considerations in interviewing migrants and their partners. I also discuss how my own positionality and in particular my migratory background and experience affected the research design and interviewing practices. In particular, I reflect on how being a highly-skilled migrant myself as well as a partner of a highly-skilled migrant and having

experience of living in Germany have impacted the dynamics and the analysis of the interviews. In this Chapter, I also present the descriptive statistics of the 64 participants in my study.

Chapter 4: German professionals in Britain: seemingly frictionless experience. In this chapter, I first present accounts of my participants that described how moving within the EU contributed to seemingly simple and easy migration. In particular, I consider to what extent the legal framework of freedom of movement, assumed cultural similarity between Germany and Britain, as well as geographic proximity facilitated and eased both the decision to move and the relocation itself. Second, my participants also discussed how particularities of the British labour market contribute to the seemingly easy and simple relocation. In this chapter, I interrogate the role of recruitment and hiring procedures in relocation between the two labour markets. Third, I examine how emotional resources of participants themselves impacted the transition. Lastly, I analysed how ethnicity and Germanness have impacted the experience, which was of particular interest taking into account the historical context of World War II. Overall, by addressing these topics, I contribute to our understanding of transition between the two labour markets and draw our attention to less examined aspects of highly-skilled migration between affluent countries, such as the role of one's nationality and emotional resources.

Chapter 5: Challenging the seemingly frictionless migration. In this chapter, I investigate the accounts going beyond the presented narrative, and explore more complex experiences. I show how challenges, some of which were anticipated while others were not, have impacted the relocation experiences. For example, despite the assumed similarity between British and German cultures, after the relocation, some participants became more aware of the nuances and differences. Moreover, for those who relocated with partners, migration became a household project, which included reorganising the life of

accompanying partners and children. Furthermore, temporary employment contracts of many highly-skilled participants have increased uncertainty over their duration of stay in Britain, affecting psychological well-being and family formation. Lastly, unexpected political events, such as Brexit, have impacted the experiences of German professionals. Through this discussion, I contribute to our understanding of the complexities of relocation that even these migrants are not immune to. By demonstrating the challenges associated with this otherwise frictionless mobility, I show the spectrum of experiences of mobile professionals.

Chapter 6: Balancing between individual desires and family life. Using rich data from leading migrants as well as their male and female partners, in this Chapter I explore the migratory experiences, relocation practices, and living arrangements in these households. By conducting interviews with 38 participants who were in a relationship at the time of the relocation, and 11 partners in German households, I was able to document both the voices of the leading migrants as well as partners who decided to accompany/follow or stay in Germany. For example, while many of my participants relocated together, either straight away or in two stages (with a partner following at a later stage), some decided to engage in long-distance relationships. In the chapter I present not only the reasons behind selecting these relocation practices and living arrangements, but also the advantages and difficulties associated with each strategy and how it affects everyday experiences. In so doing, I contribute new understandings to this under-researched topic by assessing the different strategies that couples adopt in the early stages of migration and how these are revisited and reworked through the migration project. Lastly, I address the migratory experience of accompanying or following female and male partners in my sample.

Chapter 7: Conclusion. This chapter brings together the main aspects and highlights topics that were mentioned across the three empirical chapters. Therein, I discuss the

complexity within the migration of highly-skilled individuals, highlighting the opportunities that such mobility presents as well as the challenges that even such privileged movers like German professionals experience. I organise the conclusion chapter around four research questions and show how each empirical chapter contributes to answering them. I conclude by making suggestions for future research.

1.7 CONCLUSION

While my interest in the migration of professionals between affluent countries was sparked by my personal migratory experiences, my curiosity in German professionals in Britain emerged from the fact that despite being one of the largest, most educated mobile EU groups as well as one of the larger and more educated groups in the UK, their migratory experiences and relocation practices have remained under the radar. The aim of this thesis is two-fold. First, it is to address the empirical gap on the group of mobile German nationals. Second, it is to examine wider theoretical questions on the migration of professionals. Indeed, as mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, by examining rich interviews with German professionals in Britain, I seek to contribute to the literature in four ways.

First, I address the question of what are the primary motivations and expectations of these German professionals in Britain and to what extent these expectations are realised in reality. Examining this question pushes the debate on the advantages and challenges of EU migration further and highlights the complexity of experiences of these relatively privileged and sought-after movers. Indeed, while from one side, mobile EU citizens enjoy mobility in which ethnicity, inequality, barriers and cultural disadvantages are seemingly removed, from the other side, they still face barriers and challenges associated with relocation (see

Smith and Favell, 2006; Favell, 2008; Nowicka, 2012; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a,b; Weiss, 2017; Ryan, 2018).

Second, such a case study allows an examination beyond the EU context, by referring to the debate on developments in the structure of industry, career and employment practices (Massey et al., 1993; Arthur, 1994; Bauer and Kunze, 2004; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996). Consulting with this body of literature, I aim to contribute to the discussion on how the modern structure of employment and career as well as national differences in employment practices/industry or in labour market structure impact the decision, the relocation practices, and overall migratory experiences.

Third, the thesis addresses the gap in our knowledge on German emigration, and the experience of German professionals in Britain. Taking into account the complex history of German nationals in Britain and the spectrum of attitudes from admiration and cultural closeness to open xenophobia and discrimination, one wonders to what extent the historical context has played a role in shaping the migratory experiences of those who relocated more recently. Despite being a unique case, it may contribute to the general discussion how cultural and national identity is experienced by EU migrants and how it impacts the outcome of relocations (Csedo, 2008; Nowicka, 2012; Ryan, 2018).

Finally, the migration of professionals does not occur in a social vacuum. Due to the financial resources of German professionals and the legal right to relocate as a household to the UK, such a study allows an examination of relocation of the households and which strategies and living arrangements are adopted. Such examination contributes to the literature on family migration as well as the role of partners (Mincer, 1978; Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Hardill, 2002; Melzer, 2013; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015), and helps in

identifying factors that impact the living arrangements and relocation practices of these couples.

In the following chapter, I present a detailed discussion of these theoretical frameworks, and identify several gaps that I aim to address in my study. Furthermore, I present an overview on the available empirical research which helps to situate this project within the wider empirical context.

Chapter 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As presented in the introduction chapter, the aim of this thesis is to interrogate the migration of professionals who relocate between affluent EU countries and to understand the spectrum of their migratory experiences, using a case study of German highly-skilled in Britain. In particular, I seek to examine what are their primary motivations, and what challenges and opportunities does such migration present. Furthermore, in this examination, I apply a holistic approach and seek to examine the migration of professionals in the wider social context. As such, I seek to examine how these movers navigate between migration desires and family life, and how partners, children and extended family impact migration decisions, relocation practices and overall migratory experiences. This literature review aims to contextualise these research questions by pointing to the relevant theoretical discussions and empirical data. As these research questions touch upon a wide variety of aspects, I consult with a large body of scholarship from different fields, such as migration studies, family studies, and human resources management. Using such a wide spectrum of literature allows for a holistic approach accounting for the social context as well as the structure of careers and labour markets. Moreover, although the main focus of the thesis is migration between affluent countries within the EU, various non-EU research findings are also mentioned. Incorporating non-EU research on highly-skilled migrants contributes to our general understanding of the frictions and challenges that mobile professionals around the world may face. Such data may serve as point of reference and highlight similarities and the uniqueness of experiences of German professionals in Britain.

2.2 HIGHLY-SKILLED MIGRATION: APPARENTLY FRICTIONLESS RELOCATION

In order to examine the mobility of German professionals to Britain, it is beneficial to understand the environment in which this phenomenon takes place, the EU, and in particular, to discuss the role of Freedom of Movement. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, Freedom of Movement aims at providing the fourth freedom, namely guarantying mobility within the EU for everyone and any purpose, such as tourism, studies, retirement and work (Favell, 2013; Recchi, 2015). Another objective of creating it was to circulate knowledge, skills and practices between EU state members (Kilkey, 2017), which was supported by various directives and laws. Those included but were not limited to a right to work, accreditation of foreign diploma, and recognition of work experience. The latter may be of particular importance for the mobility of the highly-skilled who might prioritise moving to a country where their education is recognised and where they can be employed according to their education (Iredale, 2001). Research findings across EU countries provide empirical support and identify abolition of border controls as one of the reasons for higher mobility of EU citizens within the region (Hadler, 2006; Heinz and Ward-Warmedinger, 2006; Recchi, 2008, 2015; Fouarge and Ester, 2008; Nerb et al., 2009; Belot and Ederveen, 2012). Furthermore, studies showcase diversification of migration flows within the EU, suggesting that such mobility is not only an elitist activity but also prominent among middle-class and working-class EU citizens (Scott, 2006; Conradson and Latham, 2007; Favel, 2008; Weiss 2006, 2017).

In addition to the legal characteristics of the EU, the migration of EU citizens is also promoted through institutional agreements as well as collaborations between private and governmental organisations between individual EU member states (Elliott and Urry, 2010). For instance, educational programmes such as the Erasmus programme, and researchers' mobility schemes contribute to the mobility of students and young academics within the

area (Kim, 2009; Favell and Recchi, 2009; Recchi, 2015; Carrozza et al., 2017). Using these mobility schemes, and institutional agreements between specific countries helps to promote migration on the macro level and simplify the relocation itself on the micro level (Bettin and Bontempi, 2008; Carrozza et al., 2017). For example, according to Blitz (2005), binational arrangements between Spain and the UK helped to facilitate recruitment of the Spanish doctors for the NHS (British National Health System).

Examining mobility within the EU, some scholars focus on the “human face” of such mobility (Smith and Favell, 2006), and interrogate the personal experiences and motives of movers themselves (Santacreu et al., 2009; Favell, 2009, 2013; Koikkalainen, 2009; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a,b; Recchi, 2015; Erel and Ryan, 2019). Through such examinations, however, it has become evident that reasons and migratory experiences vary between EU movers depending on the country of origin. In particular, although citizens of both Western and Eastern EU enjoy Freedom of Movement, those from Eastern regions seem to resemble the “more traditional” migratory path and have experiences which include downward mobility, challenges with transferability of education and skills, language barriers and discrimination (Favell and Nebe, 2009; Favell, 2013). In contrast, the existing body of scholarship on Western Europeans suggests that some of these movers seem to enjoy apparently frictionless and relatively easy migration and integration, e.g. they are well integrated, invisible, and employed according to their qualifications (Favell, 2008; 2009; Young et al., 2014; Koikkalainen, 2014). Favell (2011) coined the term Eurostars to describe these mobile Western Europeans who enjoy mobility in which ethnicity, inequality, barriers and cultural disadvantages are removed. In his later works on integration within the EU, Favell (2013) continues to describe these Eurostars as “the most privileged and unproblematic movers.” Turning to this body of literature in my research may help us to understand some of the migratory experiences of German professionals to

Britain, who are also representative of movers from Western countries. In her research on German nationals in the South East of England, Wlasny (2017) has also shown that her participants have enjoyed a privileged situation, in particular due to cultural and linguistic proximities, as well as education background, which has led to structural advantage in the UK. However, this is a rare report. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, the majority of research on Germans in the UK adopts a historical perspective (Ellis and Panayi, 1994; Panayi, 1995; Weber-Newth and Steinert, 2006; Steinert and Weber-Newth, 2008; Duxbury-Neumann, 2017). In this thesis, I aim to address this gap and contribute to our understanding of experiences of this under-researched group.

The concept of Eurostars implies transferability of education, qualifications and experiences, as well as accumulation of knowledge, which may lead to seemingly frictionless migration and transition between labour markets for these movers. Empirical research has ample examples of EU professionals working across various EU countries according to their qualifications and work experience, and describing some of their own experiences as easy and frictionless (Beaverstock, 2005; Favell, 2008, 2009; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a; Young et al., 2014; Koikkalainen et al., 2016; Carrozza et al., 2017). Within this body of literature, many projects have focused on a particular nationality group of EU highly-skilled (such as Finns, see Koikkalainen, 2009, 2014; French, see Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a,b,c; British in France, see Scott, 2006) or examined particular occupation groups (such as mobility of doctors within the EU, Padaiga et al., 2014; Ognyanova et al., 2014; Young et al., 2014; mobility of EU academics, Ackers, 2004; Bennon and Locke, 2010; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2017). Furthermore, some of those who decide to return also seem to benefit from the relocation and their accumulated knowledge. For example, research on German medical professionals who have returned to Germany after working in other EU countries has recorded that their

international experience was appreciated by local employers (Ognyanova et al., 2014). Similarly, research on returned Finnish professionals indicates that these nationals are more likely to earn higher wages and have lower unemployment rates than those who have not had an international experience (Koikkalainen et al., 2016). Such data support the transferability thesis and provide additional examples of seemingly frictionless transition and movement between labour markets.

Examining personal experiences of Eurostars demonstrates that some seek to create a cosmopolitan and denationalised lifestyle, and do not consider themselves as migrants (Favell, 2008, 2009, 2013). In her empirical research on Finns in London, Koikkalainen (2009) observed that some of her participants decide to relocate to large, cosmopolitan and international cities where they are able to create a cosmopolitan lifestyle, develop international networks, and work in international companies. The international nature of cities may not only provide employment opportunities but also simplify the integration of these citizens, ease socialisation and contribute to “feeling at home” (Koikkalainen, 2009). Similarly, in his book on Eurostars and Eurocities (2011), Favell documented how the cosmopolitan and international nature of European capitals such as London, Brussels, and Amsterdam have attracted the Eurostars. Among the characteristics that lure these movers are the overall attractiveness, cosmopolitan nature, as well as economic and cultural environments. In their research on Dutch emigration, Van Dalen and Henkens (2007) have also found that public domain characteristics, such as environmental quality and safety, can contribute to emigration intentions among Dutch nationals. According to Van Dalen and Henkens’ (2007) analysis, potential Dutch emigrants relocate to countries that provide their preferred public goods. In his work on integration of Eurostars, Favell (2013) suggests moving discussion beyond the concept of generic integration and putting more focus on documenting the particularities of integration into the specific place or city of residency.

Following this body of scholarship suggests that Western Europeans may not only be motivated by employment opportunities but also by diversity, quality of life, leisure and cultural amenities, as well as the presence of international companies and international character of the city (Koikkalainen, 2009; Favell, 2011; Beaverstock and Hall, 2012; Mulholland and Ryan, 2014; Meier, 2014, 2014b). These aspects resemble another line of research in migration field — lifestyle migration. In the context of the EU, this body of research examines migration from Nordic/Western affluent counties to Southern regions, which, according to research, stems from the lifestyle preferences of the movers themselves, who are usually retirees (Stone and Stubbs, 2007; Van Dalen and Henkens, 2007; Benson and O'Reilly, 2009; Benson, 2013). However, in her research on the British in the South of France, Benson (2010, 2013) showed that such a motive was not only prominent for retirees but also for mid-life and younger childless couples who decide to quit their well-paid jobs in the UK to escape what they called the “rat race”.

Consulting with this literature and available research on the role of city/region characteristics may provide an additional layer for my analysis. As mentioned in the introduction, many of my participants reside in London, Oxford, Cambridge, and the surrounding areas, known for their good quality of life, with well-developed public infrastructures, cultural amenities, closeness to rural areas, as well as cosmopolitan and international characteristics. Therefore, turning to this literature may help us understand some of the experiences and underlying factors for specific relocation practices of German professionals in my sample. I explore this factor in Chapter 4.

While consulting with the literature on Eurostars may contribute to our understanding of some aspects of German mobility, in order to examine this phenomenon in its full complexity, it is important to account for overall developments and changes in the structure of professional careers. Engaging with concepts like boundaryless careers (Arthur, 1994)

and “do it your self-biography” (Beck et al., 1992; Beck, 2002, 2014) may provide additional insights into career-related motives of highly-skilled Germans who have relocated to Britain, going beyond the EU discussion.

The concept of boundaryless careers refers to changes in contemporary career structures, and in the employee-employer dynamics. In essence, it describes an environment in which employees move across employers and countries (in contrast to staying with the same employer until retirement), use their external network to gather information about other employment options, break hierarchical reporting (change employers for career progression), and hold a perception of a boundaryless future (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Allvin, 2008; Thorn, 2009). According to the boundaryless career paradigm, previous generations of workers were more likely to prioritise employment which provided job security, high levels of unionisation, and allowed the pursuit of career growth, e.g. upward mobility within the company (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Edwards and Wajcman, 2005). Contemporary workers, however, are encouraged to initiate, manage and negotiate their own careers and work arrangements according to their own aspirations and abilities (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Grantham, 2000; Allvin, 2008; Vaiman and Haslberger, 2013). Similarly, Beck and colleagues, discuss a shift from a society of workers to an individualised society of employees (Beck et al., 1992). This focus on individual decision-making and personal agency in regard to various aspects of life, resembles another concept — “do it yourself-biography” (Beck et al., 1992; Beck, 2002, 2014; Elliott and Urry, 2010). Building on these bodies of literature, one can describe mobile professionals as representatives of this new type of modern employees, as they take an active role in managing their lives and careers, and follow their own career aspirations across borders. Referring to the concepts of boundaryless careers and do-it-yourself biography is beneficial for my study, as it helps us to examine the migration of

German professionals to Britain beyond the EU rhetoric, taking into account contemporary career structures and career aspirations. I will discuss career and employment motivations for relocation for the highly-skilled in the next section of this chapter.

For contemporary professionals, taking active steps in managing their careers according to their preferences and ambitions is simplified by the Internet. Empirical studies demonstrate the increasing usage of the Internet for job searches, especially among the highly-skilled (Batram, 2000; Feldman and Klaas, 2002; Stevenson, 2008; Kuhn and Mansour, 2014). First, it allows individuals to apply for a particular job without necessarily knowing anyone in the company, namely without relying on one's personal or professional networks. Second, it simplifies the access to information, the submission process, and requires low maintenance costs (Stevenson, 2008; Kuhn and Mansour, 2014). Lastly, it facilitates access to information from both regional and global perspectives, which may result in a wider pool of opportunities both within the country and internationally.

Indeed, professionals may choose from a variety of locations due to the ability of some mobile professionals to work independently of location-specific skills such as knowledge of local language (Portes et al., 2001; Weiss, 2006; Amit, 2007, Solimano, 2008; Thorn and Inkson, 2013). To illustrate the case, consider mobile professionals who use the English language as a working language regardless of the firm's location, such as those employed in the IT or HE sectors. Moreover, using native languages in the foreign country may provide mobile professionals with a competitive advantage. In her study of Finnish professionals in London, Koikkalainen (2009) found that some were able to utilise their knowledge of the Finnish language to their advantage and find employment in international firms which were keen on employing Finnish-speaking personnel.

At the same time, for other mobile professions, competence in the local language is essential to be able to perform work-related tasks (Covell et al., 2015). Scholars suggest that in this case highly-skilled as well as transnational elites who are more likely to know several languages are again more likely to have a larger pool of potential destination countries (Portes et al., 2001; Amit, 2007). Knowing the local language may not only be imperative for obtaining a job in the country of destination, but also help to establish contacts with the local population and allow individuals to integrate more easily (Cederberg, 2014; Gimenez and Morgan, 2017). For instance, high command of English language and competence in professional vocabulary has helped internationally trained nurses from various countries of origin to integrate into the Canadian labour market, and has seemed to simplify the relocation and integration process (Covell et al., 2015). The role of local language competence on migration was also discussed in the EU context. The data from Eurobarometer 2010 demonstrate that 28% of respondents who considered relocating to another EU country have stated that they would prefer to move to a country they knew the language of (Eurobarometer, 2011).

The observed variation in regard to the role of language on migration of the highly-skilled suggests that the mobility of professionals is a context-dependent action, and, when studying mobility, one needs to account for the intersectionality between linguistic resources, specific national context of destination country, and the occupational characteristics. Taking into account this body of research raises a question about the role of language in migration of the German highly-skilled in my sample, and how their language skills shaped their migration experience in Britain. Using rich qualitative data from 64 participants from a variety of occupations in Britain, I will address this question in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.3 MIGRATION OF PROFESSIONALS: MOTIVES AND ASPIRATIONS

In addition to questioning the migratory experiences of highly-skilled migrants between affluent countries, scholars also question what motivates these professionals to relocate. Bodies of literature identify various reasons for migration of the highly-skilled between EU countries. For example, some studies found that mobility of professionals within the EU are motivated by desire for an international experience (Koikkalainen, 2009, 2014; Ognyanova et al., 2014). Similarly, two studies on German emigrants overseas and across the EU (not the UK) have also found that international experience is one of the reasons for engaging in relocation and seeking employment abroad for some German professionals, (Stahl et al., 2002; Ognyanova et al., 2014). Other scholars suggest that migration of highly-skilled becomes a normalisation of professional life (Ackers, 2004; Scott, 2006). In her research on mobile EU academics, Ackers (2004) demonstrates how mobility becomes an integral part of academic career progression. In the non-EU context, available research shows that for some professionals seeking employment abroad is a way to travel the world (Stahl et al., 2002; Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Ho, 2011; Froese, 2012). For example, in his empirical study on mobile professionals from New Zealand, Thorn (2009) found that the opportunity to travel abroad was one of the main motives for seeking employment and relocating overseas. As such, for some migrants, mobility itself may become a goal to be pursued (Urry, 2008; Elliott and Urry, 2010).

Examining the reasons for migration of highly-skilled EU nationals between affluent countries may benefit from consulting with wider literature on human resource management. Turning to this body of literature may provide complementary explanations about what may motivate workers, especially the highly-skilled, to seek employment abroad. From a more traditional perspective, labour migration is associated with betterment of one's financial situation, such as higher wages and/or escape from unemployment.

Empirical evidence consistently shows the importance of financial factors in explaining what motivates people to engage in labour migration (Ransome, 1999; Gorz, 1999; Muirhead, 2004; Felstead et al., 2015). For example, workers may seek employment abroad to escape unemployment (Harris and Todaro, 1970; Ahn et al., 1998; Bardsley and Ederveen, 2003), to gain access to better employment opportunities and higher wages (Borjas et al., 1996; Bauer and Zimmermann, 1999; Geis et al., 2011), or to secure a higher household income (Adams, 2003; de Haas, 2008; Bennon and Locke, 2010; Tremblay et al., 2014; Vysotskaya, 2014; Padaiga et al., 2014). For example, Geis (2013) explained Romanian inflow to Spain by higher wage levels and better working conditions in Spain compared to Romania. Data on the migration of highly-skilled personnel, such as academics, shows that financial motivations play a major role in their decision to relocate (Bennon and Locke, 2010; Vysotskaja, 2014; Tremblay et al., 2014). For academics, these pecuniary motivations not only include a higher salary rate, but also the technical resources of the institution and available research funds (Bennon and Locke, 2010; Tremblay et al., 2014).

Furthermore, dissatisfaction with current employment may be the determining factor for the highly-skilled in searching for a new job in their country of origin or abroad. Despite improvements in regard to physical environment at the workplace, upgrade of skills, and higher pay, job satisfaction across occupations has declined (Guest, 2001; Edwards and Wajcman, 2005; Felstead et al., 2015). For example, research on German emigration intentions of physicians demonstrates that low job satisfaction was among the main reasons for willingness to migrate (Pantenburg et al., 2018). Various research projects have shown that workers across all occupations and skill levels have, on average, longer working hours and a higher workload, many are employed on temporary contracts, without a pension scheme and/or the opportunity for promotion (Bradley et al., 2000; Grint, 2005). Indeed,

although traditionally professionals were less likely to find themselves employed in temporary contracts, contemporary professionals might find themselves in a precarious situation which goes beyond class and occupation (Kim, 2009; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Carrozza et al., 2017). Even for academic jobs which were traditionally more regulated, scholars acknowledge increases in fixed-term positions which may result in insecurities and uncertainties about the future, and lead to migration. By using data from 64 interviews, I seek to examine this and interrogate the role of temporary contracts on the experiences and migratory decisions of the German highly-skilled in my sample.

However, describing work only in economic terms provides an incomplete and misleading picture of the meaning of work in people's lives. In their comprehensive volume "Myth at work" Bradley and colleagues criticize neglect of the role of non-pecuniary motivations for work: "[...] *academic and managerial accounts of people's motivations for working frequently employ an explanatory framework that proposes a simple formula: people work primarily for money[...] What is striking is that few managers and academics would consider that their own primary motivations for working are purely financial [...]*" (Bradley et al., 2000, p. 170). Non-pecuniary attributes include a wide variety of aspects, such as level of autonomy, sense of meaningfulness, and self-fulfilment (Dex, 1985; Ransome, 1999; Bradley et al., 2000; Anton et al., 2012; Felstead et. al., 2015). Empirical research demonstrates that workers, especially the highly-skilled, strive for a higher degree of autonomy, self-scheduling, and flexibility, as well as a better work-life balance (Hackman and Oldham, 1976; Clutterbuck and Hill, 1981; Guest, 2001; White et al., 2003; Appelbaum et al., 2008; Anton et al., 2012).

When discussing financial and non-financial aspects of employment some scholars, especially in the field of human resource management (industrial relations), follow Maslow's hierarchy of needs framework (Herzberg et al., 1959; McGregor, 1960; Taylor,

1972; Herzberg, 2003). According to this framework, the primary goal of a worker is to satisfy basic physiological needs (safety, security, and social affection). Later, however, they will try to fulfil higher-level needs (self-esteem and self-actualisation). Research shows that workers in skilled occupations not only respond to good pay and job security, but also express a desire for a challenging and intellectual job (Taylor, 1972; Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Clutterbuck and Hill, 1981; Warhurst et al., 2012; Felstead et al., 2015). Furthermore, these workers may see work as a source of personal growth and opportunity for self-validation and self-development. As a result, working itself can become a meaningful experience. In her research, Hochschild, (1997) found that some professionals and managers may actively decide to work overtime because they find their job not only financially rewarding but also more interesting and fulfilling than their social lives at home.

Although research is inconsistent in regard to the role played by gender in determining job attractiveness, scholars agree that work-related activities are important aspects of one's life irrespective of gender (Dex, 1985; Appelbaum et al., 2005). At the same time, some research indicated that female employees prioritise flexible working hours (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Warhurst et al., 2012) and are more likely to be interested in a workplace that puts anti-discriminatory policies in place (Thang et al., 2002; Tharenou, 2010; Nagy and Primecz, 2014; Rishardson et al., 2014). Other studies indicate that good pay and job security were the priorities for working men and women alike (Beynon and Blackburn, 1972). In their research on managers, Edwards and Wajcman (2005) show that both male and female managers display similar career aspirations, work attitudes, and commitments.

Consulting with this scholarship for the purpose of my project helps to identify employment- or career-related aspects that might have played role in migration decision of professionals across the EU. However, employment-related aspect may not be sole reason for migration: various research findings showcase the relevance of romantic relationships

for explaining some intra-EU migration (see Walsh, 2009; Santacreu et al., 2009; Verwiebe, 2014; van Mol et al., 2015; Ryan, 2015a; Emilsson and Adolfsson, 2019). For example, in their research on Latvian and Romanian migrants in Sweden, Emilsson and Adolfsson (2019) found that, for their participants, romantic relationships were the second most common reason for moving to Sweden. Despite some findings on the topic, research into romantic migration within the EU is still rare (van Mol et al., 2015). In my project I will explore to what extent was romantic motivation prominent among my participants.

As discussed in this section, the highly-skilled may have a variety of reasons for migration between EU countries. Probing and prompting these aspects during the interviews with German professionals in Britain may help us to uncover the reasons and aspirations for their relocations taking into account both employment-related and family reasons.

2.4 ALTHOUGH BORDERS DISAPPEAR, BARRIERS STILL EXIST

Despite Freedom of Movement, minimal border controls, and reduced barriers, empirical research across the EU provides evidence that legal, political, and bureaucratic aspects still hinder intra-EU mobility (Heinz and Ward-Warmedinger, 2006; Fouarge and Ester, 2008; Belot and Ederveen, 2012). Furthermore, research is consistent in showing that for some highly-skilled EU movers transferability of education within the EU is not an easy process (Nowicka, 2012, 2015; Weiss, 2006, 2017; Ryan, 2019). Data are consistent in showing that recognition of profession within the EU is a highly contextualised topic: professionals from Eastern regions are more likely to have their education undervalued than those from Western regions (Favell and Nebe, 2009; Young et al., 2014). Similar challenges were observed by Csedo (2008) in her study of Hungarian and Romanian professionals in London where she draws attention to the inability of some of these professionals to transfer

their education and skills to the British labour market, which leads to employment below their level of qualification.

However, the obstacles to transferability of education and work experience are not unique to Eastern European professionals. In her comparative study, Ryan (2019) has demonstrated that while Irish female migrants to London had fewer challenges than Polish female migrants in the city, they still had to overcome several obstacles associated with skill recognition. The study demonstrates that despite the fact that Irish women had some advantages, they were not immune to all challenges and had to overcome some obstacles in a similar manner to those from Poland. Similarly, Koikkalainen (2014) also showed that a few Finnish professionals in her sample have faced challenges with transferability. This was mainly associated with the fact that local employers did not recognise or were unfamiliar with the particularities of the Finnish education system or labour market. Such data challenge the notion of transferability of education and experience within the EU and demonstrate the variation and complexities of the experiences of all EU movers, including the so-called Eurostars. Consulting with this body of literature may provide a deeper understanding of the complexities and spectrum of experiences of German professionals in the British labour market.

To fully engage with this scholarship, it is beneficial to include relevant literature from a non-intra-EU context. Indeed, a large body of empirical research from various geopolitical contexts has highlighted the influence of one's nationality and country of origin on transferability of credentials (Weiss, 2006, 2017; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014; Leung, 2017). In his study on foreign scientists in the US, Harvey (2008) showed how different values are attached to scientists from different countries of origin. According to his research, while British scientists enjoy higher values attached to their credentials, Indian scientist are assigned lower values, which hinders accreditation and integration to the local

labour market and worsens economic conditions. Similarly, in her empirical research on Indian professionals in Germany, Weiss (2006) has found that even those professionals who have graduated from top universities in India feel underappreciated in the German labour market. Moreover, some research shows that highly-skilled migrants may also experience discrimination at the local labour market as well as at the specific workplace (Carlsoon and Rooth, 2007; Csedo, 2008; Wrench, 2008; Baptiste, 2015). The challenges associated with transferability of credentials may also sometimes lead to downward social mobility. In her research on Asian scientists in Germany, Leung (2017) found that some of the Asian scientists who have come from a middle or upper class in Asian society have found themselves in a new social position; unable to utilise their knowledge, they have faced a downward social mobility during their stay in Germany. In addition to worsening of their social position, their inability to utilise skills and experiences also led to financial hardships.

The aforementioned projects have touched upon the question of intersectionality between the transferability of credentials and work experience, employment perspectives, and the experiences of professionals in the foreign labour market. The majority of these projects, however, have examined mobile professionals who are visible minorities (such as Indians and Asians across Europe and North America, and Europeans in Asia and the Middle East). Less is known about the particularities of the experiences of the highly-skilled working in similar cultural contexts. In my research, I aim to explore this under-researched topic, examining how less visible ethnic groups, such as Germans in the UK, may experience the local labour market taking into account this intersectionality between migration and nationality, and complex historical relations between the two countries (see introduction chapter).

In addition to various barriers associated with the recognition of credentials, mobile professionals within the EU may also experience cultural and linguistic obstacles. Indeed, even in the absence of physical borders, differences in cultures, languages, and customs are still visible across border lines. Acknowledging these differences and their impact on the mobility and integration of professionals may contribute to our understanding of their overall experience. However, a large part of research on linguistic and cultural integration of mobile professionals describes professionals working in unfamiliar and different contexts, such as European professionals working across Asian countries, and Asian professionals working in Australia and Europe (Ho, 2006; Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Froese, 2012; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014; Leung, 2017). Building on this wide scholarship, my intra-EU research provides a detailed discussion on the mechanisms through which these cultural and linguistic components impact migration experience.

According to this body of literature, professionals living abroad may face prolonged adaptation periods as they familiarise themselves with the local language, culture, customs, and behaviours (Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Butcher, 2010; Ho, 2011; Froese, 2012; Nowicka, 2012). Those include, but are not limited to, differences in work culture, customs and codes of behaviours, as well as the local food. Indeed, Froese (2012) has found that European academics working in Korea find it challenging to adapt to the local Korean cuisine. Similarly, Singaporean professionals in London found it difficult to adapt to the local social etiquette of small talk and the after-work culture of drinking (Ho, 2011). Moreover, cultural and linguistic differences may also hinder building friendships and connecting with the local population (Ho, 2006). In her research on Australian professionals living in China, Butcher (2010) documented challenges in socialising with the local population due to cultural differences and unfamiliarity with the peculiarities of

the local culture. As a result, Australian professionals find themselves socialising with Australians or other expats rather than the local population.

Scholars acknowledge that adapting to a new culture may be a challenging experience itself (Ho, 2006, 2011; Butcher, 2010). Some professionals feel the pressure to adapt to new cultural norms and codes of behaviour in a timely manner, which contributes to an increase in stress levels (Butcher, 2010; Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008). For other professionals, adjusting to a new cultural environment may lead them to question their own self-worth (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Ho, 2006). Indeed, such data hint at the emotional undertones of such mobility. I will continue to discuss emotional resources and challenges later in this chapter.

Challenges associated with learning and adjusting to the new culture, language, and customs have also been recorded in the EU context (Belot and Ederveen, 2012; Nowicka, 2012; Mulholland and Ryan, 2014; Ryan, 2018). Similarly, Mulholland and Ryan's (2014) study on French highly-skilled in London also showed that cultural and linguistic differences impact everyday life practices. At the workplace, for example, participants acknowledged difficulty in adjusting to and aligning the two different approaches to problem-solving: the French approach which is more abstract and the British one which is more pragmatic. Such data highlight the importance of acknowledging cultural differences between EU nationals, such as those between French and British. Moreover, it highlights the need to document how such differences impact the integration and overall experiences. While such examples are rare in the context of highly-skilled migration between affluent EU countries, a question about the experiences of German professionals in Britain, taking into account English language competence and familiarity with the local culture, remains open. I will address this question in the empirical chapters.

Learning and adapting to new cultures might be an on-going process rather than a one-time problem. Due to Freedom of Movement, mobile professionals may choose to work in various EU countries and engage in repeat mobility, as well as decide to move back to their country of origin after obtaining some international experience. In her research on Polish workers abroad, Nowicka (2012) noticed that her participants were at first concerned about adjusting to the work culture in the destination country. After mastering the local behavioural codes, however, those who considered going back to Poland expressed their concern about whether they could fit back in with the working culture in Poland. Indeed, a few projects have shown that in the case where these professionals decide to return home after spending years working abroad, their acquired knowledge may be considered irrelevant and become a barrier to reintegration in their country of origin (Nowicka, 2012; Erel and Ryan, 2019). Such accounts stand in line with the argument that language and culture represent location-specific knowledge that is not easily transferred between different Member States (Weiss, 2006; Nowicka, 2012, 2013; Erel and Ryan, 2019). Such data do not contradict what was discussed in the beginning of the chapter. In contrast, the information draws our attention to the complexities of mobility and spectrum and variation in regard to experiences of the transferability of knowledge.

In addition, EU movers may also experience several practical challenges when pursuing relocation within the EU. While legal rights of EU citizens simplify the relocation between countries on the national level, challenges and obstacles in the practical side of migration are still evident. For example, research indicates that movers still experience barriers with pension rights, double taxation, as well as general administrative “red tape” associated with relocation (e.g. registration with the police and opening a local bank account) (Traser et al., 2005; Heinz and Ward-Warmedinger, 2006; Carrozza et al., 2017). In their research on mobility of EU academics, Giorgi and Raffini’s (2015) showed that the

insecurity over pension schemes and rights of EU citizens working in another EU country are major obstacles for intra-EU mobility. Others show how insecurities associated with raising children in new and unfamiliar school systems and problems with building trust in using local medical services challenge migration of EU movers (Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a,c; Carrozza et al., 2017). As argued by Elliott and Urry (2010) mobility requires a high degree of flexibility and adaptability, and multi-tasking. According to this literature, pursuing intra-EU migration may also be challenging for so-called Eurostars, who otherwise may be more likely to experience frictionless mobility. Taking into account this body of scholarship for the purpose of my project may provide a more comprehensive view on the everyday experiences of German professionals in Britain, and highlight the practical obstacles that professionals may need to overcome when relocating.

Finally, political changes in EU countries, such as Brexit in the UK, may present another kind of difficulty and unexpected challenge for EU movers who already live in the country as well as those who intend to relocate. Despite being a relatively new phenomenon, various research projects have examined its impact (Ryan, 2015; Kilkey, 2017; Lulle et al., 2017; D'Angelo and Kofman, 2018). Within these projects, scholars discussed the future of legal rights and of status of EU citizens, and in particular restriction of entry for EU workers and their family members, as well as conditions for their reemployment and social entitlements (Kilkey, 2017; D'Angelo and Kofman, 2018). Other lines of research have focused on examining the experience of EU migrants during and in the aftermath of the Brexit vote (Lulle et al., 2017; D'Angelo and Kofman, 2018; Owen, 2018; McCarthy, 2019). For example, in their research on young EU migrants in London, Lulle and colleagues (2017) have documented the negative reaction to Brexit and its associated uncertainties. Similarly, Owen's (2018) participants have described their shock over the outcome of the Vote, and spoke about their sense of rejection and otherness.

According to research, while for some EU citizens the outcome of the Vote was associated with shortening their stay in the UK, for others, it has led to a desire to secure their status in the UK, for example by applying for citizenship or permanent residency. Such a response was observed by Ryan (2015) among some Polish migrants as well as by McCarthy (2019) among some Spanish nationals living in UK. The two projects demonstrate that for some the desire to secure their status in the country was associated with the amount of time spent in the UK, overall family life, and established family relationships in Britain.

Following this review, one can identify the various challenges and obstacles that professionals in the EU and non-EU context may experience. Building on this literature helps us to examine the spectrum of experiences of German professionals in my sample. By interrogating the expected and unexpected challenges in their migration I seek to provide insight into the complexities and range of experiences of these movers.

2.5 IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN JUST MOVE EVERYWHERE

Although it is suggested that EU professionals are free to move anywhere within the EU, the reality seems to be more complicated. While examining migration flows, one may observe variation in the share of highly-skilled EU citizens across EU countries. According to the European Commission report 2018, Germany and the UK remain the main destination countries for EU movers, hosting almost 50% of all EU movers. The overall attractiveness of some EU countries may be attributed to wealth and technological advancement as well as presence and size of industry providing employment opportunities (Bauer and Kunze, 2004; Solimano, 2008), which may lead to localisation of employment. Available data show that such localisation of employment leads to professionals in certain industries having limited choice of destination countries (Reuschke, 2010; Mulholland and Ryan, 2014; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2017). As such, work migration can be seen

as a matching function between a job seeker from one country and a particular job in another country (Bardsley and Ederveen, 2003).

However, location choices are not only influenced by specific industry characteristics; other non-employment related factors may also play a role (Meier, 2014, 2014b). For example, in their research on mobile professionals in the EU, Doherty and colleagues (2011) have demonstrated the reputation of the firm/institution have also impacted location choices for mobile professionals. Similarly, in their research on intra-European academic mobility, Giorgi and Raffini (2015) have highlighted the importance of various infrastructures in the destination country, such as proximity to an airport. Accordingly, some academics choose potential employers in a particular destination country taking into account transportation means and future commute between the destination country and the country of origin (Ryan and Mulholand, 2014a; Meier, 2014; Young et al., 2014). Likewise, French professionals in London acknowledged geographic proximity to France and ability to maintain relationships with those in France as one of the reasons for choosing London as a destination place (Ryan and Mulholand, 2014a).

The location problem is even more profound for those professionals who relocate together with their partners and children. It is not surprising that location choices for professionals may be influenced by a partner's employment preferences as well as legal entry requirements. Although the impact of the legal aspect has been widely discussed in the literature, the impact of employment options for both partners in the destination country became more prominent in the research only recently (Raghuram, 2004; Reuschke, 2010; McFall and Murray-Close, 2016; Vohlídalová, 2017). According to this scholarship, dual-career couples may face a double location problem as they need to satisfy employment perspectives for both partners which may limit the pool of potential destination countries for the household. In her empirical research on dual career academics, Vohlídalová (2017)

illustrates this point. In her sample, she found that potential destination places were weighted by their ability to provide employment options for both partners in the mobile household.

Lastly, even though it was previously suggested that the Internet may help in solving the location problem due to its propensity to provide a wider range of information worldwide, potentially increasing the pool of destination countries, using this tool is not without its deficiencies. First of all, big companies and businesses are more likely to publish their information online and have online applications due to the financial investment that it requires (Batram, 2000). As a result, by utilizing this tool, mobile professionals are more likely to find employment in locations where these large national and international companies are based. Second, although the Internet is widely used by professionals as it allows access to diverse information, the amount of information online may require a longer screening process (Feldman and Klaas, 2002; Fountain, 2005). Studies suggest that a lack of relevant information, complex navigation, and vague descriptions reduce the effectiveness of the Internet as a tool in job searches (Feldman and Klaas, 2002; Fountain, 2005). Data show that while some professionals such as lower-level executives and junior managers access information through the Internet, high-ranking managers and executives prefer to access information about job openings from professional communities (Fountain, 2005).

Indeed, scholars have long noticed the positive impact of social networks on job seeking and career attainment for professionals (Bird, 1994; DeFillippi and Arthur, 1994; Arthur et al., 1995; Elliott and Urry, 2010; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014b; Keskiner and Crul, 2017). Having networks may not only provide information on labour market opportunities in the destination country, but also on social dimensions of migration such as social customs, language, and traditions in the country of destination (Massey et al., 1993;

de Jong, 2010; Ghosh, 2014). Despite the benefits, these networks are bound to specific locations where they are established or connected, and although they might expand and change, they are limited by its size. As a result, networks in specific locations may define destination countries and shape the trajectory of mobility for mobile professionals by providing information on and access to these particular destinations. Taking into account this body of literature, I explore this argument in the case of German professionals in Britain and discuss location-related considerations in greater detail in the empirical chapters.

2.6 MOBILE PROFESSIONALS — NOT A HOMOGENEOUS GROUP

As discussed in previous sections highly-skilled migrants even within the EU may have different motivations for relocation as well as migratory experience. Discrepancy in regard to the motivations of mobile professionals can also be observed in the context of a single occupational group. For example, several cross-national projects have examined motivations of mobile academics found contradictory results (Bennon and Locke, 2010; Froese, 2012; Tremblay et al., 2014; Vysotskaya, 2014). Specifically, while in her research on Russian academics in Germany Vysotskaya (2014) showed that financial motivations played a major role in their decision to relocate, in his research on academics in Korea, Froese (2012) mentioned international experience as a main motivator. The divergence in regard to the motivations of professionals may also be observed in the single context of one destination country. Namely, professionals may be motivated by a different set of reasons for choosing a particular destination country. In his research on Asian skilled-migrants in Canada, Ghosh (2014) identified different motivations for each ethnic group within the Asian highly-skilled community. According to his analysis, while Indians professionals in his sample were motivated by higher earnings and intellectual growth, Bangladeshi and Tamil professionals identified a lack of proper employment opportunities in their home

countries as the main motivator for relocation to Canada. Such discrepancies suggest that treating professionals as a homogenous group may be misleading and highlights the need to examine specific professional groups taking into account the wider context such as the particularities of the country of origin.

In a similar manner, available research in the EU also indicates heterogeneity in terms of reasons for mobility. In their comparative research on foreign medical professionals in the UK, Young and colleagues (2014) recorded differences between EU15 and EU12 professionals regarding their experiences and motivations for relocation. While doctors from EU12 considered higher financial incentives, those from EU15 considered linguistic preferences as well as geographic proximity to the country of origin. In her research on Spanish doctors in the UK, Blitz (2005) found that some doctors were motivated to improve their social status. According to the research, Spanish doctors considered British nationals to be more respectful of GPs, and valued the British structure of the health system which allows for doctor-patient relationships to be established. These conditions, according to Spanish doctors, contributed to a higher social value being accorded to doctors in the UK compared to doctors in Spain. Similarly, Lithuanian medical professionals (doctors, nurses and dentists) working in other EU countries explained that they were motivated not only by financial incentives and infrastructure, but also by overall preferences for management practices in hospitals abroad compared to those in Lithuania (Padaiga et al., 2014). Likewise, according to Ognyanova and colleagues (2014), German doctors used EU mobility to escape the hierarchical structure and leadership style in German hospitals.

An additional aspect that contributes to the heterogeneity of mobile professionals is gender. Research indicates that some women choose to relocate not only for better employment opportunities but also to overcome gender barriers in the local context (Thang et al., 2002; Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Tharenou, 2010; Nagy and Primecz, 2014;

Rishardson et al., 2014). In their empirical research on migrant women in Canada, Hiller and McCaig (2007) showed that for women migration may present an opportunity to escape family relationships and to focus on personal self-realisation. Moreover, they may experience upward mobility with more independence and labour market participation (Boyd and Grieco, 2003; Hiller and McCaig, 2007). Although mobility may present an opportunity for mobile female professionals, available data suggest that their migration and experiences are not always positive. Harris (2004) shows conflicts between the work and family life of female professionals who take on international assignments. Furthermore, bodies of literature from various contexts are consistent in showing that highly-skilled women are more likely to experience downward occupational mobility than men, resulting in them being underappreciated and engaging in part-time work or experiencing prolonged absence from paid employment after the relocation (Ho, 2006; Kofman, 2007, 2012; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015).

When examining migration of female professionals, scholars show variation in regard to migration paths: from moving as leading migrants or students to entering the destination country and local labour market as spouses through family reunification (Kofman, 1999, 2012; Bagchi, 2001; Mäkelä et al., 2011; Thang et al., 2002; Boyd and Grieco, 2003; Raghuram, 2004; Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Ackers, 1998, 2004; Tharenou, 2010; Nagy and Primecz, 2014; Rishardson et al., 2014). For example, Bagchi (2001) shows that on entering the US, male professionals are more likely to hold employment visas (sponsorship through an American employer), whereas female professionals are more likely to enter the country on family-related types of visa. Among the reasons for such a trend is industrial character of the destination country and occupational characteristics of movers themselves. This pattern can be ascribed to male-dominant industries that are more open to a migrant workforce, which makes it easier for male movers to be the leading migrants in the mobile

household (Raghuram, 2000, 2004). The impact of gender can be seen not only in the way that female professionals enter the destination country but also how they integrate into the local labour market and experience the relocation and settlement. I will address the role of gender in the migration of couples and families with children later in the chapter.

Even though studies have focused explicitly on female professionals working across various countries (Raghuram, 2000; Mäkelä et al., 2011; Thang et al., 2002; Ackers, 2004; Kofman, 2004; Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Tharenou, 2010; Ghosh, 2014; Nagy and Primecz, 2014; Rishardson et al., 2014), the topic of female highly-skilled migration is still under-researched (Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015; Ryan, 2019). Focusing on the experiences as well as everyday practices of German female professionals in Britain in my sample helps to address this gap in the literature. Indeed, through the analysis of 19 interviews with female professionals in my sample, the data may contribute to our understanding of particularities of female mobility within the EU.

2.7 IS IT ALWAYS AN INDIVIDUAL PROJECT? PARTNERS, CHILDREN, AND EXTENDED FAMILY

Regardless of whether German professionals decide to pursue relocation alone or together with other members of their households, the question about how such migration affects their relationships with other family members remains. In the following sections, I first discuss migration of couples, focusing on the two strategies: moving together and engaging in long-distance relationships (LDRs). I then present the literature on the role of children, followed by the body of literature on extended family. Although my research focuses on intra-EU mobility, this review is comprised of data from a variety of sources, which aim to provide the theoretical background to understand the dynamics of family migration.

2.7.1 Moving together with the partner

The existing body of scholarship shows that when couples relocate together, men are more likely to be leading migrants, while female partners are more likely to move abroad to accommodate their partner's career choices (Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Breugel, 1996; Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Smits et al., 2003; Ackers, 1998, 2004; Tharenou, 2010; Branden, 2014). Such a tendency was also observed among dual-earning couples, where migration of the entire household is more likely to follow male preferences than female (Melzer, 2013; Ackers, 1998, 2004; Vohlídalová, 2017). In his longitudinal analysis of the US data from 1960-2000, Tenn (2010) showed that despite some societal changes in gender norms and gender equality, increasing educational opportunities and the betterment of women's position in labour market, migrating households are still prioritising one career, oftentimes the husband's. Such behaviours are sometimes attributed to financial resources and the educational level of each partner as well as gender norms in the household (Wills and Yeoh, 2000; Eby, 2001; Smits et al., 2003; Ho, 2006; Cooke, 2008; Bernard, 2014). For example, households that identified as having traditional gender roles are more likely to give secondary importance to the wife's employment (Breugel, 1996; Tenn, 2010; Vohlídalová, 2017).

In some cases, however, couples may prioritise one member's career over the other for a variety of reasons, irrespective of gender (Cooke, 2008; Vohlídalová, 2014, 2017; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015). In her research on doctors, Raghuram (2004) demonstrated that when both spouses are doctors, a particular specialisation which provides easier entrance to the foreign labour market has determined who the leading migrant was. In her research, Green (1997) showed that in some dual-career household, the leading migrant is most likely to be the one who has a higher salary or whose career has fewer location choices. Other couples may prioritise male/female career based on the stage of the career

(Cooke, 2008; Vohlídalová, 2017). In her empirical research on Hungarian academics, Vohlídalová (2017) showed that female researchers who take on a prestigious fellowship abroad are more likely to be followed by their husbands than those with less prestigious fellowships. Despite some reports, our knowledge on female leading migrants who are accompanied by their male partners is still limited (Smits et al., 2003; Tharenou, 2010; Clerge et al., 2017). Indeed, some research suggests that while partnered men are often accompanied by their partners, some mobile females are more likely to move alone while the partner stays in the country of origin (Tharenou, 2010; Vohlídalová, 2014). I presented a more detailed discussion on long-distance relationships later in this section.

Within this body of literature, scholars identify various reasons for significant other to accompany their partners abroad. Relocating together may present an opportunity to renegotiate family relations and dynamics or change the household's lifestyle (Zlotkin, 1995; Breugel, 1996; Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Ryan, 2008; Ryan et al., 2009). For example, Toader and Dahinden (2018) showed that relocating to countries with child-friendly policies may make it easier for women to combine work and family life. As such, migration may present opportunities for the entire household as well as for the female career. In other households, migration may present an opportunity to change family lifestyles. For instance, evidence shows that after the relocation — and as a result of the increased earnings of the male partner — some accompanying women may choose to become full-time mothers, something which they could not afford in the home country (Ryan et al., 2009; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014c). Similarly, Bernard (2014) found this to be true for a few accompanying males who after the relocation chose to take this opportunity to become stay-at-home dads. Other accompanying partners are motivated to follow abroad as they attempt to avoid lowering the quality of their relationships and to reduce the likelihood of their mobile partners having an extramarital relationship while

abroad (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014c). The issue was both important for accompanying male and female partners (Cole, 2012; Bernard, 2014; Clerge et al., 2017). In their study, Clerge and colleagues (2017) found that both male and female decide to accompanying as a way to solidify a partnership.

In their empirical research on mobile households across the US, Clerge and colleagues (2017) showed that male accompanying partners have considered the female career to be equally important as their own, and in some cases, a main priority of the household. Similarly, Bernard's (2014) and Cole's (2012) qualitative studies found that male accompanying partners in their sample exhibited an egalitarian philosophy and sense of equality in regard to gender roles and gender attributes. However, more research needs to be done on this relatively small and invisible category. Due to the characteristics of my sample, I will contribute to this discussion and add to our understanding of motives and experiences of couples in general and the experiences of female leading migrants and accompanying male partners in particular.

Empirical research across the EU and non-EU countries demonstrated that after the relocation many accompanying female partners experience loss of earnings and face a complex reemployment, regardless of their education and occupation (Raghuram, 2000; Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Eby, 2001; Ackers, 2004; Ho, 2006; Schaer et al., 2017). In her qualitative research on mobility of dual-career academics within the EU, Ackers (2004) shows that women are more likely to exit their career and experience downward mobility or career stagnation. In addition to employment and financial downward trends, accompanying partners may also face non-financial challenges such as social isolation and anxiety (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014c). For example, as women are also more likely to play an active role in recreating family life (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ho, 2006; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014c), combining family duties

and employment may lead to additional conflicts and challenges. In addition, female partners are more likely to provide care and maintain relationships with the extended family remaining in the country of origin (Baldassar, 2007; Ryan et al., 2009; Baldassar et al., 2014). This topic is addressed in more detail later in this section.

In other cases, the decision to relocate for the benefit of the husband's employment may coincide with pregnancy or childbearing (Breugel, 1996; Kofman, 2004). Adopting such a strategy may increase migration probability, especially among dual-earning couples, as childbearing may signify the exit of the woman from the labour market, reducing the conflict between partners. The impact of children on living arrangements is best illustrated by couples who were in long-distance relationships at the time of the pregnancy. In their empirical research on early career academics in the UK and Switzerland, Schaer and colleagues (2017) observed that all couples who were in long-distance relationships decided to reunite and live in the same location after having a child.

The discussion on accompanying partners, particularly female partners, has flourished in recent years (Ackers, 2004; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014c; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015) demonstrating the active role that they take in migration decisions, relocation, and integration processes. Partly, these recent works have emerged as a point of criticism on the concept of "trailing spouse" which was commonly used by scholars. "Trailing spouse" referred to the almost involuntary mobility of accompanying partners, whose involvement in migration and relocation was assumed to be minimal. Empirical research, however, has ample examples demonstrating a more complex role of accompanying women in migration, challenging this assumption that women "blindly" follow their husbands (Ho, 2006; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015). The active role of the accompanying partners can also be seen in how they manage the relocation and organisation of their life in the new country. Willis and Yeoh (2000) take

this argument further and suggest that the success of relocation depends on successful management of both the workplace and the home sphere. As such, women contribute to the success of their mobile partners by organising the family life. Kanter (1977) called it a “two-person single career”, and provided an example of diplomats and highly-ranked managers who build their careers on the unpaid engagement of their wives, such as, e.g., hosting high-rank events. According to Kanter, wives supported their husbands’ careers and helped them to maintain their motivations and commitment to their jobs. In a more recent study, Ryan and Mulholand (2014c) also showed that such a strategy was adopted by a few of the spouses of French professionals.

A few studies have examined the experiences of both female and male accompanying partners (Bernard, 2014; Foebker and Imani, 2017; Foebker, 2019). While the numbers of male accompanying partners are usually smaller than those of accompanying female partners in these samples, they add to our understanding and show similarities between male and female experiences. For example, in a similar manner to some female accompanying partners, some accompanying male partners experience challenges in finding employment after the relocation, some enter less attractive jobs, or enter continuing education (Foebker, 2019). In their research on accompanying male and female partners of highly-skilled workers in Germany and the UK, Foebker and Imani (2017) showed that incompetence in the local language was the main barrier for partners to finding employment after relocation. Moreover, while leading migrants themselves are not expected to speak the language, their accompanying partners feel the need to master the language not only for employment reasons but also for everyday use. Finally, Cole (2012) presents a rare example of research focused solely on accompanying male partners. In this study of 45 male partners who accompanied their wives/partners to the Asia Pacific area, Cole showed that while all partners spoke about the advantages of such relocation for the entire household, they also

found entering the local labour market challenging. These challenges were associated with their legal status, as well as the absence of appropriate professional networks. Turning to this literature for my project is of particular advantage. In my sample, several male participants have accompanied their partners to the UK. Therefore, examining their experiences may provide new insight into this relatively under-researched topic.

Including the body of research on migration decision of couples, is especially relevant to my study due to the fact that 32 participants have relocated together with partners. Furthermore, by analysing decisions and experience of leading migrants, as well as their accompanying male and female partners, I seek to gain better understanding of how partners affect household decisions and relocation practices in the context of intra-EU migration between affluent countries.

2.7.2 Long-distance relationships

Long-distance relationships represent an emerging topic in the field of migration of professionals, which has only recently become of interest for the scientific community (Murray-Close, 2019). At first, the concept of long-distance relationships (LDRs) was used to describe domestic workers whose work required geographic mobility (such as military, mariners, and offshore oil workers). This has been extrapolated to include professionals who relocate to work in a different country. Scholars, however, disagree on the terminology. Duncan and colleagues (2014) suggest that “living apart together” is a more neutral term than “long-distance relationship,” whereas Beauchemin and colleagues (2015) suggest using “LATAB” - “living together apart across borders” to highlight the international nature of living apart. In this project, I follow Reuschke (2010), Murray-Close (2019) and Giorgi and Raffini (2015), and use the term long-distance relationships (LDRs) which is more widespread in the literature on mobile professionals. According to the

definition, LDRs refer to couples who don't share the same dwelling and reside in different geographic locations; however, they maintain some functionality as a non-mobile couple.

While LDRs are not a new phenomenon, they are observed more frequently than before (Levin, 2004). In the context of migration, the vast research on LDRs is conducted in North American and a non-EU context, exploring African and Asian migrants who relocate alone while leaving partners and other family members in the country of origin. A few scholars have observed and examined this phenomenon in the EU context (Reuschke, 2010; Murray-Close, 2019). Turning to this literature in my project, is particularly advantageous as some of the participants in my sample were in LDRs at the time of the relocation.

Scholars document a variety of reasons for couples to engage in LDRs, differentiating between a voluntary decision which is based on personal preferences and an involuntary decision which is mainly associated with labour market constraints (Levin, 2004; Reuschke, 2010; Murray-Close, 2019). The voluntary nature of LDRs is sometimes attributed to the desire of both partners to ensure personal independence. Some scholars suggest that this type of relationship is becoming a new form of family type across Western societies (Levin, 2004; Elliott and Urry, 2010). In such cases, couples decide to skip shared dwelling and prefer to live separately. Moreover, the decision to live in different locations may be bound to previous commitments, such as taking care of children from a previous marriage, or a desire to provide for aging parents who reside in a specific location (Levin, 2004; Reuschke, 2010).

The growing number of LDRs may also be attributed to changes in social norms and gender equality. While traditionally it would be expected for a woman to follow her husband abroad, supporting his career choices even if it required quitting her job, today this is a less of a social expectation for women (Levin, 2004). Existing body of literature

attributes this change to the increasing participation of females in the labour market that might lead couples to prefer LDR arrangements in contrast to relocation of the entire household. (Levin, 2004; Reuschke, 2010; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2017; Murray-Close, 2019).

At the same time, involuntary terms that may lead to LDRs often refer to legal and labour market challenges as well as financial constraints. For example, those who have relocated from non-EU countries are constrained by visa and immigration factors which may lead to LDRs (Kofman, 2004, Beauchemin et al., 2015). Even in the case of reduced border control, however, LDRs may be associated with lack of employment for each partner in a household. In practice, while one partner relocates following his/her employment, the other partner stays due to his/her employment commitments in the country of origin or inability to find employment in the destination country. Leaving a partner behind may be an easier option as it may minimise disturbance for the entire household as well as to this partner's employment. In her empirical research, Reuschke (2010) showed that three of five respondents identified employment-related aspects as the main reason for engaging in LDRs. Furthermore, existing bodies of literature attribute the growing number of dual-earning or dual-career couples engaging in LDRs to the temporary nature of employment contracts (Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2017; Murray-Close, 2019). By choosing to engage in LDRs, these couples seek to reconcile career demands and family life.

Indeed, available data on LDRs suggest that this strategy is more common among young and highly-educated individuals, especially those in dual-earner households (Reuschke, 2010; Neustaedter and Grenberg, 2012; Murray-Close, 2019). The prevalence of LDRs among young couples, especially in the beginning of their careers, is not surprising taking into account the intersectionality between career aspirations, location restrictions, and family life (Reuschke, 2010; McFall and Murray-Close, 2016). Using census data for

the USA non-cohabitating population, Murray-Close (2019) showed that LDRs are more common for those with advanced degrees than for those holding bachelor degrees. Data from Germany also support this claim, demonstrating that, in the German context, those who engage in LDRs are highly-skilled and young, and the majority reside in cities and metropolitan areas (Reuschke, 2010). Moreover, such an arrangement is more likely to occur in couples transitioning from graduate school to professional employment (Reuschke, 2010; McFall and Murray-Close, 2016). In their empirical research on PhD couples, McFall and Murray-Close (2016) have observed several strategies that these couples may choose to adopt, including LDRs. According to their research, LDR arrangements were more common and a preferred strategy compared with the option to break up or reject the job due to a location conflict. Due to the fact that many of the participants in my sample are early career professionals, and many have had some experience of or are currently in LDRs, examining their migration decisions and relocation strategies will contribute to this literature by examining these experiences across the spectrum from voluntary to involuntary decisions.

Exploring the available data on LDRs highlights the variation in terms of how LDRs are experienced by different ethnic, socio-economic, and gender groups. According to the data, women are more likely to engage in LDRs and relocate alone, while men are more likely to be accompanied by their spouses. In her research, Vohlídalová (2014) reported that some Czech female researchers going on fellowships abroad did not consider the option to be followed by their partners. Similarly, female academics from Southern countries also found themselves relocating alone while their husbands and children stayed in the country of origin (Giorgi and Raffini, 2015). Among the reasons for some women to relocate alone and leave their family members in the country of origin is the temporary nature of their employment contracts (Reuschke, 2010). At the same time, in their empirical research on

early career academics in the UK and Switzerland, Schaer and colleagues (2017) have observed that after having a child all couples who were in LDRs decided to reunite and live in the same location. The observed variation in regard to relocation practices and living arrangements demonstrates that treating all highly-skilled as a homogeneous group, even with the EU, is misleading. The question therefore remains as to prevalence of LDRs in my sample and what underlying factors have impacted my participants to choose this relocation practice. I will address this question in chapter 6.

In addition to the questions about who engage in LDRs and why, scholars have been interested in understanding the dynamic of the relationships of partners in these couples, their everyday routines, and issues of intimacy. Indeed, migration is not only about moving knowledge but also the physical movement of the body itself (Levin, 2004). Developments in communication and travel may all facilitate the maintenance of LDRs, as they allow relationships to be negotiated and provide a way to emerge in a partner's life in another location (Levin, 2004; Elliott and Urry, 2010). In their empirical research on intimacy, Neustaedter and Grenberg (2012) documented that those in LDRs use video chat to maintain close relationships. According to their data, individuals use video chat not only to see each other but also as a tool for day-to-day shared activities, such as to dine together, listen to music together, and even fall asleep together.

However, the existing body of literature also shows that, even with technology, partners do not always idealise LDRs (Neustaedter and Grenberg, 2012; Kiriakos, 2014; Carrozza et al., 2017). Although it might be suggested that such technology erases the impact of geographic distance, in her empirical research on Finnish professionals living in Silicon Valley, Kiriakos (2014) showed how using Skype for maintaining transnational connections highlighted the geographic distance. Maintaining LDRs is even more challenging for those who reside in different time zones, and need to account for the time

difference (Neustaedter and Grenberg, 2012; Carrozza et al., 2017). Finally, despite technological advancements in communication, organising face-to-face meetings requires finding and making time, as well as paying for travel, which complicates and increases the cost of maintaining LDRs (Elliott and Urry, 2010).

Exploring the dynamic of relationships in these couples highlights the variation with regard to the experiences of LDRs and suggests that such experiences are not homogeneous. For example, women with low levels of education may find themselves in LDRs for a longer period, as they lack the bargaining power to push for family reunification to actually realise the reunification (Kofman, 2004; Beauchemin et al., 2015). Similarly, those who live in less egalitarian societies have a higher chance of finding themselves in LDRs in contrast to those from more egalitarian societies who might have more bargaining power to push for reunification (Beauchemin et al., 2015). In contrast, some evidence exists suggesting that LDRs may improve the situation of women. In their research, Giorgi and Raffini (2015) demonstrated that through LDRs, some women become main breadwinners while the man stays to care for the children. Similarly, Beauchemin and colleagues (2015) showed that in some cases of LDRs, the mobility of husbands brings empowerment to those wives left behind who take on new roles due to their husband's absence.

The observed variation with regard to motivations and experiences highlights the complexity and contextualised nature of LDRs. Exploring this topic in the context of a single case study, such as German professionals who engage in LDRs, may contribute to our understanding of their reasons for engaging in LDRs. Indeed, whilst it is legal for these mobile professionals to be accompanied by partners, several participants in my sample have chosen to engage in LDRs. Turning to this body of research may not only help us to understand the reasons but also the migratory experiences of partners in these households. Furthermore, as such examination in the context of the EU is still rare, by probing and

prompting these topics in my investigation, I seek to contribute to our understanding of the underlying patterns and gain better insight into the experiences and practices of LDR couples in the context of migration of highly-skilled intra-EU migration.

2.7.3 Children

When addressing the topic of intra-EU mobility of professionals, taking into account children deepens our understanding of the motivations, practices, and experiences of these movers. The following review represents a collection of the available empirical research in the EU as well as outside the EU. Discussing studies from outside the EU may highlight the experiences and challenges that may apply to EU migrants who migrate with children.

The decision about whether to move together with the child may depend not only on personal preferences, but also be affected by circumstances, such as employment options, duration of stay, child's schooling, and immigration regulations. For non-EU movers, immigration policies may determine the ability to travel with a child, as some countries may not allow relatives such as children and spouses to join a migrant (Kofman and Raghuram, 2015). In other cases, regardless of the legal aspects, leaving children in the country of origin may be the only available option. When migration is short-term and financially motivated, relocating with children may be counterproductive due to additional financial costs that such migration may involve (Kofman, 2004). However, leaving children behind is not always easy. A qualitative study on Polish migrants in the UK indicated that although some partners and children stayed in Poland at first, due to the children's desire to be reunited with their fathers, these households reunited in the UK (Ryan and Sales, 2013).

Other parents may decide to leave the child in the country of origin to minimise the disturbance to schooling (Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014c; Ryan, 2019).

However, the impact of a child's schooling on mobility patterns is not unidirectional. In their research on intra-US mobility of professionals, Bailey and colleagues (2004) have shown that depending on the school preferences, couples may decide to prolong their stay in a specific location or decide to relocate to a different place. Indeed, for highly-skilled Indians and Bangladeshis in Canada, moving with children was a way to provide their children with access to educational opportunities in North America (Ghosh, 2014). Data indicated, however, that not all professionals utilise the local educational system. For example, in their study of French professionals in London, Ryan and Mulholand (2014c) notice that some families preferred to enrol their children in the French schools in London rather than British schools. This situation is unique as the French community has been able to establish French primary and secondary schools across the UK, while many other minority communities do not have such an option. The observed variation with regard to the role of the child's schooling in the mobility of professionals suggests that it is a context-dependent action which may be affected by the specificity of the educational system in the country of origin and the destination country.

Furthermore, families may decide to relocate with children to recreate their family structure in the destination country, expose their children to a new culture or language, as well as gain access to educational institutions in the country of destination (Ho, 2006, 2011; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014a,b; Ghosh, 2014). Although some professionals moving abroad may choose to relocate together with their children for the benefit of the child, these good intentions may lead to undesirable outcomes. Empirical research within the UK demonstrates how misconceptions and the unfamiliarity of Polish migrants with the local education system have led to disturbances in a child's education and put additional stress not only on the child but on the entire mobile household (Ryan and Sales, 2013; Kloc-Nowak, 2015).

Relocating with a child may also impact the dynamic of the relationship between partners, as it may lead to a redirection of childcare activities in those households. Indeed, research is consistent in showing that migration of the household impacts fathers and mothers in a gendered way (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Ho, 2006; Schaer et al., 2017; Vohlídalová, 2017). Literature has ample examples of female partners who, after migration, find themselves involved more actively in domestic and caregiving tasks (Raghuram, 2004; Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Ho, 2006; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014c). For example, research on Chinese professionals in Singapore showed that while the husbands' roles after migration did not change, wives found themselves taking a more active role in childcare and housekeeping (Willis and Yeoh, 2000). Research suggests that among the most common reasons for such a tendency is the loss of childcare support (Zlotkin, 1995; Baldassar, 2007; Ryan et al., 2009). Even in cases where domestic help was employed, wives still engage in caregiving as they tend to distrust the local domestic help. Similarly, enrolling the child in school or pre-school facilities does not always solve caregiving challenges nor the gendered way in which these challenges are addressed. In her research on Polish migrants in the UK and Italy, Kloc-Nowak (2015) demonstrated that some mobile couples had to organise their employment in line with the school routine. This led some parents, usually the mothers, to engage in part-time employment in order to be able to provide the necessary care after school. In their research on the mobility of academic couples, Schaer and colleagues (2017) suggest that universities need to provide more help in terms of childcare for mobile male and female academics to ease their integration and address the gender impact that relocating with a child may have on mobile families.

In their pioneering work on migrant fatherhood, Kilkey and colleagues (2014) draw our attention to parallels between migrant motherhood and fatherhood. Accordingly, some migrant Polish fathers in the UK were motivated to provide for a better life for their

children, regardless of whether they live in the same country or not, while economising on their own living expenses. However, such projects are rare, and the research on migrant fathers, their motivations and experiences, is still in its infancy. In my project, I will address this gap by examining the experiences and practices of migrant fathers in my sample, as well as interrogating how being a father impacted the migration decisions and relocation practices of the participants.

As can be inferred from the review of this literature, migrating with children may present additional challenges for the mobile household in both practical terms (managing the local school system) as well as emotional terms (adjusting to the new caregiving responsibilities and changing family dynamics). As I mentioned in the introduction chapter, a large number of professionals in my sample have relocated together with children. Therefore, turning to this literature to explore the mobility of German professionals helps to interrogate the experiences of German professionals who have children, to examine the extent to which having children impacted relocation strategies, and reveal the expected and unexpected challenges and obstacles that participants with children encountered pre- and post-migration to Britain.

2.7.4 Extended family

Whether individuals decide to relocate alone or not, migration takes place within a complex system of the entire extended family, including parents, grandparents, siblings, and so on. When addressing the role of extended family, scholars document that family members may encourage or discourage migration of a particular member (Boyd, 1989; Boyd and Grieco, 2003; de Haas, 2008; Baldassar, 2008; Ryan, 2008; Toader and Dahinden, 2018). In their research on foreign medical personnel in the UK, Young and colleagues (2014) documented that having friends and family members in the UK contributed to the desire to migrate and simplified the relocation of some medical

professionals to the UK. The positive impact of family members was mainly associated with the emotional and practical support which they could provide to the newcomers. Similarly, in their empirical research on mobile academics, Toader and Dahinden (2018) documented that emotional support provided by extended family was essential in facilitating international mobility of both male and female academics.

Data are consistent in showing that even after the relocation, extended family continues to play a role in migrants' lives (Zlotnik, 1995; Lowell, 2008; Alesina et al., 2015). Contemporary developments in transportation and communication between countries facilitate a greater degree of communication and quality of relationships across distances between various members of the extended family (Nauck and Settles, 2001; Baldassar, 2007). At the same time, the desire to have the intergenerational link may lead families to return to their country of origin to be closer to their extended family (Bailey et al., 2004; Baldassar, 2007; Rayn et al., 2009).

The relationship between mobile individuals and their extended families remaining in the country of origin is complex. Various bodies of research indicate that migrants may feel strong feelings of obligation to provide care for ageing family members left in the country of origin (Bailey et al., 2004; Baldassar, 2007; Ryan, 2008a; Ryan et al., 2009; Baldassar et al., 2014). Fulfilling these obligations, however, is not always easy, as it can impose an additional emotional and financial burden. Furthermore, scholars suggest that the issue of transnational care is also gender-biased, with the majority of care provided by female partners in migrant households (Kofman, 2004; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Baldassar et al., 2014). In her research on transnational care of Afghan migrants in Australia, Baldassar (2008) showed that some migrants find themselves in a financial dilemma, balancing between providing economic support for the family left in Afghanistan and ensuring their

own financial well-being in Australia. In addition to the financial aspects, actual household/caring responsibilities may also present a double-care situation. This may occur when migrants need to take care of their own children in the destination country as well as to provide care for elderly family members in the country of origin (Ryan and Sales, 2013; Baldassar et al., 2014). In contrast to the issue of financial support provided by migrants to their extended families (remittance), which is oftentimes associated with migration between developed and developing countries, the topic of caregiving is found across various types of migrants (refugees, skilled migrants) from all kinds of destination countries (Baldassar, 2008; Baldassar et al., 2014). However, the dynamics of the relationships between movers and extended family vary depending on the country of origin. Such variation in the form of the relationship can be attributed to the differences in the amount and the quality of the state- or community-provided care for the elderly or lonely. In a practical manner, this impact whether the migrant may rely on the state or the community to provide care for the elderly while they are away. Furthermore, it depends on the cultural differences, such as expectations with regard to providing care for the elderly. For example, in their research, Baldassar and colleagues (2014) showed that although for some Italian migrants being a good child meant not only to have conversations over the phone but to also frequently visit Italy, for Dutch migrants, keeping up constant communication with family members in the Netherlands was considered enough.

Taking into account this observed variation, one wonders about the extent to which the experiences of German professionals differ from or are similar to what is known in the literature in regard to transnational care. Moreover, taking into account geographic proximity and financial capacity to afford travel, interrogating the specific case of German professionals will contribute to the aforementioned literature by identifying some of the patterns of relationships in the context of migration between affluent EU countries.

2.8 EMOTIONAL UNDERTONES AND BURDENS

The review of the relevant literature brings to light the importance of emotions in migration and integration. Indeed, finding employment, adjusting to the new country and culture, as well as reorganising family life may all lead to emotional hardship (Ryan, 2008a; Butcher, 2010; Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Elliott and Urry, 2010). In their book on the *Mobility Turn*, Elliott and Urry (2010) tackle some of the myths of mobility, suggesting that a mobile lifestyle entails highly levels of anxiety, stress, and emotional hardship. Consulting with this body of literature for the purpose of my research may provide us with a more comprehensive view of the experiences of German professionals.

Although scholars have long acknowledged the emotional costs of relocation, only recently has the emotional component been examined as a standalone topic (Skrbiš, 2008; Svašek, 2010; Albrecht, 2016). According to this scholarship, migration may be experienced as an emotionally destabilising endeavour for both mobile men and women (Svašek, and Skrbiš, 2007; Toader and Dahinden, 2018). Various scholarly studies have recorded complex emotions associated with mobility, such as feelings of guilt for leaving family behind, feelings of growing attachment to the country of origin or detachment from the destination country, as well as anxiety about integration, just to name a few (Svašek, and Skrbiš, 2007; Baldassar, 2007; Skrbiš 2008; Ryan, 2008a; Svašek, 2010; Baldassar et al., 2014; Albrecht, 2016). In her research on British migrants in Dubai, Walsh (2009) urges scholars to include emotion in migration research and shows how migrants renegotiate emotions with others.

Scholars, however, disagree on terminology when talking about emotions in the migration field. While Hochschild (1979) uses the term “emotional labour”, others such as Reay (2004) and Zembylas (2007) adopt the term emotional capital, widely used in the

field of education. Irrespective of the definition, scholars suggest that those emotions are feelings and beliefs as well as acquired tools that are developed by practices and discourses and build up throughout a person's life. In the context of mobility, Svašek and Skrbiš (2007) describe emotional resources as “carry along” memories and emotions that migrants take with them when moving between countries. These resources may also help migrants to cope with new situations and risks involved in migration. Furthermore, these emotions include autonomy and self-confidence in dealing with relocation (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002).

In addition to emotional resources, migrants may also experience emotional challenges. According to scholars, emotional challenges are also highly contextualised (Reay, 2004; Zembylas, 2007; Svašek and Skrbiš, 2007). Being far from family and friends, or partners (for those in LDRs) may impose higher psychological costs and lead to emotional disconnect for some (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Lowell, 2008; Neustaedter and Grenberg, 2012; Carrozza et al., 2017). For others, dealing with partners, children, and extended family, pre- and post-migration, may represent an additional emotional challenge. Moreover, providing transnational care may add an additional emotional burden for both migrants and their family members (Baldassar, 2007; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Baldassar et al., 2014). Similarly, emotional hardship may occur as a result of loss of social ties and change of family dynamics post-migration (Conradson and McKay, 2007; Svašek, and Skrbiš, 2007; Svašek, 2010, 2012; Skrbiš, 2008; Albrecht, 2016).

In order to reduce emotional burden, some migrants may decide to relocate together with other members of the family, or to places where personal connections are already established, both of which are assumed to provide emotional assistance and support (Massey et al., 1993; de Haas, 2008). Such a strategy was observed across various migrant groups, suggesting that emotional hardship may present a challenge and impact location choice for various types of migrants. For example, Lowell (2008) found that highly-skilled

migrants tend to move within a geographic proximity in order to minimise the psychological and emotional costs associated with the disturbance of relationships with family and friends.

While these empirical examples indicate that emotions may impact migrants and affect their relocation (Svašek, 2010; Albrecht, 2016), they draw little to no attention to the emotional resources of migrants that help them in addressing and managing these complex emotions. Moreover, we know very little about the role played by emotional resources in migration decisions, relocation and adjustment processes for highly-skilled migrants. My project aims to address these gaps. By using data from over 60 interviews, I seek to explore and to gain better understanding of the role of emotional resources and challenges and examine how they have affected the migration and relocation experiences of German professionals in Britain, and thus to contribute to the growing literature on emotional resources and challenges.

2.9 CONCLUSION

This literature review has aimed to provide the theoretical background and empirical context to contextualise this study on migratory decisions and experiences of German professionals in Britain. Following the review, it can be suggested that experience of mobile German professionals in Britain may resemble those of co-called Eurostars (Favell, 2011) who may enjoy seemingly frictionless and unproblematic migration. The first empirical chapter, Chapter 4, examines this aspect as well as applies the concept of boundaryless careers. Consequently, the chapter investigates which factors may have contributed to this seemingly frictionless migration and how these factors have shaped the overall migratory experiences.

At the same time, as discussed earlier, available empirical research points to the challenges of mobile professionals, such as of the recognition of professional qualifications and adjusting to cultural differences (Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Butcher, 2010; Froese, 2012; Nowicka, 2012; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014). In the second empirical chapter, Chapter 5, I seek to contribute to our understanding of the complexities of mobility and document challenges associated with this mobility, such as adjusting to cultural and linguistic nuances, dealing with the temporary nature of contemporary contracts, and other anticipated and unexpected challenges that may arise as a result of relocation.

Finally, as I have shown in this review, migration occurs within the wider social context of families. Mobile couples may choose several strategies to deal with migration, such as relocating together, following male or female leading migrants, or engaging in LDRs (Reuschke, 2010; Neustaedter and Grenberg, 2012; Murray-Close, 2019). The final empirical chapter, Chapter 6, is devoted to the migratory experience, the migration decisions, and living arrangements of my coupled participants. Due to a large number of households, I seek to document the rationale behind selecting each relocation strategy and examine the experiences of female leading migrants and accompanying male partners.

Before continuing to the empirical chapters, I first want to discuss the particularities of my sample. While I have mentioned some of the characteristics of the sample in the introduction, in the next chapter, the methodological chapter, I present a detailed discussion of the research design, interviewing and analysis techniques, as well as present descriptive statistics of the sample.

Chapter 3. USING IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS TO STUDY THE MIGRATION DECISION-MAKING AND EXPERIENCES OF GERMAN PROFESSIONALS IN BRITAIN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As presented in the introduction chapter, in my project, I seek to explore the migration decisions and experiences of the highly-skilled who migrate between affluent countries. Through examination of 64 participants, made up of 53 German professionals working and living in Britain and 11 partners, I seek to deepen our understanding of particularities of this type of migration and the relocation practices involved in it. I address the following research questions: What are the primary motivations for highly skilled migrants, who are already in employment, to move from one affluent European country to another? What do they expect from such a move? How are these expectations realised in reality? Are there any national differences in employment practices or in labour market structure that impact the decision to move or the relocation practices? How is the cultural and national identity experienced and how does it impact the outcome of these relocations? In the case of partnered migrants, what impact do partners have on migration?

In this methodological chapter, I present a detailed discussion on my research approach and methodology, and introduce the descriptive statistics of the sample. First, I deliberate on the terms used in the project, and provide definitions of who is considered German, who is considered professional, as well as who is considered a partner for the purpose of this study. I also discuss the rationale behind selecting in-depth interviews as well as ethical and practical considerations associated with this technique. It should be noted that the project was granted ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Sociology (DREC) at the University of Oxford.

Second, I discuss strategies that had to be adopted to enter the field and recruit this relatively invisible group of migrants. I present a variety of approaches that I used to reach the target population, and present details of the sample. In the following section, I also describe the analytical approach to analysing the data and present several coding examples from the code book to illustrate how theoretical concepts were transformed into practical guidelines for coding. I conclude this section with a discussion on my own positionality and reflect on how my background impacted the development of the project. Finally, this chapter concludes with descriptive statistics. By presenting these characteristics of the sample as well as making the analytical approach and coding scheme more transparent, I seek to provide a background and contribute to our understanding of the data presented later in the three empirical chapters.

3.2 IDENTIFYING THE TARGET GROUP

At the beginning of the project, the target group of Germans was identified as those who were both ethnic Germans and holders of German passports. However, as most of the interviewees were recruited through general advertisements addressed to German professionals, a sense of belonging — feeling oneself to be German — became a determining factor rather than ethnicity and citizenship. The majority of the 53 core participants in my sample were ethnic Germans who held German citizenship, with only seven participants having a migratory background. Of those, a few were ethnic Germans who were born outside Germany, a few held dual nationality, and a few had a mixed ethnic background. For example, Patrick was born and grew up in Germany but to Balkan parents, and Claus, half German and half American, was born in Germany. Regardless of their citizenship and ethnicity, all the participants self-identified as Germans and spent most of their childhoods and youth in Germany.

With regard to qualifications, I identified a potential participant as someone who had obtained a university degree in Germany or elsewhere, but not in the UK. The latter is considered to represent a separate category of migration which differs in terms of both migration motives and experiences, and therefore this group was excluded for this project. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, I use the terms “highly-skilled migrant” or “mobile professional” to refer to participants’ educational and occupational backgrounds. While I am aware that these terms overlap in regard to some characteristics, I am also aware that there are distinctions between “highly-skilled” and “professional” in regard to the existence of a professional regulatory body and accountability to this body. In this project, the two terms refer to individuals who hold occupations that require a degree or postgraduate qualification, and are employed according to their education and experience in the UK. I excluded from the sample those without completed formal tertiary education or those who were not employed according to their qualification. This has resulted in a homogeneous sample of highly-skilled migrants with professional occupations.

An additional criterion for selecting an interviewee was his/her employment in Germany and in Britain. In practice, participants had to be employed prior to migration and to have found employment in Britain according to their qualification. By imposing this criterion, I wanted to investigate the migration of professionals going beyond the issue of necessity. Indeed, as mentioned in the literature review, highly-skilled employees may decide in favour of migration for a variety of reasons such as career development, new opportunities, challenges, and also lifestyle and travel (Ho, 2011; Froese, 2012; Koikkalainen, 2009, 2014; Ognyanova et al., 2014). In addition to examining the reasons for mobility, introducing this aspect allows to explore the issue of transferability of the qualification and work experience in the context of EU mobility (Arthur et al., 1995; Thorn, 2009; Thorn and Inkson, 2013; Favell, 2008, 2009; Froese, 2012).

For the purpose of this study, I have also included German professionals who relocated as part of intra-company transfers. Such a decision rested on the assumption that they undergo similar proactive steps in their migration decision and relocation as many other highly-skilled migrants. This assumption was confirmed during interviews. Indeed, even though companies may have simplified the logistics of relocation, those who decide to engage in intra-company transfers still faced a formal and competitive application process, had the option to choose from a variety of destination countries, and had to readjust to the new country and new office after the relocation. As a result, their migration decisions as well as relocation practices resembled other mobile highly-skilled employees who were not intra-company transferees.

Furthermore, I have put much effort into recruiting both male and female participants. Within my sample of 64 participants, I was able to recruit 26 female participants of whom 19 were female professionals (core participants), and seven were female partners of core male professionals. The size of the female group allowed me to capture both female professionals who were single at the time of their migration, those who were married and were accompanied by their male partners, and those who relocated following a partner. In doing so, I was seeking to contribute to our knowledge of the particularities of mobility among female professionals in general and female leading migrants in particular, topics which, according to scholars, are largely under-researched (Thang et al. 2002; Smits et al., 2003; Tharenou, 2010; Vohlídalová, 2014; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015; Clerge et al., 2017; Ryan 2018).

Another criterion for selecting a participant was his/her length of stay in Britain. Foremost, I intentionally focused on those German professionals who had moved to Britain more recently, between a few months to seven years prior to the interview. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, the timeframe was chosen to provide a better description of the

contemporary migration trend, which has increased since 2008. Furthermore, this timeframe captures migrants who relocated after the 2008 financial crisis, and provides an opportunity to explore the role of this financial aspect. Choosing this timeframe was also beneficial from the methodological point of view. In contrast to those who have been living in Britain for over a decade, those who relocated more recently may have a better recollection of their decision-making and their opinions might not have changed significantly since the relocation. On average, participants had spent five years in the UK, with only three having spent a longer period of time.

When approaching potential participants, I have tried to ensure variation in regard to marital status and living arrangements at the time of migration. I have interviewed single and married participants, and those with children. Furthermore, I was keen to interview couples who relocated together and those who decided in favour of LDRs. My effort to ensure variation in regard to marital status and living arrangements of both male and female participants stemmed from my desire to explore how partners impact the mobility of German professionals. As such, I was seeking to address the complexity of the role of partners and children on migration decisions, relocation practices as well as living arrangements that was highlighted in the literature review (see Wills and Yeoh, 2000; Eby, 2001; Melzer, 2013; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Clerge et al., 2017; Toader and Dahinden, 2018; Murray-Close, 2019).

As mentioned earlier, when possible I have also interviewed partners of core participants. For the purpose of this project, a partner was identified as someone who was partnered to my core participant and was present during the migration decision, regardless of gender, marital status, living arrangements, and irrespective of education level or nationality. As a result, in addition to 53 interviews with core participants, I was able to

conduct an additional 11 interviews with partners, of whom seven were female and four were male.

For the purpose of the project, I did not follow the principles of critical sampling. Moreover, as a qualitative study, this research makes no claims to be representative. The group of highly-skilled Germans was not chosen as representative of a typical German migrant (although the majority of German migrants in Britain are from this category), but rather due to their unique characteristics. For example, investigating the migration of these professionals provides insight into the variety of reasons for migration and provides an opportunity to explore the complexity of everyday life of these sought-after professionals in the new country. Moreover, such a case study allows an exploration of the specific context of mobility of Western, highly-educated Europeans who relocate between affluent countries and of the underlying patterns and complexities of migration of the entire household.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

In terms of methodology, in order to understand the particularities of the migration decisions and experiences of these professionals, I chose to conduct in-depth semi-structured interviews. Using in-depth semi-structured interviews with actual migrants allows collecting a wide range of information on the event of migration itself, the circumstances surrounding it, as well as the particularities of life after the relocation (Favell, 2008; 2011; Isolofoldes, 2011; Vysotskaya 2014; Baldassar et al., 2014; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014a,c). Choosing this approach also enables migrants themselves to express their thoughts and explain their behaviour in their own words, i.e., it gives a voice to migrants. Furthermore, in addition to providing detailed information about the particularities of the move itself, in-depth interviews give an opportunity to document

thoughts, underlying expectations, and emotions evoked in the process of relocation as well as after it. Such examination explores migration not as an isolated event, but as a project in the context of the life course. This context, as identified by various scholars, is crucial in understanding migration decisions and behaviour (Demuth, 2000; Weiss, 2006; Kloc-Nowak, 2015). Such data are not merely descriptive, they can also reveal social processes as well as influencing factors (see Rosenthal, 1993; Breckner, 2000; Maxwell, 2004; Isolofoldes, 2011). Finally, the setting of in-depth interviews allows direct contact to be established with interviewees which may contribute to the development of trustful relationships and create a safe place for an honest conversation about migration and relocation experiences. Such an atmosphere is crucial when investigating very private and sensitive topics (Lee, 1993; Dickson-Swift et al., 2008; Isolofoldes, 2011). Migration is one such topic, as it may rest upon challenging and unpleasant circumstances (sudden unemployment, deterioration of family relations) or involve painful experiences after the relocation (emotional stress, discrimination).

After choosing interviewing as a methodological tool to collect data, the question of the language of the interview had to be addressed as well. I decided in favour of conducting the interviews in the English language. While I am aware that non-native language proficiency may affect how people talk about their experiences and emotions, in the case of my participants this was less of a concern. All of the German professionals and their partners in my sample had a good command of English and spent the majority of the day using this language at work and in some cases also at home (for example when living with non-German partners). This resulted in a large work- and non-work-related vocabulary which allowed them to express their thoughts and emotions. While most of each interview itself was conducted in English, sometimes participants used German words or expressions

that could not be easily translated into English. I provide a detailed discussion on the effect of my competence in the German language later in this chapter.

At a starting point for the project, I conducted ten interviews to probe my assumptions and to develop and revise my research questions. Having this pilot stage proved to be very effective. For example, while at first I was interested solely in migration decisions, following the pilot stage, I observed the variation in regard to relocation practices and hence decided to include specific questions about them. After analysing these ten pilot interviews, I also noticed the active role of partners in migration decisions and relocation practices. For this reason, when possible, I decided to include partners in the project. Such a decision followed an assumption that conducting interviews with partners as well would provide a broader picture and help to recreate the social context of the migration decision and integration practices more accurately (Valentine, 1999; Taylor and de Vocht, 2011; Kloc-Nowak, 2015). Furthermore, the decision to include partners in the sample was also supported by the academic literature. Indeed, as described in the literature chapter, partners may not only impact the mobility patterns of the entire household, but also affect migration and integration (Ryan and Mulholand, 2014c; Branden, 2014; Vohlídalová, 2017). Therefore, interviewing both partners of the mobile household could perhaps shed light on the role of each partner and, as such, contribute to the theoretical discussion on the migration of the entire household.

However, conducting interviews with both partners raised methodological and ethical questions regarding the interviewing technique, i.e., whether both partners should be interviewed separately or jointly (Kaźmierska, 2005; Kloc-Nowak, 2015). The two strategies for interviewing couples provide different sets of data and, therefore, using one or the other should be informed by the research question (Valentine, 1999; Taylor and de Vocht, 2011). For example, joint interviews are rich in data about a couple's life, common

understanding, and tensions between partners. As such, conducting joint interviews may help us uncover the negotiation process as well as overall dynamic between partners (Valentine 1999; Bjørnholt and Farstad, 2014; Kloc-Nowak, 2015). At the same time, research indicates that the presence of a partner during an interview is associated with greater agreeability in a variety of behavioural and expressed attitudinal preferences (Aquilino, 1993; Zipp and Toth, 2002; Bateman and Murno, 2009; Bjørnholt and Farstad, 2014). Such behaviour may be ascribed to the fact that when interviewed jointly, household members do not only express their own views, but rather see themselves as representatives of the entire household and, therefore, may report what they perceive to be mutual views (Taylor and de Vocht, 2011).

In contrast, interviewing partners separately allows each member of the household to express their own opinions and explain their actions and thoughts (Hertz, 1995; Valentine, 1999). Moreover, separate meetings may allow each household member to address topics they would not disclose otherwise. For example, they may feel more open to expressing emotions or opinions about the issues they perceive their partner may have different feelings about (Aquilino, 1993; Dosman and Adamowicz, 2002; Taylor and de Vocht, 2011). As described by Zipp and Toth (2002), during a joint interview, men are less likely to be affected by their wife's presence in contrast to women who seem to show higher agreeability when husbands are present during the interview. This effect is even more pronounced for women who are financially dependent or hold traditional gender norms.

In the context of my project, choosing to conduct separate interviews with members of the household was of particular benefit. As many female partners relocated to Britain to accommodate their husbands/partners who also oftentimes were the main breadwinners, conducting joint interviews may have reflected the leading mover's preferences and attitudes towards migration. In contrast, separate interviews could reveal the partner's

feelings about the household's migration decision, and their perception of their own role in it, which may otherwise not have been vocalised. Indeed, as discussed in the literature review chapter, the migration decisions and experiences of each of the household members may differ (Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Melzer, 2013; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014a; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015). Therefore, conducting separate interviews may contribute to the discussion on the particularities of the migratory experiences of different family members.

However, conducting separate interviews is not without ethical and methodological challenges. For example, one needs to consider that interviewees may report conflicting data or events, highlighting the divergence between their stories (Perlesz and Lindsay, 2003; Sands and Roer-Strier, 2006). Presented with different narratives, a researcher is advised to proceed with caution not to reveal what was described previously by the other member of the household, and yet continue to explore different aspects and nuances of the migratory experience. Although it is impossible to confront the other partner (due to confidentiality) about the conflicting evidence (Hertz, 1995; Thurmaon, 2001), these unique accounts may provide an additional perspective on the decision. I continue the discussion of the ethical challenges of interviewing couples later in this chapter.

3.4 THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF THE INTERVIEW

Once I identified the target group and decided on the methodology, I needed to approach and recruit participants. Recruitment of interviewees proved to be both challenging and time-consuming. At first, I used my local networks to contact potential participants and disseminate information about the project. To reach out to a wider public, I posted general adverts about the project on various social online forums, such as university mailing lists, German societies' Internet sites, Facebook web pages (e.g., Germans living in London), or by direct contact through LinkedIn and InterNations.

Recruiting participants by direct email proved to be more efficient than using a snowball technique. The availability of personal information on nationality, educational background, and work experience in the public domain helped in identifying and approaching potential interviewees via email. For example, relatively easy access to this information through various university and college web pages resulted in easier access to the academic population. For online recruitment of non-academic participants, I contacted potential participants through other global social forums, such as LinkedIn and InterNations. These forums also have individual pages with all the necessary information about citizenship, employment, and education.

In addition to approaching target groups online, I also attended events organised by Germans in the city of London, student communities in Cambridge and Oxford, as well as various social events for expats, such as those organised by InterNations. InterNations events are designed specifically to bring professionals from a variety of backgrounds together and provide a physical space for them to socialise. During these events, I met and recruited several participants for my study who were formally interviewed at a later time. In other cases, I used these events to discuss my research topic with highly-skilled migrants from a variety of nationalities; these conversations frequently evolved into meaningful discussions about their migration experiences. Such accounts became a valid source of ideas and provided a background for my research. Having these accounts highlighted unique characteristics and common traits between the German highly-skilled in my sample and their counterparts of other origins.

After establishing some contact in the community, participants were encouraged to use their social networks to refer others who might be interested in participating in the study. While snowball sampling is often used to find and recruit “hidden populations” by other scholars (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981; Miller, 2003; Browne, 2005), in my project only a

few individuals were recruited using this technique. Overall, recruitment of interviewees was a slow process and the response rate was one to six when approached directly, while broad and impersonal advertisements were less successful and failed to attract a significant response. At the same time, by utilising these various points of entry, and disseminating information online as well as in the physical space, I was able to collect 53 interviews with professionals from various educational and occupational backgrounds.

As mentioned earlier, when appropriate, I asked participants to forward my information to their partners. In my sample, the majority of coupled interviewees migrated together with their current partner and many had children. In only three cases had the couple separated since the relocation. However, recruitment of partners depended both on whether the participant forwarded my request and the willingness of the partner to participate in the project. Although I cannot comment on the practices across my sample, I am aware of several instances where participants explained that they thought it would not be of interest to their partners, and, therefore, they would not forward the email. Such behaviour questions the extent to which researchers may rely on such a technique when seeking to interview partners within a mobile household. While I approached all the coupled participants, I was only able to arrange 11 interviews with partners.

Once I received confirmation of participation, I arranged the interview, informed the participant about the interviewing procedure, and organised the details of the meeting. Overall, I applied the same techniques to interviewing both German highly-skilled and their partners. First, securing a quiet place for an interview with a relaxing atmosphere guided my location choice. When possible, interviews took place in a meeting room provided by the college, in other cases, in cafés or interviewees' work offices, with only two interviews conducted in participants' home. The particular setting of the interview is not surprising as most of the interviews were conducted during working hours or lunch breaks and could

also be attributed to the rather autonomous nature of participants' jobs (unsupervised workplaces, access to a private office). Such arrangements were also beneficial for ensuring the separate interviewing of each partner. Indeed, when considering separate interviewing, conducting the interview in a participant's house may lead to the unintentional presence of the partner during the meeting. I also conducted five interviews via video conference as two of the participants were not in Britain at the time, and three participants were partners who were in LDRs and did not relocate to Britain.

Moreover, conducting interviews with highly-skilled Germans seemed to raise a few nuances associated with interviewing elites which had to be addressed. As suggested by scholars, elite interviews may be constrained by schedule, and involve more obstacles in establishing reliable and trustful connections (see Bygnes, 2008; Darbi and Hall, 2014). Hence, before conducting interviews, I consulted with the available literature on elite interviewing, and followed Bygnes' suggestion: "it is not only advised [for a researcher] to be well-prepared, well-informed and socially skilled, but also able to offer interesting and open-ended interview questions to fill the interviewees' requirements for a credible conversation partner" (Bygnes, 2008, p. 2).

The interviews themselves lasted between 45 minutes and two hours and included small talk before or after. Following ethical principles, ensuring trustworthiness, openness, as well as consent was of the highest priority. At the beginning of each interview, participants were given an information sheet which provided general information about the project, explained complaint procedures, and informed them about their right to withdraw from the project at any moment. In line with good ethical practice, participants were asked to give permission to be recorded and signed written consent. Only three participants declined to be recorded; for these interviews, I took detailed notes during our discussion. However, using field notes was a common practice during all of my interviews. Before the

interview I asked permission to document our interaction in the form of field notes. During the analysis, these field notes served as a collection of verbal and non-verbal communication, and provided a description of the interviewing process. Such thorough documentation of non-verbal communication, as suggested by scholars, provides additional valuable insights into studied phenomena (Matthews, 2005; Lacey and Luff, 2007).

Second, interviews followed several sets of guidance and had a semi-structured framework. The semi-structured interviews aimed to provide consistency across interviews (Weston et al., 2001). Informed by the academic literature and theoretical discussions presented in Chapter 2, I organised the interviews around four topics: the decision to leave the region of origin and relocate to Britain, relocation practices, current situation (professional, financial, and kinship), and future plans. However, due to the free-floating conversation style promoted during the interview, questions were asked in different sequences while ensuring that all of the interviewees touched upon these four topics. Following the suggestions of other qualitative scholars (Marvasti, 2004; Matthews, 2005) interviewees were encouraged to lead the conversation, and I was cautious to avoid short and direct questions, as well as leading questions.

Although interviews represent a valuable and trustworthy source of information, during each interview, attention was paid to narrative control: I examined the way interviewees presented their stories. Narratives, as defined by Marvasti (2004, p. 21), “are ways of sharing information with others following a particular pattern of telling”. These stories help people to organise their biography following specific themes and timelines, to derive relevant biographic experiences, and assist them in identifying who they are, both for others and for themselves (Rosenthal, 1993; Breckner, 2000). In a particular case of migration, people’s accounts constitute a reconstruction of events and behaviour before, during, and after migration. Such references to the past may be altered both intentionally

(concealed truth) and unintentionally (issue of recollection and awareness). Interviewees may exaggerate the portrayal of their situations, both in the country of origin and destination (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). As noted by Gardner (2001), "interviewees may lie, telling the researcher only part of the 'truth' or 'nothing like' the truth" (Gardner, 2001, p. 190).

As a result, various techniques for cross-referencing the data were used. First, during the interview, I collected detailed information on the circumstances surrounding the migration decision (family background, employment situation before migration, kinship relations, and general financial situation). These questions allowed interviewees to address the migration decision beyond the decision itself and within the broader context. For example, when interviewees stressed the non-pecuniary motives in their migration decision (maybe as an attempt to rewrite their biographies or to distance themselves from other migrant categories), I would ask them later to describe their socioeconomic status before and after the move. In addition, in many cases, counterfactual questions (see Small, 2017) were asked to encourage participants to reflect on their actions. For instance, interviewees were asked if they would have made a similar decision if the job content or the location was different, as well as if they had or did not have a partner. These questions allowed participants to concentrate on the specific event of migration and, as such, provided a better understanding of why it did or did not happen.

I followed these practical guidelines in each of the 64 interviews. The necessity for additional interviews was determined by theoretical saturation (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Eisenhardt, 2002). Namely, I continued to conduct interviews until each additional interview added minimal benefit. Such a strategy is based on case study logic in which small-sample studies are examined as multiple case studies (Gerring, 2004; Small, 2009, 2017; Yin, 2009). Accordingly, each interview represented an independent case and each

was logically selected (Small, 2009); this stimulates an examination of different cases to determine whether the expected difference is a unique characteristic of the sample.

Immediately following each interview, the digital record of the interview was transferred from my personal recording device to a self-owned, home-based computer to avoid the unnecessary movement of the data in public places or between university facilities. The information was stored in password-protected folders. All materials had a full back-up in the form of an electronic anonymised file, which was used to avoid loss of crucial information.

3.5 CODING AND ANALYSING PROCEDURES

After transferring the interviews to a computer, they were transcribed. To maximise the efficiency of the transcribing process, I utilised a voice recognition software (Transcribe). After transcribing, I started coding the data, through use of another software package, NVivo. While I used NVivo for organising the data, all the coding was performed manually through examination of each transcript. Such a practice is justified by the fact that electronic and manual methods for coding are not mutually exclusive, but on the contrary, may be complementary. Indeed, for my project, in which I coded 64 interviews, using NVivo simplified the organisation of the data, eased systematic comparison, and helped to manage and interlink all the related documents such as codes and memos. During the coding process, I developed around 60 codes, and wrote numerous notes and memos about the data.

The coding for the core participants was performed separately from the coding for their partners. In fact, two separate categories were created within the project: Professionals and Partners. While the same procedures were applied to coding for the two categories, performing separate coding resulted in a separate and self-sustained coding systems. As a

result, I was able to compare the two systems and analyse the similarities and distinctions between the two categories, explore how different codes interlinked in each category, as well as how these codes interlinked between these categories. By adopting such a practice, I aimed to elevate the analysis of my data and reach a deeper understanding of patterns as well as to get insight into new and complex issues that interlinked the two categories.

In practice, coding the interviews involved reading and re-reading each transcript several times — first as an individual text and then also in relation to the other interview transcripts. The preliminary coding was informed and guided by the analysis of the existing scholarship. To illustrate how this was performed, consider the following example of how I coded the topic of household relocation strategies. Scholars suggest that each partner may impact the decision to relocate which may result in different relocation strategies, such as moving together, or engaging in LDRs (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Tharenou, 2010; Reuschke, 2010; Branden, 2014; Murray-Close, 2019). The two strategies informed my reading of the transcripts and served as preliminary codes. For example, when relocation practices were mentioned in the transcript, I coded them into two codes (“Moving Together” and “LDR”). After the preliminary coding, I reread these codes against the theoretical discussion and empirical evidence which helped me to identify new and emerging themes in my data. Foremost, this resulted in breaking down the code “Moving Together” and adopting a more specific coding scheme comprising three separate codes: a) moving together straight away after one partner found a job; b) moving together but in stages, one partner relocating after obtaining a job while the other following at a later stage; c) moving together after both found employment. While the first two strategies are widely discussed, although there is no differentiation between strategies (a) and (b), I could not find any theoretical or empirical discussion on the strategy (c) (relocating together after both found employment). As a result, I was able to document and explore the reasons behind specific strategy. Finally,

when analysing the “LDR” I was able to identify and code the reasons for this strategy among my participants, and later interrogate how they resembled or differed from what is already discussed by scholars (Levin, 2004; Reuschke, 2010; Murray-Close, 2019).

Such work practices guided my coding and analysis. To ensure that coding was performed according to a high standard, I consulted with empirical guidelines and suggestions proposed by various scholars (Weston et al., 2001; Welsh, 2002; Blank, 2004; Saldaña, 2015; Chametzky, 2016) and utilised my analytical skills developed through previous experience of coding. Indeed, I have conducted and coded in-depth interviews since 2009; this experience contributed to my overall practical knowledge and helped me to develop the skill set necessary to conduct this type of research. As a part of my practice, I documented and discussed my coding schemes and analytical approach, following other scholars (Weston et al., 2001; Campbell et al., 2013; Saldaña, 2015), who suggested that rigorous documentation of coding schemes and their application procedures ensures reliability and transparency about how conclusion are linked to data.

I started to develop coding schemes and coding the interviews in parallel with data collection. More specifically, I transcribed and coded each additional interview immediately after it was conducted, rather than starting the coding process after all interviews had been conducted. I chose this strategy for several reasons. First, the project did not have a set number of interviews and the continuation of the interviewing process depended on analysis of the collected material. Second, such a flexible strategy aimed to help to identify motives and factors that were not considered at the beginning of the project, but were crucial for the project. Indeed, preliminary analysis of the data highlighted the role of partners on migration decisions and relocation practices, which led me to include them in the project, and resulted in 11 additional interviews with partners. Such a strategy is common practice in qualitative research, since a researcher, although guided by

assumptions and theories, still faces uncertainty in the field, which may lead to the emergence of new and unforeseen themes, ideas, and questions (Matthews, 2005).

I approached coding by utilising two coding techniques: deductive and inductive. As suggested by Weston et al. (2001), however, coding is not merely a descriptive process but an important aspect of the analysis itself. When using a deductive approach for data coding I followed research questions and theoretical assumptions and developed a provisional coding scheme (see Table 1 for an example of this coding strategy). Among provisional codes that I used for the first cycle of analysis, the categories were “Move UK”, “Who Moved”, “Migrant”, “Future”, “Why Moved”. When these topics were mentioned during the interview each aspect was coded in these large and open categories. Once I had familiarised myself with the data in each of the categories, I could subdivide them into more specific subcategories and recode some of the codes. For example, the code “Move UK” aimed to capture all topics associated with the reasons for relocation to the UK. After examining this category, I could distinguish between several reasons for relocating such as “Speak English”, “Partners in the UK”, “Industry”. Each of these reasons was then recoded into new and separate codes. When examining these new categories, I concluded that some could be further subdivided and recoded. For example, the new category “Industry” included a variety of aspects of the industry; each could be recoded into a new separate category such as “No Hierarchy”, “Hiring practices”, “Large Industry”.

TABLE 1: EXAMPLES OF CODES (DEDUCTIVE APPROACH)

Initial code	Second cycle of coding	Third cycle of coding
Move UK	Speak English	
	Partner in the UK	
	Professional networks	
	Part of the EU	Cultural similarities Visa Close to family Bring partners
	Industry aspects	No hierarchy Hiring practices More inclusive, foreigners Larger industry Developed industry

When coding parts of the transcript that did not fit into a provisional coding scheme, I used an inductive approach. Following this approach, I coded each segment into new very specific descriptive codes. During the second and third rounds of coding, these descriptive codes were organised into large categories. For example, when exploring the interviews, I created several descriptive codes such as “Easy decision”, “Contract Signed”, “I knew I am good”. Later on, I could link these codes into a new category “Easy Decision - Employment”. Table 2 presents an example of this coding strategy.

TABLE 2: EXAMPLES OF CODES (INDUCTIVE APPROACH)

Initial code	Second cycle of coding	Third cycle of coding
I knew I am good at job	Easy decision employment	Frictionless and easy move
Easy decision		
Opportunity popped up		
Contract signed before		
Speak English	Easy transition (between countries)	
Interviewed in the city		
Been to England		
Easy travel to Germany	Not a big deal - emotionally	
Not a big change		
Previous mig. experience		
Partner agreed to migration		

Applying the inductive approach was very advantageous for my type of project. Identifying new themes was possible due to flexibility and openness during the coding phase. For example, I did not intentionally ask about children during the interview and did not develop provisional codes for children. However, during the coding stage I found a large number of children-related codes such as “Schooling”, “Age of the child”, and “Grandparents”, as well as a large number of examples for each of the codes. The high number of examples signified the importance of the topic in my research project. As a result, I expanded my theoretical framework. This led me to question current state of research on children of highly-skilled movers and highlighted a contribution of my project in this specific respect. Adopting this holistic, bottom-up approach allowed the data themselves to lead and uncover patterns without them being presupposed in advance (Maxwell, 2004; Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Perelli-Harris et al., 2014).

While I organised all parts of the interview into codes and then into larger categories, I did not merge these categories into larger themes within NVivo, nor did I organise the data hierarchically. I preferred to leave the codes/categories as independent but linked entities and did not merge them into overarching themes. While the technology in NVivo allows these manipulations to be performed, having this basic code allowed me to go back to the basic unit of analysis and see if I had missed a category or a relationship between a set of codes. Furthermore, this was very useful when a new theoretical framework was examined because I could explore new connections between the basic code schemes. For example, I noticed a large number of location-related codes. After rereading some of the theoretical discussions on the role of location and the city on mobility, I went back to the codes and could easily identify the relevant codes and see how they linked to other codes.

Finally, when rereading the transcripts and notes taken during the interview, I wrote several memos reflecting the overall interaction during these interviews as well as my own

impressions and feelings. Analysing these memos helped me to examine my own positionality and reflect on the methodological practices and analysis.

3.6 REFLEXIVITY AND POSITIONALITY

As mentioned in the introduction chapter, being a highly-skilled migrant myself and a partner of a highly-skilled migrant sparked my curiosity about studying this phenomenon. As I discuss below, this background not only guided my research but also impacted my analysis and research practices. Reflecting on how my personal situation has impacted my research has contributed to the understanding of the dynamic between me and my participants as well as to the deepening of the analysis of observed migratory paths.

My personal migratory background makes my position within the field relatively unusual, however, not unique. Empirical research shows that there is a growing number of projects examining migration which are conducted by researchers who have migratory backgrounds themselves (Carling et al., 2014). Such tendencies are sometimes explained by the international mobility of academics, as well as an increasing number of second-generation migrants in higher education and research facilities. The aspect of doing research on migration by a researcher who is a migrant him/herself has gained some theoretical attention from the research community (see Ryan, 2008a; Carling et al., 2014; Nowicka and Cieslik, 2014; Nowicka and Ryan, 2015). Such circumstances are sometimes described as insider/outside dynamic, which refers to the situation where an insider is a researcher who is a member of the migrant group under study, and an outsider is a researcher who is a member of the majority population in the country of residency.

Scholars urge researchers to reflect on the role of their migratory background, suggesting that by reflecting on one's own migratory path and that of research subjects, researchers challenge, construct, and deconstruct common understandings of both groups

(Carling et al., 2014; Nowicka and Ryan, 2015). In their research, Nowicka and Cieslik (2014) urge scholars to go beyond the national/ethnic discussion of insider/outsider, and instead, suggest focusing on multiple identities and roles that researchers and participants share. Similarly, Carling and colleagues (2014), show that shared experiences of migration, as well as of parenthood, religion, or knowledge of a language and cultural experience may all impact the insider-outsider dynamic between the researcher and the participant.

In the course of the project, it became evident that my personal background has impacted all the stages of my research from the interviews themselves to the analysis of the data. First and foremost, during the interviews, all the participants exhibited an interest in my personal background. Due to my name and overall physical appearance some assumed that I was of Slavic or Polish origin and asked me where I was from. I explained that I am an Israeli, born in the Ukraine, and studying in the UK. As mentioned by Carling and colleagues (2014), by choosing to share his/her migratory background with participants, a researcher may signal trust, and openness to share things from personal life, and an understanding of complex experiences and migratory situations.

Indeed, being a migrant myself, seemed to contribute to what was perceived by my participants as a shared experience of migration. This seemed to help in establishing trust and to provide a common point of reference. In some cases, when portraying a particular situation, participants would occasionally conclude “you know how it is” or use other non-verbal comments to refer to the assumed similarities between their and my migratory experiences. In some cases, small talk about my migratory background preceded the interview, while in other cases it took place after the recorder had been turned off. Such small talk could last for another 20-40 minutes.

While I shared some similarities with my participants, my personal situation did not fit the dichotomy of insider/outsider. While I am a highly-skilled migrant who has lived in Germany for some time, who speaks the language and understands some cultural references, I did not share the cultural, ethnic, or national associations with my participants. Neither am I a German citizen or an ethnic German nor did I spend formative years in the country. As a result, I oftentimes felt in a position of in-betweenness. Such a position of the researcher, as discussed by Carling and colleagues (2014), is an insider by proxy, or honorary insider. In this case language skills and cultural competence or migratory background provide some commonality between the researcher, like myself, and participants, which transcends the ethno-national divide.

However, being a non-EU citizen, my migratory experiences of EU migration are very different from my participants. As an Israeli citizen, I am allowed visa-free-travel for up to 90 days within the Schengen area and other EU countries. However, when I wanted to study in the UK, work in Germany, or be reunited with my spouse in Austria, I had to apply for a visa which required proof of funds, a marriage certificate, language certificates, and proof of university placement or employment. These bureaucratic necessities were the main difference between my personal experience of relocating within the EU and the migratory experiences of my participants. Analysing the narratives of my participants and reflecting on my personal position, I was curious to understand these similar and different experiences. For example, while my migration differed in terms of the paperwork required, uncertainty about pension rights and unfamiliarity with the medical system was a shared experience between me and my participants.

In addition to these similarities in migratory and relocation experiences, the fact that I have lived in Germany and Austria for some time, and spoke the German language seemed to have a positive effect during the interview, and reassured my participants about my

competence in researching the topic. As suggested by scholars (Ryan, 2008a; Nowicka and Ryan, 2015) researchers may use various techniques to highlight the commonalities between themselves and participants, for example relating to their own migratory experience, or to knowledge of a culture or language. Indeed, during all of the interviews, I was asked if I was a German citizen, whether I spoke German and what my connection to Germany was. Upon reflecting on these questions, it seemed that they served as a testing ground for my competence and overall knowledge of the situation in Germany, its politics, and culture.

Knowing the German language and having experience of living in Germany also had a practical benefit for this kind of project. First, although interviews were conducted in English, knowing the German language eased the conversation itself. During the interviews, some words, expressions, or nouns could not be translated easily or, if translated, would have lost their meaning. Therefore, understanding these German words or acronyms sped up the conversation. Second, migration of Germans is still an under-researched topic. Most of the available research as well as national statistics on the migration of German nationals are written in the German language. As a result, it was necessary to have the language skills to access and understand the available data. Third, the fact that I am not a German national but have lived in Germany as a foreign student allowed me to experience the culture as an outsider. This experience has drawn my attention to the particularities of the German culture and community.

Keeping in mind these commonalities, I had to take additional care during the interviews themselves, and to reflect on my own position as well as the interactions between myself and the participants. As suggested by Becker (1967) in the course of examination, a researcher may develop feelings of sympathy with the people under investigation (subordinate) or, in contrast, may embrace the presumptions of the majority group

(superordinate). Applying this logic to my project, one may suggest that investigators who have a personal migration background (such as myself) may be more prone towards developing a higher sympathy towards migrant participants. As a result, I had to assess my positionality during each interview as well as when analysing the data, and account for the unintentional impact that my personal background might have had on the interview and the analysis.

Furthermore, I had to reflect on the impact of the interview on the participants themselves. As scholars suggest, the interviewing process is not a neutral process either from the viewpoint of the interviewer or the interviewee (see Elwood and Martin, 2000; Gardner, 2001; Limerick, et al., 2006; Ryan, 2008a). For example, one needs to account for the previous experience of interviewing, such as interviews conducted with border control authorities, which might have incontrovertibly influenced the way people present their migration experience to others. Although this situation is less likely to be widespread among highly-skilled Germans in Britain because they have legal rights to enter the country and are positively portrayed in the media and national reports (Weber-Newth and Steinert, 2006; Salt, 2009), one should not disregard such a scenario. As I mentioned earlier in the chapter, conducting research on mobility may touch upon sensitive memories and it therefore requires a sensitive approach from the researcher. Furthermore, interviews may bring up memories of an emotionally charged migratory experience of the researcher him/herself (Ryan, 2008a). Therefore, sensitivity and awareness of the potential impact on both the researcher and participant should be taken into consideration and reflected upon at the time of the interview and analysis.

An additional level of sensitivity and reflection was especially needed during interviews with partners. Such practice followed other scholars who urge researchers to consider additional ethical considerations when conducting interviews with partners (Hertz,

1995; Valentine, 1999; Kaźmierska, 2005; Kloc-Nowak, 2015). First, during the interview, I had to reflect on the development of the conversation to ensure each partner's confidentiality. Among others, I had to carefully consider the questions asked in order not to reveal information that might have indicated aspects discussed by the other partner. This was especially true in the case where partners presented conflicting portrayals during interviews, such as the case of Erika and Rudolf or Lutz and Alicia. For example, during the interview with Lutz, he has spoken about the decision to move together with his girlfriend Alicia as a joint decision. However, during the interview with Alicia, she suggested that the decision to accompany Lutz felt outside of her control. Hearing a different story during the interview with Alicia, I had to proceed carefully. This included not questioning her story line or implying that Lutz has presented a different portrayal.

Second, during interviews as well as during the analysis, I had to reflect on the emotional undertones of these conversations. The example of Alicia introduced earlier, illustrates how interviews may uncover unexpected emotions for both the participant and the researcher. Mouton and Pohlandt-McCormick (1999) refer to a situation where the interview becomes an unexpected and disturbing, emotionally charged situation as "boundary crossing". Such episodes of emotional encounter may not only be emotional for the participant, but also leave long-lasting impression on the interviewer (Mouton and Pohlandt-McCormick, 1999; Ryan 2008a). Indeed, during the interview, Alicia explained that she felt that the relocation decision was out of her control because if she did not move with Lutz, she would have to go back to live with her parents. She was visibly upset and frustrated about the migratory experience as well as her current living situation as her relationship with Lutz had deteriorated. While I continued the interview in an ethical and professional manner, her portrayal of the situation left me uneasy.

Even today I feel uneasy and wonder what happened to her and whether she decided to stay in the relationship. Such situation is however not surprising. First, because I continued to analyse the interview long after it had been recorded, it brought back memories of that situation. Second, due to the specificity of the interviewer-interviewee relationship, there is no follow up, and no way to find out how the issue resolved. Reflecting on such situations, I often question about our social responsibility, as researchers and individuals, towards these participants. Furthermore, I question the extent to which our professional training provides us with practical skills, emotional and ethical tools to assess these situations and to decide on the best action.

Such experiences resemble what was discussed by Ryan (2008a) in her research on Irish nurses. Reflecting on her emotional response to narratives presented by the participants, the author had to address her own complex set of emotions in regard to her family and motherhood. I was also puzzled about why this situation had resulted in an emotional response on my side and was curious to understand what had prompted it. Reflecting on the situation, I saw how my personal migratory situation resembled Alice's in some regard: I also accompanied my husband who was a main breadwinner. While my relationship with my husband was different from the one portrayed by Alicia, hearing the dynamic between Alicia and Lutz made me think about possible scenarios and how I would have reacted under similar circumstances.

Such a case also illustrates the role of gender and its impact on interviewing and analysis. For example, reflecting on my research practices, I have noticed that I was questioning female migratory patterns and their reasons in a more exhaustive way than those of the male participants. Detecting this behaviour, I was curious to understand it. From one side, such behaviour seems to be attributed to the fact that mobility of female professionals is still under-researched; therefore, I was more detailed when collecting

information about this less documented phenomenon. From the other side, as a highly-skilled migrant myself, I might have been biased toward understanding female professionals in my sample of participants, as a way to also understand my own choices.

Finally, although the data for this project were collected and initially analysed before my recent relocation to the US, re-examining the stories of my participants after my relocation has added various dimensions to the analysis of the migration of households. This was my first experience of relocating as a spouse and without securing some sort of employment beforehand. This experience has highlighted some of the obstacles and challenges that mobile households in general and their accompanying partners in particular need to address when migrating, for example, finding employment after the relocation and reorganising life after the relocation. As a spouse of a highly-skilled migrant, my personal experience highlighted the role of partners in the migration of highly-skilled households, and led me to question the term “trailing spouse”, i.e., someone who follows the mobile partner almost blindly. However, the accounts presented by my interviewees as well as my own experience highlighted the amount of work done by these partners in managing the relocation, such as finding a new apartment, organising the living space, enrolling children in the local school or pre-school, and so on.

Second, this migratory experience increased my sensitivity to the different types and living arrangements of mobile households, and highlighted the variation in regard to strategies that couples adopted to deal with migration. For example, although I decided to relocate with my spouse, a few participants in my sample who were in a similar position decided to engage in LDRs, or relocate after both had found employment. This led me to question and investigate which factors have contributed to selecting each of these strategies and whether their experiences differ from one another.

Lastly, conducting research as a PhD student in the University of Oxford, I had to address the complexity of my position within the hierarchical structure of the interview. In their empirical research, Carling and colleagues (2014) demonstrate how education, age, and occupation of both the participants and the interviewer are negotiated and reconstructed during the interview. Examining this aspect is very relevant for my study, and I observed two different dynamics between me and my participants. The first one was with those who were employed in prestigious academic and financial institutions, and the second with those who were employed outside academia, or in less prestigious universities than the University of Oxford.

On the one hand, interactions with some of the highly-ranked managers, professors, and those holding lucrative academic posts were more structural, official, and conducted in their offices. These were also more time sensitive and less free flowing conversations. A few of these participants asked questions about my skills and education and in some cases even referred to or asked about scholars in the field of migration. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, interviews with some of these highly-skilled participants resembled aspects of elite interviewing. On the other hand, the interaction with some young academics or early-career professionals was more relaxed and usually lasted longer. Many of these participants agreed to come to be interviewed at the college (for some it was an opportunity to see the college from inside). A few also asked about my experience of studying at the University of Oxford. Despite these different dynamics during the interviews, it seemed that working within the framework of the University of Oxford, known for its academic excellence and ground-breaking research, contributed to participants' curiosity in the project and the willingness of some of these interviewees to participate in it.

3.7 DESCRIPTIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Table 3 presents selected descriptive statistics of 64 participants in the sample at the time of relocation. The table first presents characteristics of 53 German professionals which is later followed characteristics of 11 partners.

TABLE 3: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

N	Name	Age	Gender	Educational	Marital status	No. Children	Partner's nationality if not German	Partners' living arrangements	Occupation after relocation	Recruitment
1	Gilbert	mid-30s	Male	PhD	Married	1	Central Asian		Researcher	P.networks
2	Franziska	early-30s	Female	PhD	Married	1			Researcher	Email
3	Konstanze	mid-20s	Female	MA	Single				Technical Assistant	P.networks
4	Alissa	early-30s	Female	MA	Single				Language Tutor	P.networks
5	Conny	late-20s	Female	BA	Single				Manager	Snowball
6	Lucas	early-40s	Male	MA	Married				Manager	Snowball
7	Clemens	early-30s	Male	MA	Married	2	East Asian		Language Tutor	P.networks
8	Carolina	mid-20s	Female	MA	Single				Language Tutor	Snowball
9	Berta	early-50s	Female	BA	In a relationship			Stayed in Germany	Manager	P.networks

10	Angelika	late-20s	Female	PhD	In a relationship			Stayed in Germany	Researcher	Email
11	Bernhard	early-30s	Male	PhD	Married	1			Lecturer	P.networks
12	Rudolf	early-30s	Male	PhD	In a relationship			Stayed in Germany	Lecturer	Email
13	Alex	mid-30s	Male	PhD	Married	2	East Asian		Lecturer	Snowball
14	Martin	mid-40s	Male	MA	In a relationship		East Asian		Research Associate	General advert
15	Steffi	mid-40s	Female	PhD	Single				Linguist	General advert
16	Jens	mid-40s	Male	PhD	Married	1			Associate Professor	Email
17	Conrad	mid-30s	Male	MS	Single				Manager	Email
18	Heidi	late-20s	Female	BA	Single				Manager	Email
19	Johann	mid-50s	Male	PhD	Married	2			Manager	Email
20	Mona	late-30s	Female	PhD	In a relationship		Central European		Associate Professor	Email
21	Carolyn	late-30s	Female	BA	Single				Manager	Snowball
22	Thomas	early-40s	Male	MA	Married	2			Spacecraft Engineer	Email
23	Rene	early-50s	Male	PhD	Married	2		Stayed in Germany	Lecturer	Email
24	Marius	late-30s	Male	PhD	Married	1			Research Fellow	P.networks

25	Josef	late-30s	Male	MA	Single				Financial Consultant	Email
26	Max	early-40s	Male	PhD	In a relationship		North American	Partner in the US	Lawyer/Reader	Email
27	Fabian	late-30s	Male	MA	Single				Engineer	Email
28	Catarina	early-30s	Female	MA	In a relationship		East Asian		Manager	Email
29	Andreas	late-30s	Male	PhD	In a relationship			Stayed in Germany	Research Associate	Email
30	Ula	late-20s	Female	PhD	In a relationship		Northern European		Lecturer	Email
31	Marcel	late-30s	Male	BA	Single				Manager	Snowball
32	Claus	early-30s	Male	PhD	Single				Researcher	Snowball
33	Sven	early-40s	Male	BA	Single				Software Engineer	Email
34	Marvin	early-40s	Male	MA	Married	2			Manager	Email
35	Christoffer	early-40s	Male	PhD	Married	1			Associate Professor	Email
36	Ingrit	late-30s	Female	MA	Single				Language Tutor	Email
37	Mathias	mid-40s	Male	PhD	Married		East Asian		Reader	Email
38	Lutz	late-20s	Male	PhD	In a relationship		South European		Reader	Email
39	Patrick	early-40s	Male	MA	Married	2			Manager	Email

40	Sebastian	mid-30s	Male	PhD	Married		South European		Researcher	Email
41	Simon	late-30s	Male	PhD	Married	2			Reader	General advert
42	Judith	mid-30s	Female	PhD	Married	2	British		Associate Professor	Email
43	Tobias	mid-30s	Male	PhD	Married	1			Senior Economist	Email
44	Stephan	early-40s	Male	MS	Married	1			Manager	General advert
45	Samuel	mid-30s	Male	PhD	Married	2			Researcher	Email
46	Ulf	mid-30s	Male	MA	Single				Language Tutor	Email
47	Sabine	late-40s	Female	MA	Married				Teacher	General advert
48	Roland	late-30s	Male	MBA	Married				Business Advisor	General advert
49	Maria	mid-30s	Female	PhD	Married	1			Lecturer	Email
50	Demian	late-30s	Male	PhD	Married				Lecturer	Email
51	Philip	early-40s	Male	PhD	Married				Reader	Email
52	Helga	mid-40s	Female	PhD	In a relationship				Research Fellow	General advert
53	Teresa	early-30s	Female	MA	In a relationship				Publisher	Snowball

Partners							Nationality	Occupation after relocation	Occupation now	Partnered to
54	Elsa	mid-30s	Female	BA	Married	1	Central Asian	Unemployed	Part-time Librarian	Gilbert
55	Carl	late-20s	Male	PhD	In a relationship		German	Did not relocate	Post-doc	Angelika
56	Erika	late-20s	Female	MA	In a relationship		German	PhD Student	PhD Student	Rudolf
57	Jeni	early-40s	Female	BA	In a relationship		East Asian	Unemployed	Full-time Librarian	Martin
58	Theo	mid-40s	Male	PhD	In a relationship		Central European	Professor	Professor	Mona
59	Karolina	mid-30s	Female	BA	In a relationship		North American	Did not relocate	Lawyer	Max
60	Albert	mid-30s	Male	MBA	In a relationship		East Asian	German contact	Financial Director	Catarina
61	Philippa	late-30s	Female	PhD	Married		South European	Did not relocate	Post-doc	Sebastian
62	Alicia	mid-20s	Female	MA	In a relationship		South European	PhD student	PhD Student	Lutz
63	Adam	mid-30s	Male	PhD	Married	2	British	Lecturer	Lecturer	Judith
64	Madeleine	late-40s	Female	Vocational	Married	1	German	Unemployed	Student	Stephan

Age Categories				Recruitment Strategies	
early-20s	20-23	early-40s	40-43	P. networks	personal networks of the researcher
mid-20s	24-26	mid-40s	43-46	Email	answered email addressed directly to them
late-20s	27-29	late-40s	47-49	General advert	generic advertisements for the project

early-30s	30-33	early-50s	50-53	Snowball	recruited by other participants
mid-30s	34-36	mid-50s	54-56		
late-30s	37-39	late-50s	57-59		

TABLE 4: AGE DISTRIBUTION IN THE SAMPLE

Age range	Number of interviewees
24-30	10
31-35	15
36-40	17
41-45	16
46-54	6
	64

TABLE 5: PROFESSION REPRESENTATION IN THE SAMPLE

Profession	Number of interviewees
Language Tutors	5
Researcher (academia or research institution)	15
Associate Professor/Lecturer/Reader	12
Managerial position	11
Economist	4
Engineer	3
Librarian	2
Others	9
	64

All of the 64 interviews were conducted during 2015 and 2016 in South East England, with many undertaken in the city of London and areas around the city of Oxford and Cambridge. For example, in the Oxford area, interviews were conducted in towns such as Didcot and Harwell. These areas are known for their industrial presence, with international and German companies, such as Siemens and BMW, university facilities, and a vibrant international community, which may all account for the presence of the German highly-skilled in these areas. In fact, as mentioned in the introduction chapter, according to the national statistics, a large number of German citizens reside in the triangle of Oxford, Cambridge and London (Office for National Statistics). At the same time, the variation in city size and industrial focus between these locations and the city of London provided access to participants from a variety of occupational backgrounds. For example, while participants from the university cities were predominantly in university occupations, those who resided in industrial areas had a wider employment profile, ranging from those employed in the financial and publishing industries to gambling industry and tech development. The timing of the interviews (2015-2016) provided a unique opportunity to document the impact of the Brexit Vote on the lives and plans of the German highly-skilled in Britain. Such data allowed for observation of how such unexpected political events interfere with the migration decisions and experiences of mobile professionals. This topic is addressed in Chapter 5.

When transcribing and analysing data, I aimed to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of my participants. Therefore, I employed several steps to protect their identity. For example, all of the identifiable materials, such as the person's name and surname, as well as the company name, were removed. Moreover, random names were assigned to each

interviewee, while preserving gender attributes. I also added an additional systematic manipulation to alter age, e.g., the precise age of a participant was replaced by a category of reference (early, mid and late of that age group). For example, if a participant was 28 years old, his/her age was coded as late-20s. In the case of the mixed ethnicity of the participant or their partner's foreign nationality, local references were employed instead of precise ethnic background. For example, a partner of Spanish origin was coded as a person with a South European background. While I deliberately focused on occupational rather than industrial affiliation, the exact titles of the job were omitted to ensure a higher level of confidentiality. At the same time, the place of current residence in Cambridge or Oxford was changed to Oxbridge to provide higher protection for the interviewees who live in smaller communities.

In the following section, I present the personal, occupational, and marital characteristics of these participants. I first describe the main sample of 53 German professionals which is followed by a description of 11 partners.

Within the group of 53 professionals, all the participants identified themselves as Germans and had spent their socialisation years in Germany, even though several participants were not ethnic Germans and had a non-White or non-European background. Although one might consider participants with a mixed-background as a separate category, I decided to include their accounts. Following my analysis, it seemed that their experiences in Britain displayed more similarities rather than differences to the ethnic Germans in the sample. Moreover, exploring the accounts of those with a migration background provided a complementary discussion on the migratory experiences.

The sample of the German highly-skilled consisted of 19 female and 34 male participants. Having a high number of female professionals in my sample is one of the strengths of the project. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, by interrogating interviews with these female highly-skilled movers, I seek to contribute to our understanding of the particularities of their migration. Due to the large sample size, I was able to capture professionals in different age stages, occupations, and time spent in Britain. For instance, age distribution spreads over 30 years, ranging from 24 to 54 years old, with 37 being the average age. Over a third of the participants had some experience of studying or working in various parts of the world, mostly in European countries, except several interviewees who had spent significant time in the US, Brazil, Australia, and Thailand. Furthermore, my sample varies with regard to previous place of residency in Germany: many were from the West German area and only a few participants from East Germany. Several federal states were overrepresented in the sample, with ten interviewees from Baden-Wuerttemberg, eight from Berlin and North Rhine-Westphalia, and six from Bavaria and Hamburg. On average, participants had spent five years in Britain at the time of the interview, with eight people having relocated more than a decade before the interview. Having such a variation in regard to time spent in the country provided an opportunity to observe and capture different stages of integration into British society and the local labour market.

All of these participants held university diplomas, ranging from a BA to PhD, and worked according to their qualifications. Following my recruitment strategies, I was able to interview German professionals across various industries, occupying a wide range of employment posts. Those included lecturers, associate professors, economists, engineers,

language tutors, and managers (for more information, see Table 5). While, a large share of participants was employed by academia, viewing all these participants as representatives of a single category is misleading as their jobs vary in terms of their requirements, obligations, and responsibilities, as well as wages and job security. Academia includes a variety of positions, some of which are non-academic and not research-oriented. The latter category includes language tutors, laboratory technicians, and managerial personnel. In order to investigate whether those participants who were employed in academia shared additional similarities to those who were employed in other industries, I performed systematic comparison. Indeed, scholars suggest that a systematic comparison between groups explores the data and may help to identify common traits as well as the distinct characteristics of each group (Maxwell, 2004; Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Perelli-Harris et al., 2014). My analysis indicated similarities in occupational characteristics between participants across various industries.

Among the largest groups of interviewees in my sample were people in a managerial position. In fact, 12 participants held managerial positions, e.g. heads of offices, directors, managers, purchasing managers, and so on. Although they were employed across a variety of industries (such as academia, space and motor, health, and publishing industries), they shared similar responsibilities and utilised a particular skill set for their work.

Ten participants had post-doc or research associate contracts in academic and non-academic institutions. Although Oxford, Cambridge, and London are known for their academic institutions, these locations also host various non-academic private and governmental institutions. In this sample, a few researchers were employed by

biotechnological, space technology, and research institutions, as well as hi-tech firms. Moreover, some international companies, such as large computer firms, offer post-doc positions in collaboration with universities. In such cases, the screening process is conducted by the company which is the official employer despite the fact that the post-doc is conducted on the university premises. Despite the variation with regard to the employer, contract type, and income, these research positions (post-doc, research associates, or research fellows) share similar responsibilities and obligations.

Five participants were German language tutors. These participants were employed by the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD) and were placed by this German institution across various British universities. Participants explained that the screening process for the particular job in Britain was done in Germany. While they made an application for a particular country, they were unable to choose a particular higher education institution within that country. The DAAD contract is a fixed-term contract of up to five years, with no extensions possible. Seven people in the sample were employed as lecturers and eight as readers or associate professors. These positions differ with respect to obligations, requirements, as well as salary range. According to the available data, the employment contracts of academics at top universities (Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, and Kings College London), offer on average higher wages than less renowned research facilities.⁶ Three

⁶<http://www.eui.eu/ProgrammesAndFellowships/AcademicCareersObservatory/AcademicCareersbyCountry/UnitedKingdom.aspx> accessed 10.05.2020

participants were employed as engineers, with another three as economists, and one as a technical assistant and a teacher.

As mentioned earlier, I made an effort to interview participants with different marital statuses and living arrangements. During the interviews, 15 participants identified their status as at the time of migration as being single, 27 were married, and 11 were in a partnership, but not legally married. Most of the interviewees had developed partnerships still in Germany, with a majority of their partners being ethnic Germans. Twelve participants had partners of another nationality, most commonly of Asian origin. The large number of coupled interviewees in my sample allowed me to document various family and living arrangements. Out of 38 couples, 32 decided to relocate together, and six decided to engage in LDRs. As mentioned in Chapter 2, limited research has been conducted on LDRs in the context of EU mobility (Reuschke, 2010; Vohlídalová, 2014). Despite low numbers, having these six couples who had decided to engage in LDRs in my sample and being able to interview both partners in three of these couples, I sought to deepen our understanding of the underlying patterns and reasons behind these couples selecting this living arrangement.

Furthermore, 19 couples had at least one child during the relocation. None of my participants were a single parent at the time of the relocation. The age of children varied from new-born to university graduates; however, the majority were toddlers and children attending primary school. All couples with children, except one, relocated together or reunited within the first few months.

I was also able to interview the partners of managers, associate professors, post-docs, and language tutors, which allowed diversified information on the migration experiences of these different groups of professionals to be collected. When analysing the sample of 11 partners in the project, several characteristics seem to resemble the main sample, while others seemed to differ greatly. Out of 11 partners, seven were female and four were male. The age of partners corresponds to the main sample and ranges between 26 and 49 years, with average age being 37 years old. All except one had a university education, at least a bachelor's degree. While these educational characteristics are very similar to those of the main sample, the occupational characteristics at the time of relocation and at the time of the interview were the main point of difference between the two groups. Before the relocation, two were enrolled in university studies, one was on maternity leave, and the rest were employed. Of those who decided to relocate with their partners, only one secured a position before the relocation and, once in Britain, started to work right away. One had continued to work remotely from Britain for a German company and nine had to terminate their contracts. For the majority of partners finding full-time employment after the relocation took around two years. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the occupational characteristics and employment situations of partners were one of the main differences between the two groups.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I focused on presenting the methodological approach to collecting and analysing the data. As discussed, I used in-depth interviews which aimed to facilitate comprehensive data collection on migration decisions and relocation processes and practices

of German highly-skilled living and working in Britain. Using this technique allowed migration to be followed through the eyes of the participants themselves. This was especially relevant in the case where both partners were interviewed, as it provided a safe place for each partner to express their own thoughts about mobility. Taking into account the difficulties in recruitment of this group, I was able to interview 64 participants, of whom 53 were German highly-skilled and 11 were partners. The sample varied in terms of age, education, occupation, and career level. Moreover, due to the size of the sample, I was able to collect a wide range of information relating to migration decisions, and relocation processes and identified three main themes for analysis. These themes became the main focus of the three empirical chapters that are presented in the thesis. Chapter 4, the first empirical chapter, provides a discussion on migration experiences and focuses on the reasons as well as the factors that simplified participants' relocation. The following chapter, Chapter 5, investigates the challenges that these professionals and their partners encountered during and after the relocation. Lastly, Chapter 6 presents a discussion on the role of partners and migration strategies across different partnership types.

Before continuing to the empirical chapters, one needs to keep in mind that relying on the data from retrospective interviews provides a very particular world view from the standpoint of those who succeed in translating their intentions to migrate into actual migration. As such, using retrospective interviews is more likely to portray a variety of factors that enable migration while providing only a small glimpse of the factors that hinder such relocation even if there is a desire to relocate.

Chapter 4. EASY AND FRICTIONLESS MIGRATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

When I started my interview with Josef, a financial consultant in London, he had a typical description of his relocation to Britain “*I felt like moving to a new place and doing something new for work and then I had this offer that just came at the right time; it couldn't take me very long to decide to move here*”. Such descriptions of seemingly frictionless, easy and fast decisions were common among my participants. I was curious to understand which factors contributed to this perception. Analysis of such portrayals of migration decision is the main focus of this chapter. As the mobility of the German highly-skilled took place within the context of the EU, I first explore how legal as well as cultural characteristics of the EU have impacted both the decision to move as well as the experience. I further continue the discussion by addressing the factors in Britain and the British labour market that affected the decisions of these German professionals to relocate specifically to Britain. I then draw attention to the practical steps undertaken by many of my participants to manage the relocation and reduce the anticipated and unanticipated costs and risks associated with it. In doing so I also discuss the role of emotional resources in explaining their migration decisions and overall relocation experiences. Finally, I conclude by pointing to the particularities of German experiences in the British context taking into account the complex historical relations between Germany and UK.

4.2 THE EU IS MY OYSTER

Through examination of rich accounts collected from the 64 interviewees, I documented how legal and cultural characteristics of the EU itself contributed to seemingly frictionless experiences of mobility described by the majority of my participants. According to my analysis, the fact that Britain was part of the EU at the time of the relocation, which allows freedom of movement and employment for all EU citizens, seemed to simplify the relocation and migration decisions.⁷

The case of Patrick, a project manager in his early-40s, despite being an unusual case, provides an illustration of this topic. During the interview, he described how different relocating to London had been from his previous migratory experience. Patrick was born in Germany to Balkan parents who, at that time, were on working visas (Gastarbeiter). As a result, he spent several years in the Balkan region with his grandparents, living between the two countries until he finally reunited with his parents in Germany during his teen years. Although Patrick spent the majority of his life in Germany, due to German regulations, he could apply for a German passport only a few years prior to the interview. As a result, he had experienced various visa regimes even when travelling within the EU, and only recently had he been able to enjoy freedom of movement. When describing his visa-free relocation to London, he spoke with excitement:

For me it was now a matter of adventure and having this possibility to go somewhere without applying for a visa. This was just fantastic. (Patrick)

⁷ Please note, all of the participants relocated to the UK prior to the Brexit Vote.

For Patrick, having the opportunity to engage in free movement led to a noticeable change in his migration practices and experiences. However, even those participants who enjoyed the freedom of movement prior to this relocation to Britain, also expressed that such circumstances have facilitated their mobility. In his account, Mathias, a reader in his mid-40s, spoke about the ease and fluidity of mobility within the EU:

Between EU countries it's easy to move. I mean, when I moved here it was more of an idea "let's see what happen" and it wasn't fixed whether I would stay in the UK or not. (Mathias)

Using the notion of Eurostars may help us to understand such descriptions. The concept of Eurostars suggests that Western European EU citizens may enjoy the advantages of the EU, and in particular the Freedom of Movement rights, and enjoy relatively frictionless and easy mobility in which barriers are removed as they enjoy transferability of education, qualifications, and experience (see Santacreu et al., 2009; Favell 2011, 2013; Koikkalainen, 2009, 2014; Young et al., 2014; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014a; Carrozza et al., 2017). These legal conditions, as discussed by many participants, like Mathias and Patrick, facilitated relocation. Furthermore, when discussing their decision to move, many of my participants assumed transferability of education and work experience, and spoke about compatibility between the specific skill set and experiences, and job demands in the destination country. Only a few professionals in my sample were aware and spoke about challenges of transferability: those were trained as doctors and lawyers, and were required to pass a state exam before being able to work according to their qualifications.

By analysing these accounts, I uncovered that the majority of participants were able to integrate seemingly easily into the local labour market due to formal and informal recognition

of German diplomas by the state and the employers. That, in turn, simplified movement between the two labour markets, as majority of these German professionals did not need to undergo additional training or requalification before they could start their employment in Britain. Such data provide some support for the ability of some German professionals to signal their educational and cultural skills and resources to local employers. Such findings contribute to the body of scholarship on the impact of recognition of diplomas, qualifications, and work experience on mobility and transition for intra-EU mobility (Iredale, 2001; Beaverstock, 2005; Young et al., 2014; Carrozza et al., 2017).

Andreas, a researcher in his late-30s, was typical of many participants in my sample, who described their relocation in term of skill match, and seemed to not be concerned about recognition of diplomas, experience, or skills. According to Andreas, he came across what he considered an interesting position in Britain which matched his profile and research interest. Despite having an employment contract in Germany, he could not overlook this chance and applied for the position. According to him, the match between his expertise and the job profile guided his decision:

At the time I was working in Berlin at a university research institution. I've worked there for three years. I didn't really look for jobs yet because I had a year left on my contract but I came across this job posting for this project here. It matched my profile so well that I basically had to try and apply. I got the job and I could postpone the starting date a little bit. (Andreas)

A similar account was presented by Fabian, an engineer in his late-30s. In a similar manner to Andreas, Fabian described his decision process as easy and fast, highlighting the match between the job profile and his expertise:

I saw this job and I applied because it matched my profile so well, like all the things asked for in the job advert, I basically ticked all the boxes. (Fabian)

Such accounts were typical among German male and female professionals in my sample who relocated after securing employment. These examples illustrate the operation of the European single market on an individual level, and are in line with existing scholarship on the topic that suggests that EU mobility may be viewed as a special case of job matching between a job seeker from one country and a job in another (Bardsley and Ederveen, 2003; Blitz, 2005; Heinz and Ward-Warmedinger, 2006).

In addition to the legal characteristics of the EU, cultural and historical characteristics have also impacted the decision to move within the region. Going beyond the legal aspects and bringing the cultural and historical characteristics of the EU into analysis facilitates our understanding of mobility within the EU. For example, during the interview with Ula, a researcher in her late-20s, I noticed how her reasons to relocate within the EU were connected to the assumed similarity of cultural and historical characteristics. These led to a perception that staying within the EU is more comfortable and easier not only from a practical but also from an emotional point of view:

I look for jobs in Europe. Of course, I'm realistic I consider practical issues. Norway is probably not on my list because they're not European Union, and Swiss Visa is complicated.

It's also because I feel more connected to Europe and to other European countries. I recognised it when I actually lived in the States, there is much difference between how people are there [in the US] and how people are here [in the EU]. If I would put it in one word, then I would probably say it is solidarity. It feels here in Europe that we have a greater understanding of what solidarity means. We do care about people around us, even when it's against

our own interests. I find this somehow important. I prefer to stay in Europe.
(Ula)

As Ula herself explained, cultural difference between the US and the EU, and the assumed similarity between Britain and Germany, contributed to her decision and her preference to stay within the EU. However, Ula's reference to her experience in the US was not unique in this sense. Many participants, male and female, had spent some time working or studying in the US, or had contemplated relocating to the US in the future. While from an employment perspective many were attracted by the US labour market and the fact that they spoke the English language, those participants explained that relocating to the US was a more complicated and difficult option both bureaucratically and culturally. In contrast, assumed similarities between EU countries were mentioned in relation to European history, culture, religion, as well as social and political structures. While witnessing such expectations and assumptions of the similarity between Germany and Britain, I was interested to learn the extent to which these expectations were met. I address this topic of cultural similarities and diversity in the next chapter.

The role of the EU and specifically the freedom of movement had an even larger impact for those participants who decided to relocate together with their partners. The fact that no additional paperwork was required in the case of family migration contributed to the decision to move within the EU. The example of Ula provided an illustration for this topic as well. When considering relocation, Ula was keen to relocate together with her partner. Before her relocation, Ula received two job offers, one in the US and one in Britain. As she intended to move with her partner, she explained that moving to Britain was an easier move for her and

for her partner due to the free movement. If she had decided to move to the US she would still need to apply for a “dependent visa” for her partner despite having a visa for herself. Even if her partner was granted entry to the US, Ula was not sure if this type of visa had any employment-related restrictions or not. Therefore, she decided to decline the offer in the US and accept the job in Britain:

I wasn't entirely sure whether my partner would get a visa for the US. We didn't know. I think it would have been problematic getting her a visa. (Ula)

Indeed, the legal right to move between the EU countries, as well as the right to access local labour market for both partners was a recurring topic during interviews. Many participants, similarly to Ula, took the employment perspective of partners into consideration when choosing their destination country. This, however, is not surprising. As I mentioned in the methodological chapter, many participants in my sample were accompanied or followed by their partners to Britain and anticipated their reemployment after relocation. I discuss this issue later in the chapter and devote more attention to the employment of partners in Chapter 6.

Overall, many of participants spoke about mobility within the EU using words like “natural”, suggesting that for them moving within the EU felt to be a natural decision. This was the case for Fabian, introduced earlier. He described his migration as natural and un-bureaucratic, and explained that moving within the EU as an EU citizen had contributed to this perception:

Because it is an EU country - it was easy to move here. It felt so natural. It also a reason for not feeling as an expat or migrant. I don't need a work permit. The only thing you need is a National Security Number but it was so un-

bureaucratic, no hurdle. For people from Asia, it is different they have to apply for a visa, they pay an extra tax for the NHS. (Fabian)

In my effort to understand this type of portrayal and attitude towards migration within the EU, I incorporated the wider historical approach, and in particular the role of Germany within the EU project. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, Germany was one of the core countries which contributed to the development of contemporary EU institutions as well as one of the first countries to participate in Freedom of Movement. Furthermore, German citizens, especially the highly-skilled, are among the most mobile EU citizens (Eurobarometer, 2018). As a result, one might suggest that growing up in such an environment may have led some of my participants to internalise intra-EU mobility, and hence describe it as a “natural” event.

Furthermore, this quote illustrates another aspect discussed by many of my participants: how Freedom of Movement within the EU has contributed to a perception that these German professionals are not “real migrants” or “unwelcome foreigners.” As mentioned by Fabian and Ula earlier, the legal right to move freely to Britain as well as the perceived cultural similarities contribute to such a perception. Moreover, according to these participants, the term “migrant” is more appropriate for describing people who have relocated indefinitely, or have come in search of a better life or work. They themselves, however, relocated after a contract had been signed and, at least at the time of arrival, did not intend to settle permanently. Finally, for many of my participants, the term “migrant” was associated with low occupational status and welfare benefits. Here again, due to the employment and occupational status of these interviewees, they felt that their position was different and

therefore they were not “real migrants”. According to my analysis, operating within this environment of the EU contributed to a unique experience of relocation which allowed some of my participants to differentiate and distance themselves from other types of non-EU migrants. Such a finding is in line with what was observed by other scholars in other intra-EU research projects (Favell 2008, 2009, 2013; Koikkalainen, 2014; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014a; Young et al., 2014). Koikkalainen (2014) in her research on mobile Finns within the EU as well as Ryan and Mulholand (2014) in their research on the French in London also documented such attitudes among their participants, many of whom portrayed themselves as non-migrants. While this was true for many of the participants interviewed before the Brexit Vote, those interviewed after the Vote presented a different narrative, which I discuss in the next chapter.

Finally, according to the majority of my participants, moving within the EU had practical advantages. Due to geographic proximity between EU Member States, moving within the EU seemed to reduce the disturbance to family relationships between my participants and their family members in Germany. The importance of maintaining and managing what was considered good family relationships between those in Britain and family members in Germany was a reoccurring motive discussed by both male and female participants. Most interviewees wanted to visit Germany on a budget and in a timely manner, be it for a vacation, long weekends, or in case of emergency. Here, the geographic distance was measured not by the sheer numeric distance in miles, but rather as a combined measure of several attributes, such as available transportation connections and the economic costs of such travel, as well as the time required to reach the destination. Indeed, while the USA and Australia were

considered as potential destination countries by many participants they were omitted from job searches or were given low priority because these destinations were further away from Germany. Therefore, the geographic proximity between EU countries, which allowed easier movement between countries, provided another advantage for moving within the EU. In fact, many interviewees pointed to the convenience of locations such as London and Oxbridge, which allowed for easier and faster travel even compared to some locations in Germany. These findings are in line with what was identified by Lowell (2008) in her research on highly skilled migrants and by Young and colleagues (2014) in their research on the mobility of EU professionals. In a similar manner to this body of scholarship, my findings show that some highly-skilled tend to move within a region and remain close to home in order to minimise any disturbances that such relocation may have on relationships with family and friends in Germany.

Marius was typical of many participants who spoke about the role of geographic characteristics as a main reason to relocate within the EU. When I met Marius, a father of two, he had just had his second child in Britain. He was keen to ensure a good quality relationship between his children and family back in Germany. Therefore, he preferred to stay in Europe and had not even considered employment options outside:

We had our first child, and we didn't want to move him too far away from his grandparents and family. I like to have a good involvement with the other parts of the family, grandparents, and it may be unaffordable if you live outside of Europe. (Marius)

An almost identical account emerged during my interview with Martin, a research associate in his mid-40s:

We had our first child and grandparents wanted to come to visit. Within Europe that's still feasible and doesn't cause too much disruption in family relationships. Going to the US, going to Australia, these kinds of things become much more challenging. (Martin)

The observed challenges in and desire for these transgenerational relationships in these young families in my sample was never mentioned in relation to practical support such as the provision of childcare by the extended family members. In fact, before the relocation to Britain, many interviewees did not live in the same location as other members of their extended family, nor did they rely on their financial or practical support. As a result, transgenerational relationships were oftentimes mentioned in regard to a desire for emotional connection. The existing body of scholarship suggests that some migrant groups that may have relied on extended family for childcare prior to relocation, have experienced new challenges due to the loss of this type of support after relocation (see Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Ho, 2006; Baldassar, 2007; Baldassar et al., 2014). My study contributes to this literature by suggesting that even in the case where this type of support plays a smaller role, families may still strive to secure transnational relations in order to establish emotional connections between children and family members in the country of origin, and therefore ensuring these relations impacts the choice of destination countries.

4.3 BRITAIN AS A DESTINATION COUNTRY

While for many participants moving within the EU was prioritised, the question remained as to why they chose Britain over various other EU Member States. When asked to elaborate on why they were currently living in Britain, the majority of German professionals

in my sample stated employment-related reasons. However, at the same time, ten core participants explained that the reason was personal, meaning that their partner was in Britain.

I was curious to go beyond the general discussion and interrogate which factors contributed to the decision to seek employment particularly in Britain. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 2, professionals from affluent EU countries may have a larger pool of destination countries as their skills are in high demand and they enjoy transferability of education and skills. By probing and asking participants to elaborate on the decision, I found that several factors not only contributed to their decision to relocate to Britain, but also seemed to simplify the relocation itself.

According to the analysis, English language competence seemed to be an important factor in explaining some of the mobility of German professionals to Britain. Following my analysis, I found various mechanisms through which language impacted the decision as well as relocation experiences. While I touch upon in this in this section, I discuss the role of language in greater detail in Chapter 5. For example, for Samuel, a senior lecturer in his early-40s, English language competence not only impacted the location choice but also affected and simplified his transition between the countries:

Because that was the only other language I speak. In Germany, I already taught in English once in a while, so for me, that was the easiest transfer.
(Samuel)

All of the German professionals in my sample were fluent in English and believed that they were competent enough to perform work-related tasks using it. Their English language competence was assessed at the job interview, though they were not required to provide the

results of an official English language test to the British employer. Furthermore, according to participants such as Samuel, speaking the English language contributed to a smoother transition between Germany and Britain. In contrast to what was suggested by other scholars (Portes et al., 2001; Amit, 2007; Thorn and Inkson, 2013) who have argued that language competence may be a less relevant factor in explaining highly-skilled migration (as they are more likely to adapt to foreign languages), my study suggests that for some mobile professionals language may still play a role when considering relocation and determining destination countries. Furthermore, such findings support other studies (Covell et al., 2015; Gimenez and Morgan, 2017) by showing that for some professional migrants proficiency in the local language reduces barriers to integration into the local labour market.

In addition to language, I found that some share of mobility of my sample can be attributed to institutional connection and professional networks that were developed between Germany and the UK. Indeed, while mobility of German professionals took place within the environment of the EU, many of my participants relocated to Britain following some institutional or professional connections. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, various British institutions have bilateral agreements with Germany, and various German companies have local offices across the UK, all of which contribute to the mobility of the German labour force to Britain. Alissa's story is exemplary in this regard. Before coming to Britain, Alissa was a language tutor at one of the universities in Germany. One day she was approached by her professor who told her about a similar position at an Oxbridge University. This position was established as a result of dual collaboration between the two specific universities and

involved the relocation of German tutors to this British university. After explaining the position, Alissa's professor offered her the post:

I got my job [*teaching in the UK*] through my professor in Germany. There is a teaching position based on the twin town agreement. It's not a very well-known position, a kind of unofficial but it exists. A colleague asked my professor and she suggested I might be a suitable candidate. They thought I was perfectly suitable for the teaching job. [...] I thought it sounds reasonable and it wasn't that many work hours. It seemed like a nice coincidence and I didn't have any reservations at all. I felt like nothing was holding me back; I was quite ready to go. (Alissa)

Alissa's account was not unique in this regard; a few other participants relocated through similar institutional connections. These institutional connections were not specific to academics. For example, local branches of various German companies, such as Deutsche Bank, BMW, and DAAD, also stimulate mobility of German professionals to Britain. These local offices may decide to move their employees through expat contracts, or recruit new German employees for their foreign offices in Britain. According to my analysis, using these collaborative schemes between academic and research institutions to pursue mobility seemed to ease the decision to relocate, the relocation process itself, and contribute to the notion of frictionless mobility. In a similar manner, Blitz (2005) has shown that institutional agreements between Spain and the UK have helped to facilitate recruitment of Spanish doctors for the NHS. Together with my findings, these findings demonstrate how various agreements and mobility schemes between individual states of the EU promote and simplify mobility between the countries (Blitz, 2005; Bettin and Bontempi, 2008; Recchi, 2008, 2015; Carrozza et al., 2017).

In addition to institutional ones, some participants used professional connections and networks. Turning to the body of literature on professional networks also helps us to understand mobility and the experiences of these German professionals. According to my analysis, having professional networks in Britain impacted location choice and facilitated the mobility of these German professionals to Britain through the circulation of information about job openings and providing access to the British labour market. To illustrate the topic, consider the case of Bernhard, a lecturer in his early-30s, who met his future employer at a conference in Britain. His specific skill set made him a desirable employee for this company, resulting in him being offered to apply for this position twice: first, after the first encounter at the conference, which he could not accept, and the second time, a year later, which he accepted:

I met people from this company at conferences and then we talked about the possibility of coming for a one-month visit, which happened in 2009. I liked it. Actually, they contacted me about whether I wanted to apply for a post-doc but at that time I wasn't finished with my PhD. I said I can't apply but I will be happy to come for a month. After finishing my PhD I applied for a post-doc position. That was in February, and in October I started. (Bernhard)

Bernhard's account also illustrates how some of these international professional networks are built. Bernhard, in a similar manner to many other participants, had some experience of studying or working abroad, primarily in another EU country. Such previous mobility may be attributed to various initiatives on the European and local levels (such as the ERASMUS programme and joint PhD programmes) that promote collaboration between universities and industries within the EU (Kim, 2009; Favell and Recchi, 2009; Carrozza et al., 2017).

A similar account was provided by Claus, a German researcher in his early-30s. Before relocating to Britain, he spent several years studying and working in France. He was ready for a change and after discussing his desires with a colleague from Britain, he was offered a position at Oxbridge University:

I really didn't know what to do. One of the colleagues who was based here he offered me a position to come here and then I agreed. Because it's a really good position. (Claus)

Claus's account was typical among many of my male and female participants. In fact, my findings suggest that by utilising professional and personal networks, professionals not only accessed information about employment opportunities but in some cases were offered a job position directly. These findings are in line with what was identified by other scholars who have long noticed the positive impact of social networks on job seeking and career attainment abroad (Bird, 1994; DeFillippi and Arthur, 1994; Arthur et al., 1995; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014b; Ryan et al., 2015; Keskiner and Crul, 2017).

This type of portrayal was also presented by Carolyn, a manager in an international publishing company in her late-30s. During the interview, she spoke with excitement about her relocation. She recalled that while having an accommodating conversation with her friend, she expressed her desire to change her employer. She was then surprised to learn that her friend knew about a position and eventually helped her to establish connections. Two weeks after this conversation, Carolyn started a new job:

I talked to a friend and she said I know of a vacancy. And I knew that she had been working in London in the past, before I got to know her. I said why not. She said it was a maternity cover, foreign rights. Exactly the same thing I've done before. Something I knew I could do. Something I know I'm good at.

Just from a completely different perspective. I handed in my CV and two weeks later I had a job. (Carolyn)

In this rich quote, Carolyn describes the environment in which mobility can take place. She illustrates how utilising these networks simplified the decision and the transition between labour markets. In particular, her friend not only provided her with the most relevant information as she knew Carolyn's preference, but also assisted her in establishing contact with the potential employer. Such findings stand in line with those presented by other scholars (Feldman and Klaas, 2002; Fountain, 2005), who suggest that networks may forward the most relevant information about possible employment as they know the individual and his/her aspirations. This, in turn, may reduce the time for both the job search as well as the screening process, facilitating the transition between the two jobs.

Finally, Carolyn's account also draws our attention to the particularities of the hiring process. While analysing my data, I uncovered that the efficiency of the recruitment and hiring process in Britain also contributed to the seemingly frictionless experience of mobility. To illustrate the point, consider the case of Judith, a German-born lecturer in her mid-30s, who before the relocation to Britain worked and lived in Brazil. Judith and her husband Adam were keen to return to Europe and applied for several positions, both in Germany and the UK. Because they wanted to move after both secured employment in Britain, they started to apply for jobs in Britain a year and a half before their contracts in Brazil ended. She was surprised as their third application was successful and they had to terminate their contracts in Brazil and relocate to Britain a year earlier than anticipated. When talking about the whole situation Judith explained:

When we got the offer I was surprised, maybe even almost a bit shocked because I really didn't expect it. I didn't expect to have to make this decision [to move to Britain]. (Judith)

The speedy process of finding a job and starting work was often mentioned by my participants across various occupations. The relatively fast hiring process of British employers seemed to contribute to the apparent frictionless mobility and was contrasted with the process in Germany, which, according to participants, was very time-consuming and more bureaucratic. For Fabian, introduced earlier, only six weeks passed between submitting an application for the position and starting as a new employee in Britain:

I was looking for a job and I applied. The woman from the agency called me the next day, later she wrote me an email telling me that I got a job interview over telephone. Later I went to London for the job interview. It was six weeks between Google search and signing the contract. Yes, six weeks. (Fabian)

For several participants, choosing Britain as a destination country within the EU was associated with technical and financial side of the industry they worked in. Theo, a professor in his mid-40s, was typical of a few of these participants. He explained that for those employed in Higher Education and Research and Development, the UK and especially the area between London, Oxford, and Cambridge was “a magical triangle”, an area well-known for its renowned research and teaching institutions:

In life sciences it is called the magic triangle and there are many, many possibilities for life scientists to find jobs in this region. They are not only universities but also companies, so it is a very good spot for a job searching. (Theo)

This was not a unique account for those employed in academia or other research institutions. A similar story was presented by a few other participants in the financial,

gambling, and publishing industries. Teresa, a publisher in her late-30s, was one of them. While working in Germany she had several opportunities to work with publishers in the UK and the USA, and regarded relocation to either of these locations as a good career move. As the result, when her now-husband was offered the opportunity to return to an area near London, she didn't hesitate and decided to relocate with him. Although the interview took place almost two years after her relocation, she spoke with excitement about the British publishing scene:

In Germany the industry is small, unimportant, here it's so much bigger. You are [as a publisher] more involved in publishing process, you actually go to meetings with designer and editor, and they value your opinion. You'll never get this in Germany. (Teresa)

Indeed, as mentioned in the introduction, the area of London-Oxford-Cambridge is not known only for its academic institutions. It is also home to various IT companies (such as Microsoft Research and Development offices), European institutions (such as the European Space Agency), German plants and companies (such as Deutsche Bank and BMW plants), all of which provided employment for some participants in my sample. Furthermore, according to UK census data, this area has the highest share of German nationals, peaking around Oxford, London, and Cambridge (see Figure 4).

My findings suggest that taking into account industrial characteristics of the specific area and country helps us to better understand the reasons as well as location choices for highly-skilled movers, even in the case of affluent countries. Indeed, while some industries may have similar levels of development and size across affluent countries, technological developments and financial resources of other industries may vary. This discrepancy between

industries may shift and shape the specific migration trajectory of professionals depending on their occupation and industry affiliations. Such findings are in line with what was identified by other bodies of research that show that migration of the highly-skilled may correspond to developments in the structure of business (Salt, 1992), as well as the reputation of the firm/institution (Doherty et al., 2011). However, my findings suggest the relevance of these factors in explaining some forms of highly-skilled migration between affluent countries which otherwise have similar characteristics, such as general economic development, standards of living, and social and political systems.

A few other participants preferred Britain due to their assumption that the British labour market is more inclusive of foreigners. Phillipa, a lecturer in her late-30s, was among these participants. She deliberately moved to Britain together with her husband because they assumed the British labour market was open for foreigners:

Sebastian started applying and so we decided that England would be a good place because both of us speak English. We also thought that the system could be open, that universities are more open to foreign academics and we strategically decided that England could be a good place to be. (Phillipa)

In this rich quote, Phillipa touches upon several topics. First, how language competence influenced the decision to choose Britain among other EU countries. Second, she spoke about her preference for the British system due to the assumed openness to foreigners. According to her, this aspect was supposed to provide an advantage and simplify transition and integration into the local labour market. While such an assumption seemed to contribute to her desire to move to Britain, the question remained as to whether such expectations were met after the relocation. I discuss this topic in the next chapter.

Finally, while many of my participants were attracted to Britain following employment-related factors, a few participants intentionally searched for a job specifically in the UK because they wanted to reunite with their partners. This was true for those participants who had partners in Britain, as well as those who saw Britain as a place to start family life. Martin, a German researcher in his mid-40s, illustrates this point. Martin met his now-wife Jeni during his stay abroad in Africa, and after a few years in a long-distance relationship, she relocated to Germany to be with Martin. However, Jeni's relocation to Germany was a challenging experience, which also negatively affected their relationship. As a result, Martin looked for jobs abroad to have the opportunity to live in a neutral country, where neither of them had an advantage:

I also wanted to know how our relationship develops. I could have imagined marrying her at the time when we came here, but I wanted to be sure. Seeing my wife in her home country and seeing her in Germany, it was two different people. In her country of residence, she was extremely self-confident, independent. [In] Germany she was very much dependent on me. I wanted to know how will she be when we go somewhere else. She was back to her independent self. (Martin)

While a relatively small number in my sample were motivated by this factor, their accounts demonstrate variation in regard to the motives of the highly-skilled to pursue migration, and helps us better understand the choice of destination country. Another example is provided by Teresa, a publisher introduced earlier. Teresa met her now-husband when he was temporarily stationed in a British military base in the South of Germany. Since then, he was reassigned and spent a few years in Central Asia. At that time, he and Teresa had a long-distance relationship, and when he was deployed back to the UK, Teresa decided to reunite with him. She initially wanted to relocate without a job and travel together with her now-

husband across the UK before starting to settle in the country. While researching the British labour market before the actual relocation, she applied for a job and was surprised to get an employment contract. She started to work the same week as she relocated:

I relocated here because my now husband was reassigned and stationed here, he is in the army. The plan was to come over and travel together for a month. However, I got a job very quickly. Eventually, I had to move here and start working immediately. This was good but we didn't have a break. Unfortunately. (Teresa)

This quote illustrates several aspects, such as fast hiring practices, smooth transition of skills and qualifications, as well as the role of partners and romantic reasons. I found that for ten core participants, relocating to Britain was associated with their desire to reunite with a partner, which led them to seek employment in Britain in the first place. Such data are in line with the growing body of research that highlights the role of romantic relationships in the migration decisions of intra-EU migrants (see Walsh, 2009; Santacreu et al., 2009; Verwiebe, 2014; Emilsson and Adolfsson, 2019). Despite low numbers in my sample, these accounts demonstrate variation in regard to the motivations of highly-skilled migrants to pursue migration. Indeed, due to freedom of movement, these participants could relocate to Britain regardless of the legal status of their relationship and use this opportunity to see how the relationship develops. Due to the richness of this data, the entirety of Chapter 6 is devoted to the particularities of migration of coupled participants, and discusses the migration decisions, relocation practices and migratory experiences of couples as well as each individual member.

4.4 WHICH JOB IS GOOD ENOUGH TO PURSUE MIGRATION?

As discussed in the methodological chapter, I have explicitly focused on professionals who have relocated after finding employment according to their qualification and who were employed before the relocation. This characteristic of the sample provided an opportunity to examine which job-related factors contributed to the desire to accept the job in Britain and subsequently to relocate. Taking into account the job-related factors on migration decisions and location preferences for some of these German professionals was particularly relevant, as many applied for and were offered several jobs in various EU and non-EU countries. I was curious to understand the specifics of jobs in Britain that attracted these German professionals.

In my effort to understand further which factors contributed to job desirability in Britain, I asked participants to reflect on job attributes and, if applicable, to describe their decision-making process when several job offers were evaluated. This was exemplified by Christof, a senior lecturer in his early-40s. During the interview he describe some of the guidance for this decision making:

Work is satisfying, you have possibilities to grow and develop, your work is being appreciated, and well payed. You can make a compromise on one of these but not more. For example, you can do something that you love in a place that you love and but they don't pay you that well. It's okay. You can be in a place that is not very good, you do something that you love and they pay you a lot of money. That might be okay. But I think I rather live in a place I like; I rather compromise on the salary. (Christof)

First, this quote provides a glimpse into the career and employment considerations of some highly-skilled, and show how these considerations impact migration decisions. Such a

portrayal was typical of many interviewees who used migration to negotiate their own careers and work arrangements according to their own aspirations. In order to deepen our understanding of this acceptance of labour mobility, I have also incorporated the scholarship on boundaryless careers (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Allvin, 2008) and “do-it-yourself biography” (Beck et al., 1992). Many of the professionals in my sample seemed to internalise what can be described as boundaryless careers (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996). They took an active role in organising and managing their careers through international labour mobility, followed personal employment preferences, and relied on wider professional networks rather than company-related ones. These findings demonstrate the relevance of the boundaryless career framework for the analysis of highly-skilled migration within the EU (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Allvin, 2008; Thorn, 2009). Such data contribute to the discussion on the boundaryless career paradigm and “do it yourself-biography” which suggest a new type of modern employee — one who takes an active role in managing his/her career and shifts his/her employment aspirations and circumstances (Beck et al., 1992; Beck, 2002, 2014; Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Allvin, 2008; Thorn, 2009; Elliott and Urry, 2010; Thorn and Inkson, 2013). While these theoretical frameworks do not necessarily address the international migration of employees, I suggest that applying them to the context of EU mobility deepens our understanding of the motives for migration of these highly-skilled migrants.

Second, such an account provides a description of the complexity of a decision, and shows how different aspects, such as financial and non-pecuniary, interplay. Non-pecuniary factors, and in particular the emotional satisfaction from the job, were mentioned by the

majority of male and female professionals. Participants used a variety of words to describe this, such as “doing something that I like”, “I need a challenging job”, and “I don’t want just 9 to 5”. Despite variation with regard to wording, participants across all the occupations expressed a desire to work in a specific field of expertise and perform tasks that they were emotionally connected with. Mathias, introduced earlier, expressed a preference for work that he felt connected to; however, he also explained that he felt fortunate to be able to do work which he enjoys:

I need to be able to identify myself with what I'm doing. I need to be proud of what I'm doing. I would not be able to hold on to a job for long if it's really just for the money. A job that I really hate is really just do to pay the bills and I have to say I'm very privileged and fortunate that I could do something that I really enjoy. Many people don't have a choice. I've been very lucky so far.
(Mathias)

Such accounts support the literature, demonstrating that professionals see employment not just as a way to obtain an income, but as an opportunity for personal development and self-fulfilment. These findings contribute to the ongoing debate on the meaning and nature of work in the life of highly-skilled workers (Bradley et al., 2000; Herzberg, 2003; Grint, 2005; Anton et al., 2012; Warhurst et al., 2012; Felstead et al., 2015) by highlighting the emotional component in performing work-related tasks. Similarly, in line within these studies, my findings show that many professionals in my sample preferred tasks that were intellectually challenging. Fabian, an engineer in his late 30s, introduced earlier, explained how repetitiveness and detailed knowledge of the work process stimulated him to seek new employment and quit his job in Germany. Once he found this position in Britain, which was

intellectually challenging and allowed for personal and professional development, he relocated:

After five years in a company in Germany, I didn't see any further career developments. I would have just repeated every work I have done every year. I always want some development, progress, or learn new things. If I have a feeling that I am stuck - it is a good reason to start looking for another job. (Fabian)

Considering the body of scholarship on the sociology of work and work satisfaction (Herzberg, 2003; Edwards and Wajcman, 2005; Warhurst et al., 2012; Felstead et al., 2015) helps to deepen our understanding of why — despite having well-paid, in some cases permanent contracts in Germany and residing in one of the affluent countries in the world — many of my participants decided to quit their jobs and search for new employment in another country and subsequently to relocate. According to my data, repetition in terms of knowing the procedures, performing the same or similar tasks, all contributed to dissatisfaction with employment and led many of my interviewees to seek new jobs. These specific findings suggest that for some highly-skilled even from affluent countries, having secured income and mastering performance-related work tasks may be one of the reasons to search for new employment.

While non-pecuniary factors associated with employment were mentioned repeatedly, the financial aspect was also mentioned by participants regardless of occupation and family type. Research suggests that workers might migrate to gain access to better employment opportunities and higher wages (Borjas et al., 1996; Bauer and Zimmermann, 1999; Geis, 2013). The financial aspect, mentioned by my participants, was primarily associated with

ensuring appropriate income – which meant enough money to maintain a similar standard of living as in Germany.

Having secured an appropriate income abroad was, however, even more important in the case of married migrants with children. To illustrate the interplay between financial considerations and migration to Britain, consider the case of Clemens. Clemens is a language tutor in his early-30s and a father of two. He was and remained a main breadwinner in his household prior to and after migration. Similar to many others, he also applied for several positions and had two job offers, one in Britain and one in Spain. According to him, financial security and the range of the income was the decisive factor in quitting his job in Germany, declining the position in Spain, and accepting the job Britain. This is what he said:

When I applied for this job [in Britain] I knew that the payment is quite good and that I would be able to support my family. Because it's co-financed by the German academic exchange service. There were other jobs, for example in China or the job in Spain, where it would have been difficult to support a family of four people only by my salary, so the financial aspect was an important one when we made that decision. It was not such a big factor when I was single, I never thought about money. I would have not studied literature if I thought about the money, but now since I have children - of course I have to think about my children. (Clemens)

While the literature on highly-skilled, or co-called Eurostars, tends to neglect the financial factor associated with their mobility, my findings suggest that financial rewards may play an important role in the mobility of professionals and determine their country of destination. Due to the fact that the majority of participants in my sample relied primarily on their income from employment to finance their living, it is not surprising that financial rewards were taken into account and, in some cases, served as a decisive factor in the migration decision. While a few other scholars (Weiss, 2006; Klekowski von Koppenfels,

2014) have discussed variation in regard to the financial position of highly-skilled migrants in other contexts, my study challenges the assumed homogeneity of highly skilled European professionals and shows that they differ in terms of occupation, career stage and pay range and overall financial status. In my sample, financial factors were mentioned by both those who work in academic and non-academic institutions. This is in line with what is suggested in various bodies of scholarship, which also show that financial motivations, such as a higher salary rate, technical resources of the institution, and available research funds play a major role in the relocation of academics (Bennon and Locke, 2010; Vysotskaya 2014; Tremblay et al., 2014).

The financial aspect was mentioned by participants regardless of the type of household (single- or dual-earner households). For those in dual-earner households, this was a preemptive measure, as they anticipated changes in finances. Securing what was considered enough income allowed some of these dual-earner households to function as a single-earner household, either permanently or temporarily until their partners were reemployed. Such data contribute to the literature which has ample examples of the role of financial incentives for the relocation of low-skilled migrants, or those from less affluent countries (Harris and Todaro, 1970; Bennon and Locke, 2010; Tremblay et al., 2014; Vysotskaya, 2014; Padaiga et al., 2014), and shows the relevance of this factor for highly-skilled migrants from affluent countries. Furthermore, my findings contribute to the body of scholarship in the sociology of work (Taylor, 1972; Beynon and Blackburn, 1972; Clutterbuck and Hill, 1981; Bradley et al., 2000; Guest, 2001; Grint, 2005; Warhurst et al., 2012; Felstead et al., 2015) and show how financial and non-pecuniary motives for work interplay for mobile professionals.

For a few of my participants, the determining factor of the British job was a permanent contract. Even though these professionals did not always intend to work in Britain until retirement, having a permanent contract ensured a higher degree of flexibility: the question of whether and when to change employment was the employee's decision rather than the employer's. For these participants, the aspect of a permanent contract seemed to provide not only a sense of security, but also a sense of empowerment, freedom, and control. Continuing with the example of Ula illustrates the point. She moved to the UK after obtaining a permanent employment contract, which, according to her, gave her a sense of freedom to decide about her future. In fact, despite having this permanent contact, she left Britain a year after the interview. When discussing her decision to accept this job in Britain, she explained:

I wanted a permanent position. I probably won't even stay here for a long time, but I wanted to be able to decide for myself whether I want to go rather than being forced to apply somewhere else. (Ula)

The issue of a permanent contract was even more profound in the case of early-career academics. This type of preference was expressed by Mathias, introduced earlier in the chapter. His account was typical of many other interviewees from academia who were dissatisfied with the employment conditions and, in particular, fixed-term contracts offered to early academics in Germany, and preferred the permanent contract offered for similar positions in Britain:

In Germany, between PhD and full professor position there are no permanent positions. Basically, you do a PhD with 27, 30, and you do not have any guarantee that you will have a permanent position before you are 40, or even older. If you're lucky, maybe earlier. I decided I would try the UK. The UK system is different, as an academic you can start at a lower level as a lecturer; this position is already permanent and quite independent. (Mathias)

In a similar manner to Mathias, many other participants were critical about German academia, which is, according to them, more hierarchal and based on personal networks than the British one, which they described as open with its merit-based evaluation. Such findings contribute to various bodies of research on German emigration which also identified low job satisfaction and lack of professional opportunities or career prospects among reasons for German professionals to relocate (Remhof, 2008; Erlinghagen et al., 2009; Erlinghagen and Stegmann, 2009; Seidler et al., 2010; Verwiebe et al., 2010). Indeed, dissatisfaction of German emigrants with the hierarchical structure and leadership style in Germany was also mentioned by Ognyanova and colleagues (2014) in their research on mobile German doctors. Similarly, Knerr (2007), Remhof (2008), and more recently Pantenburg and colleagues (2018), showed that dissatisfaction with overall working conditions and blocking careers in Germany was among the reasons for academics and physicians to leave the country. My findings contribute to this discussion. In particular, while Remhof (2008) documented the negative impact of the “road to the Professorship” of German academics in 2008, my findings point to the relevance of this reason for understanding more recent emigration of German professionals and academics as well.

4.5 RISK MANAGEMENT

When interrogating the migration decision and relocation practices of my participants, I was interested to understand what contributed to this perception that migration was easy and seemingly frictionless. By interrogating their overall approach to migration, their perspective

and the actual practical steps they undertook when deciding to pursue mobility, I uncovered that what some of them applied can be described as risk management strategies.

The first strategy that many of my participants used was maintaining some connection to Germany. While for some it was associated with intentionally keeping their property in Germany, at least until they felt secure and had decided to stay in Britain for longer, others tried to maintain professional ties and ensure they could return and if they desire reintegrate into the German labour market. For a few other participants, like Max, a reader in his early-40s, not selling this property back in Germany served as a security net which provided him with a sense of security and reduced the costs of such mobility:

This is one of the reasons why I keep my house. I know if some sort of risk emerges - I have this house, with no debt or anything on it. If everything falls apart, this is a place where I can go. That is security, it is mine and no one can take it away from me. (Max)

A few other participants were keen on maintaining professional networks in Germany and ensuring that experiences or qualifications provided them with the opportunity to reintegrate into the German labour market. This was the case for Ingrid, a language tutor in her late-30s. She always wanted to work abroad, and therefore decided to obtain a certificate for teaching German as a foreign language. However, because this certificate has very limited applicability in Germany, she also obtained a certificate for teaching German as a native speaker. The latter allows her to work in German schools if she decided to go back to Germany. According to her, obtaining the two certificates provided her with flexibility to stay abroad or to choose to return to Germany while ensuring her employment perspectives:

I always wanted to teach in another country. This is why I got the certificate for teaching German as a foreign language. But on the other hand, I decided to have like a plan B: get additional certificate to teach German for native speakers. In case I want to go back to Germany after one year, after ten years. I can always go back and work in the German school system. (Ingrit)

In a similar manner to Ingrit, several participants who were intra-company transferees also spoke about the possibility of returning to Germany as one of the factors in reducing risks and uncertainties. For example, Albert, a manager in a large German company who relocated to London following a two-year expat contract, stated:

I would describe it as low-risk from a team perspective. From a job perspective I knew what I was getting in. Even if we turned out to be unhappy in the UK or in London, it's a fixed-term contract. There was always a ticket back so there was no real risk, I would have had the chance to relocate to Germany in two years' time. (Albert)

Such findings illustrate the practical sides of relocation and show that in some cases mobile professionals employ strategies to reduce anticipated as well as unanticipated risks that their mobility might have, which, in turn, contributed to seemingly frictionless mobility. Accounts like these highlight the extent to which a migration decision is a thought-through and multi-layered process. While various bodies of literature focus on the motives and experiences of mobile professionals (Nowicka, 2012; Anton et al., 2012; Vysotskaja, 2014; Young et al., 2014; Felstead et al., 2015), I contribute to this scholarship by showing how various strategies are taken into account to reduce risks and uncertainties even in the case of seemingly frictionless mobility of highly-skilled between affluent countries.

While it is hard to estimate whether the desire of these professionals to return to Germany will be fulfilled, observing this willingness to return among many of my participants was not

surprising. As discussed in the introduction chapter, German emigration records indicate that German returnees are mainly highly-skilled Germans who have spent several years studying or working abroad and who successfully reintegrate into the local labour market after their return (Ette and Sauer, 2010; Ognyanova et al., 2014; BMF, 2015, 2019).

Emotional resources also help to manage and reduce risks. The data from my interviews allowed me to observe the interplay between migration decisions, relocation practices, and emotional resources. Overall, when describing their migration to Britain, the majority of German professionals in my sample shared the assumption and expectation that they would be able to successfully handle such an endeavour. To illustrate the topic, consider the case of Steffen, a researcher in his mid-30s. Together with his partner, he first moved to Britain in 2014 for a one-year contract. Although this was a short-term contract, he decided to relocate. Reflecting on his decision during the interview, he explained that at that time, he was confident that he would be able to manage the situation and either be offered a chance to prolong the contract (which he eventually was) or find a new position in Britain or elsewhere:

In retrospect, I guess it was a bit risky. But at the same time, I've sort of given up that sort of planning. A year is a year. You go somewhere, you do something interesting. We're still young and reasonably flexible and so on. If it doesn't work then I'll have to start applying again, but I've been reasonably successful with my application so far. I've had a number of offers. Something will come up. It may mean we have to move somewhere else again, but at the moment we're not entirely tied down to a particular place. So yes, there's an element of risk, but I wouldn't say it was a prohibitive level of risk. (Steffen)

Following Steffen's account, it seems that having a positive attitude and strong belief in one's ability to deal with migration from an employment-related perspective, such as managing to prolong the contract or find new employment, all contribute to the image that

certain migration is low risk. Turning to the literature on emotional resources helps us to understand such a trend. Emotional resources refer to one's ability to manage emotions, belief systems, as well as acquired tools that influence one's ability to deal with emotionally charged situations (Svašek and Skrbiš, 2007). While in the literature emotions are oftentimes associated with the family sphere (Conradson and McKay, 2007; Ryan, 2008a; Svašek, 2010, 2012; Baldassar et al., 2014; Albrecht, 2016), in my project, I applied this theoretical framework to the professional life of mobile professionals. According my findings, having the emotional resources not only impacted migration decisions but also coloured migration experiences of professionals in my sample. Having these emotional resources (belief in one's ability to successfully manage) have also contributed to this image of frictionless mobility between the countries.

In my analysis, I was interested to understand the origins of these emotional resources across my participants. Through my investigation I found that for some, the emotional resources were built up through previous short-term mobility. The issue is exemplified by Conny. Conny, a manager in a large German company, had to visit the company's office in Britain a few times each year. As a result, she developed a feeling of familiarity with the country, became more confident in speaking the language, and became more familiar with the culture and local people. Therefore, when she was approached about a position in Britain, she felt confident that she would succeed in both the relocation and her assignment in Britain. Without this confidence, according to Conny, she could not see herself pursuing this relation:

I just feel very comfortable here. I just decided I have to do it because I will regret it otherwise later in my life. But it's really the only place [Oxford], I could never go anywhere else. I always had the feeling that I know the

place already, that I know I feel comfortable here, that I know that I get along with people. I couldn't do it like people who never been in a country and just move there and see it for the first time. It's really brave; I couldn't do that.
(Conny)

The example of Conny is not unique in this regard; 32 other participants in my sample, both male and female, had some experience of working abroad before they moved to England. This international experience may have contributed to building up their confidence in their own ability to work abroad and integrate into a new work environment. Continuing with the framework of emotional resources may be beneficial in explaining mechanisms behind circular or repeat migration. Indeed, while various surveys on mobility have demonstrated that people with some migratory experience are more likely to exhibit higher migration intentions (see Murphy-Lejeune, 2004; Esipova and Pugliese, 2011), I suggest that this may be attributed to the emotional resources that they developed through their previous migratory experience.

In addition to the impact of previous migration experience, having emotional support from the social network (friends or family) also contributes to the development of emotional resources. For Carolyn, a manager in the publishing business in her late-30s, the ability to rely on her family for financial and emotional support is what made her relocation easy and frictionless. Despite being offered a temporary position, she terminated her permanent contract in Germany and decided to have this opportunity to work and live in Britain. Having family support contributed to her confidence in successfully managing the relocation and reduced the costs and risks of such a move:

I have to mention that if something went wrong, I can rely on my parents. If something goes completely wrong, then I can go back to

Germany and my parents they would catch me. Thinking about it, I think this is an important aspect. Because I know other people who do not have that possibility to count on their parents, no matter if it's emotional or financial support, and who are just much, much more careful of what they do. (Carolyn)

Existing scholarly work suggest that extended family may provide financial support before the relocation (Boyd, 1989; Adams, 2003; de Haas, 2008). In my research, I observed that for some participants such help was rather associated with emotional support. Such was the case for Carolyn, knowing that she has the extended family to rely on helped to deal with uncertainties in mobility and contributed to the perception of frictionless mobility. Such observations are in line with what was documented by Schaer and colleagues (2017). In their research on academic mobility, they also documented that emotional support provided by extended family was essential in facilitating international mobility.

Finally, in addition to making the appropriate arrangements in Germany to minimise risks, some participants intentionally relocated to a specific location in Britain in order to reduce the risks associated with mobility. Although the role of location was not mentioned spontaneously, when asked about it, participants gave a detailed elaboration about location preferences. This is how Andreas, a research associate in one of the universities in London, spoke about his relocation. He first explained that London as a location seemed to be arbitrary. However, by the end of the conversation, the underlying impact of location on his decision unfolded:

London was more or less coincidental. I'm not sure if I would have taken the job so easily if it was in a smaller and less vibrant city. There are a lot of good institutions and universities in small cities in Holland or in Denmark, or in Sweden. I probably would have done it. But London was a big — the city itself was a big factor in favour of the decision to go. (Andreas)

Andreas's example was not unique in this sense. When asked to reflect on location choices, many of participants in my sample spoke how city size, number of foreigners, cultural amenities, and closeness to an airport contributed to the attractiveness of the relocation. In practice, closeness to an airport simplified movement between Germany and the UK, while the presence of international communities allowed people to "blend in" and eased socialisation after the relocation. For example, Claus, a researcher in his early-30s, got a job offer in a private firm in the Oxbridge area. He highly valued the ability to enjoy and participate in cultural events and explained that these city attributes influenced his decision to accept the job:

I need to live in a city that offers a certain degree of internationality, cultural offers. Otherwise I will get bored. Because work is only one thing. Ideally, you have an interesting environment that gives you some input and you meet international people. It would depend. There are definitely places where I'm not going to move. (Claus)

According to my analysis, the more employment options my participants had, the higher the influence of the city's characteristics were. For example, when having the option to choose between two positions that are similar in content, location characteristics played a determining role. At the same time, the more urgent the job change was, the less important the city characteristics seemed to be. Moreover, participants who were invited for a face-to-face job interview used this opportunity to evaluate the city. Such an evaluation had a substantial impact on the overall assessment of the position. In the words of interviewees, *I need to know if I would like to spend several years working in this city*. In some cases, both partners came together for the job interview in order to check the attractiveness of the city. Including the characteristics of the specific place of residency is important to understanding

both the migratory experiences of mobile professionals as well as their employment choices. These findings are in line with my earlier findings that showed that location of the workplace was an important factor in accepting a job offer abroad for the highly-skilled who relocated to Graz, Austria (Samarsky, 2013). I suggest that including the location of the workplace in an examination of highly-skilled migration between affluent countries may help to explain migration trajectories, especially in the case of the highly-skilled who may choose from a variety of potential destination countries. In this I follow Favell (2008, 2013) who also urged scholars to move from a more generic discussion on the destination country and focus on the particularities of specific place or city of residency.

Furthermore, these findings resemble other projects on the mobility of Western Europeans. As discussed in Chapter 2, the so-called Eurostars are not only motivated by employment opportunities but also by diversity, quality of life, leisure amenities, as well as cultural attractions that these cities may offer (Conradson and Latham, 2007; Stone and Stubbs, 2007; van Dalen and Henkens, 2007; Favell 2008, 2009, 2013; Bettin and Bontempi, 2008; Benson and O'Reilly, 2009; Koikkalainen, 2009; Beaverstock and Hall, 2012; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a).

4.6 BEING A GERMAN PROFESSIONAL IN BRITAIN

As mentioned in the introduction, German nationals are one of the largest groups of foreigners in Britain (ONS, 2017); however, relatively little is known about their experiences. Furthermore, their migration is situated within the complex historical relations between the countries. Having 53 German professionals in my sample allowed their migratory

experiences to be interrogated, taking into account the specific national context of Germany and Britain.

Reflecting on their experiences in Britain, many of my participants spoke about positive stereotyping. In particular, they stated that their Germanness was associated with punctuality and good organisation skills. This perception of Germanness, held by some of co-workers and employers, seemed to simplify the transition into the new work environment. Claus's account is a fairly typical example of the extent to which my participants were aware of how their Germanness was perceived by others. Claus, a post-doc researcher in his early-30s, reflected on the interplay between his nationality and the workplace dynamics:

I think a lot of the discrimination you get is going on a positive sense and because when people have the prejudice that you are hardworking, honest and punctual it's kind of boring but it's actually quite good. It's better than the stereotypes of being lazy and criminal. This has happened tons and tons. Like when I came late to work nobody thought it was because I was drinking too much the night before, but rather thought that I must have been at the doctor's office. And then the Italian guy comes late and they'd be like 'Ah! How was the party yesterday huh?' (Claus)

A different angle on the intersection between nationality and labour market is presented by Philippa, a partner of Sebastian, a core participant in my study. Philippa, a lecturer in her late-30s, moved to London after her husband, Sebastian, was offered a position in the city. Although they are both academics, Sebastian, a German academic, received his education in Germany, while Philippa, a Portuguese national, obtained her degree in Portugal. When comparing her husband's mobility with her own, she acknowledged the impact of nationality on employment perspectives and transition between labour markets. Following her experience, she explained how German and Portuguese academics are treated differently:

It's true that a man has more opportunities, and it's also true that a German academic is better considered than a Portuguese academic. Just positive prejudice or negative, it's my feeling. (Philippa)

First, the quotes from Claus and Philippa indicate that not all EU professionals are perceived and treated similarly in the work place, and have, in some cases, a very different set of prejudices to face. Moreover, both indicated that German professionals may have some privileges in these systems of prejudice. Such data are in line with Wlasny's (2017) findings on the German population in East England. In her research, she also found that some German nationals enjoy structural advantages which in many cases led to experiencing privileged and easy transition and integration. These findings contribute to a wider discussion on the differences of experiences between EU migrants (see Weiss, 2006, 2017; Favell, 2013; Mulholland and Ryan, 2014). Taking into account the national lens may help us better understand their experiences of migration and integration in another EU country.

Second, these accounts provide empirical examples of positive prejudice or favouritism in employment in the destination country and contribute to the literature which has ample of examples of negative discrimination (see Carlsoon and Rooth, 2007; Wrench, 2008; Baptiste, 2015). Using the discussion provided by Csedo (2008) on signalling of transnational human capital to local employers may help us to better understand this pattern. In her research on mobile professionals in the EU, she noticed how despite recognition of qualifications on the EU level, some EU highly-skilled migrants find it challenging to signal their skills and knowledge to local employers. My study revealed that despite holding non-UK diplomas, the majority of German professionals in my sample succeeded in signalling their skills and

knowledge to local employers, which seemed to smooth their relocation experience and simplify the transition between labour markets.

This observed pattern of positive perceptions of the German nationality may be partly attributed to general positive media coverage of German citizens in the UK. Rare newspaper reports that focus explicitly on German migrants describe them as well integrated, blending in with the local population, and occupying highly-skilled positions. Examples include the *Telegraph* article entitled “*Britain's German-born population prefers life under the radar*” published in 2012 which stated that Germans are “*keeping a low profile: they do not dominate the high street with schnitzel restaurants or corner sausage shops*”. Furthermore, as mentioned in the introduction chapter, despite the war periods, since the late 1940s, British officials have portrayed German foreign workers in a positive way (see Steinert and Weber-Newth, 2008; Salt, 2009). Such positive reports from the government and the media for over five decades have created a specific environment in which Germanness is evaluated positively.

The impact of one’s nationality/ethnicity on relocation and labour market outcomes was even more profound for German professionals who themselves had some migratory background. This was the case for five professionals in my sample. These participants had previously experienced relocation to Germany and compared this experience with their relocation to Britain. For Patrick, a German citizen born to Balkan parents, living in Britain has highlighted how migratory background is locally constructed. In Germany, a more homogeneous nation, he was considered to be a non-white citizen and therefore, according

to him, discriminated against. In contrast, in England, a country with a variety of ethnic non-white communities, he is considered to be a white person, hence he felt more accepted:

When I moved to Berlin, I was 16, 17, and throughout my whole life in Germany I was discriminated. Whereas here, I'm just a white guy. But in Germany you can see the difference between a Turkish guy, Italian. Here [in the UK] we are all white, but you can spot exactly where they are from. (Patrick)

The interplay between German education, nationality, and labour market participation is rarely observed or explored. Indeed, other studies of German nationals abroad (see Ette and Sauer, 2010; BMF, 2015) usually rely on quantitative data and lack information on various aspects of discrimination and/or xenophobia that these migrants may encounter in the destination country. Even more so, only a few examples of studies focused on German migrants in the British context. The rare examples include those exploring the German population in the UK from a historical perspective such as during the intra-war period or after World War II (Weber-Newth and Steinert, 2006; Manz et al., 2007). More recently, in her qualitative study, Wlasny (2017) explored the sense of belonging of German nationals currently living in Britain, as well as what it means to be a German abroad. In contrast to these works, my project highlights some of the mechanisms of the interaction between being a German professional and participation in the British labour market.

4.7 CONCLUSION

Guided by the in-depth review of existing literature and the data from 64 interviews, I interrogated migration experiences of German professionals taking into account the reasons for relocating within the EU, choosing Britain as a destination country, as well as the practical

side of the relocation, such as risk management strategies and emotional resources to deal with the relocation.

Following the existing research, one may suggest that German professionals may resemble the Eurostars in terms of their narratives, experiences frictionless mobility, and enjoyment of a relatively privileged situation after relocation. My study provides additional empirical support for such a claim. Indeed, German professionals in my sample seemed to enjoy frictionless mobility and smooth transition between labour markets. According to my analysis, several factors have contributed to this apparent frictionless mobility, foremost of which are the legal and bureaucratic environment of the EU and geographic and cultural proximity. My findings also suggest that some of these movers have internalised the fourth freedom (Favell, 2011, 2013; Recchi, 2015), and seem to accept mobility within the EU as a granted right. Furthermore, several aspects also contributed to the perception that their relocation, in particular to Britain, was easy, cost-free, and frictionless. Those included language competence, maturity of the British labour market, as well as speedy hiring and recruitment processes and the existence of networks.

While many participants described their relocation as frictionless, I wanted to interrogate the data going beyond the surface of this portrayal. Through examination of the data, I revealed that many German professionals were not immune to challenges and obstacles that other types of migrants had to face post-migration. Such data suggests that the migration experiences of German professionals is complex and involves a spectrum of experiences: while some aspects of their mobility were frictionless, as described in this chapter, others were more challenging. In the following Chapters 5 and 6, I discuss the challenges and

frictions in mobility for these mobile professionals. In Chapter 5, I reveal unexpected as well as anticipated challenges that participants encountered post-migration, and in Chapter 6, I show how having a partner added to the complexity of migration decision and relocation itself.

Chapter 5. ANTICIPATED AND UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As described in the previous chapter, at first many German professionals in my sample portrayed easy and fast decisions to relocate as well as seemingly frictionless migratory experiences. However, in many cases, the experiences and the decisions were more complex. In my effort to better understand and uncover the spectrum of their experiences, I asked them to elaborate on everyday practices before and after the relocation. In this chapter, I present these accounts and discuss anticipated and unanticipated challenges and barriers that were uncovered during the interviews. Those included adjusting to a new culture, reorganising lives, and managing the temporariness of employment or their stay. I also present a discussion on the emotional costs that such relocation imposed on the movers themselves as well as on other family members within the household. Indeed, as was mentioned in the literature review chapter, mobile professionals may still experience barriers and are not immune to other challenges (Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Butcher, 2010; Froese, 2012; Nowicka, 2012, 2013; Baldassar et al., 2014; Albrecht, 2016). By illustrating how the mobility of German professionals in my sample happened in reality and highlighting the spectrum of experiences, I contribute to this academic literature by highlighting the complexity of everyday experiences and demonstrating that even highly-skilled EU professionals from affluent countries face challenges and obstacles.

5.2 CONSTRAINTS OF EU MOBILITY

As mentioned in the previous chapter, many German participants in my sample intentionally decided to move within the EU, and spoke about the EU as a single unit, referring to its legal, cultural, and political environment. I was interested to understand and trace back the location preferences within the EU and therefore asked them to reflect on their decision and choice of destination country within the EU. By analysing these discussions, it became clear that not all EU Member States were treated similarly. Indeed, despite the fact that legally one can move freely between all EU Member States, considerations over language competence, presence of professional networks, employment options, as well as the size and structure of the industry narrowed down my participants' location choices within the EU.

This kind of rationale can be seen in the case of Ula, introduced in the previous chapter. When I first started the interview with Ula, a lecturer at Oxbridge University, she spoke about moving to Britain as an easy and straightforward decision. Ula preferred to stay within the EU due to its legal and cultural characteristics. When asked to elaborate on why she chose Britain and not another EU country, however, a much more complicated picture emerged. Although she preferred to move within the EU, she did not consider all EU countries to be equally appealing. The economic and employment situation in each Member State was taken into account before the decision to move was made:

Of course, I like Spain, I like Italy, but then I exclude those countries; they don't have a good economic situation, and they don't want any German researcher at the moment. I'm aware of that. (Ula)

A similar account was expressed by Angelika, an early career academic, whom I interviewed in Oxbridge in 2015. Only after she was asked to elaborate on the location choice, and after mentioning other destination countries within the EU and outside, did she reflect on the particularities of the inner logic of her decision. Angelika was seeking a post-doc position across the EU; however, due to her specialism in the field of Mathematics, she felt that not all research institutions across the EU were able to provide her with research facilities and a faculty to support her research ambitions. Oxbridge University was one of the few options employment-wise within the EU. She commented: “*I mean if you decide on a subject you don't have infinite choices*”.

Such discussions emerged during interviews with German participants across various industries, for example, during the interview with Carolyn, a senior publisher in her late-30s. Although, initially she spoke about the EU as a single unit, only by asking directly whether she could see herself working in various countries did I uncover the rationale in her migration decision and contemplations over the destination country. Reflecting on the EU countries where she could see herself working, she explained:

There's not much. I can dream a lot. I would love to live in Copenhagen. I'd love to live in Amsterdam. But looking at it from a practical point I would not really go there. Because if I go to another country then I really want to fit in and I want to understand things, politics and so. For me, it's either UK or Germany. (Carolyn)

Despite mentioning different sets of reasons for preferring a particular Member State over others, many participants had a clear preference a particular EU country. Those included but were not limited to the general economic development of the country, size of the local labour market, and knowledge of the local politics and language. It seems that accounting for

these preferences led to a rather restricted pool of potential countries of destination even within the EU. Such observations suggest that despite Freedom of Movement, on a personal level, mobility within the EU is still restrictive and the individual trajectory is influenced by a complex combination of factors, including the characteristics of each individual Member State.

In addition to the legal and employment characteristics of each destination country, having access to the local professional network was also mentioned as a determining factor in location choice. For a few of my participants, not having connections to a local professional network in the destination country led them to deliberately remove such countries from consideration, even within the EU. This was the case for Lucas, a manager in his early-40s specialising in the IT industry. During his interview, Lucas explained that his motivation to search for a job in Britain and Germany stemmed not only from the size and characteristics of the IT industry, but also because he had appropriate professional networks in these countries. In contrast, while France also has a strong IT industry, not having professional networks in France prevented him from considering it as a possible country of destination:

In terms of tech transfer, the UK is quite advanced; it has a lot of investments in new technologies. Germany, of course, has a good research base. France is, from my point of view, a very closed club; it's very difficult to get into if you don't know anyone, so I didn't even consider [France]. (Lucas)

Similar account was provided by Steffen, an engineer in his early-40s, who explained that at the time of his migration decision, he had considered three possible locations in the

EU: Sweden, Britain, and the Netherlands. The deliberate focus on these three EU countries stemmed from his personal knowledge of the potential employers in these locations:

These were the groups whose work I respected and also had positions available. The positions available were related to the work I have been doing, so it made a lot of sense to apply for these positions because I knew it was a good fit in terms of what I knew, what my expertise in research was, and all my track record was, but also in terms of my interest in those groups and working with these people. (Steffen)

In my study, although all of the participants used the Internet to some extent, only a few participants had applied for a position without having some previously established contacts, namely they made a “blind application”. For many of my professional Germans, professional networks still played an integral role in providing information about job opportunities abroad. The role of professional networks was even more profound in the case of participants in managerial occupations. These participants explained that without some personal connection to a potential employer, both obtaining information about openings and securing employment was perceived to be almost impossible. Such data are in line with what was identified in the literature, demonstrating the role of networks on job attainment and integration for professionals (Fountain, 2005; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014b; Keskiner and Crul, 2017). My findings support such claims, suggesting that such networks are not only useful for accessing information, but also, in some cases, for determining a destination country for some highly-skilled migrants. Thus, taking into account the role of professional networks may help to explain the trajectory of the migration of professionals within the EU as well as why some countries are more successful in attracting mobile professionals than others.

The presence of professional networks, however, was not the only factor that impacted and narrowed down the pool of destination countries. Following the analysis of my data, local language competence represented an additional factor that interfered with the trajectory of migration. For a large number of participants in my study, not knowing the local language in the destination country was one of the barriers that prevented them from applying for positions in countries that otherwise were perceived as attractive. The case of Conrad, a manager in his mid-30s, is exemplary in this regard. When describing his contemplations over job applications abroad, he explained that not knowing the local language prevented him from applying to Scandinavian countries, a region that he was interested in. He explained that although he could have used English for work purposes as well as to communicate with the locals, he felt that not knowing the local language might still present a challenge for his migration, and negatively affect his overall experience of living in Scandinavia. Therefore, he decided not to seek employment there:

They [Scandinavians] are quite good at English compared to Germans. But I think it [not speaking the local language] would still have been a barrier to a lot of jobs. This most probably came into the mix to decide not even to look for jobs [in Scandinavia]. (Conrad)

Although Weiss (2006) has suggested that some highly-skilled migrants might work independently from location-specific skills such as local language, my analysis suggests that having location-specific knowledge, such as local language and local politics, might be still an important factor. For a few of my participants, like Conrad, lack of such knowledge not only affected the migration decision but also affected the choice of destination country within the EU.

Furthermore, knowing the local language seemed to be important for recreating social circles and establishing social lives in the new country. The desire to be able to communicate with the local population after the relocation was often mentioned during the course of my study. Such an account was provided by Tobias, a senior economist in his late-30s, who felt that knowing the local language of the destination country is essential for recreating social life. Although he began the interview by expressing his willingness to move to a broad range of countries within the EU, during the interview, the importance of knowing the local language emerged as a strong aspect in determining the destination country:

I wouldn't say that I'm not willing to go somewhere different. However, I have to say I'm fluent in English, I speak German as a native speaker. I also learned Spanish. It doesn't get easier to learn new languages beside the job and beside personal life. And even if you're acquiring English on the job, it makes a difference in your personal life where you speak the local language or not. For example, I love France, and I love Italy. But I don't think it's wise to go there just because it gets hard to blend in if you're not fluent in the language. Still, if it's a great opportunity, I wouldn't probably say no. But it makes it hard, so no. (Tobias)

This quote also illustrates the intersection between language competence and (in)visibility of foreignness, or as Tobias explained: “language increases the ability to blend in”. In my analysis, I uncovered that the issue of invisibility was not an unintentional outcome, but rather a thought-through factor that was considered before making the decision to migrate to a particular country. According to my analysis, many of my participants deliberately moved to locations where they spoke the local language in order to have a higher chance of fitting in and reduce potential discrimination or intolerance from the local population. These deliberate decisions of this highly-skilled, privileged, and relatively invisible group, suggest that these movers are well aware of the potential negative

consequences that might have stemmed from their foreignness. These results resemble those presented by Butcher (2010), who demonstrated that professionals working in foreign labour markets may feel additional stress and a desire to fit in. My data further contribute to the scholarship by suggesting that when possible, some highly-skilled migrants may intentionally choose locations where their foreignness is less visible in order to minimise the potential costs.

For some of the participants in my sample, family circumstances presented additional restrictions that narrowed down the pool of potential destination countries within the EU. When partners were involved, many of my participants felt that they had to account for their partners' location preferences as well. Lucas, introduced earlier, was typical of many coupled participants in my study. Lucas was searching for a job and intended to relocate together with his wife who is an artist. When describing how he approached the decision to relocate, he explained that he had a very limited choice of destination places, such as London, Berlin, and Paris due to his partner's professional circumstance. As a result, he intentionally searched in these locations while omitting others:

She's an artist, for her, there are few places that are very interesting. One of them is definitely London, another one would have been Berlin and, of course, New York, Paris maybe. I couldn't just move to some place, where she didn't have any perspective to find a useful network for herself. That's why I didn't just look [for a job] anywhere. (Lucas)

Lucas's example provides a glimpse into a complex and multi-layered decision over the destination country. Indeed, while in this section of the interview he spoke about four possibilities, in a later discussion he explained that he had to omit Paris from the pool of destination countries due to a lack of professional networks in France, and the USA as it was

considered to be too far away from Germany. Therefore, he searched for a job in the UK. Lucas's account highlights the complexity of highly-skilled migration: not only he had to navigate his way through the employment environment across various EU countries, but he also had to account for his wife's employment preferences. As a result, out of 27 EU countries, he felt that only one, the UK, could satisfy all the requirements.

Furthermore, Lucas's account is exemplary of how a migration decision happens in reality. Following Lucas's story suggests that in dual-career households, employment opportunities of the accompanying partner may affect the household's migration decision by influencing location preferences. As seen in this example, location choices that could not provide employment prospects for his wife were intentionally omitted from the search. These observations challenge the narrative of frictionless mobility and demonstrate the complexity of the decision when partners are involved. My findings contribute to the body of research that shows how migration of dual career couples impacted by location choices (see Green, 1997; Vohlídalová, 2017). In her research on dual-career academics in Hungary, Vohlídalová (2017) also observed that for some academic couples the ability for both partners to find employment had determined the destination country. For that reason, some of those Hungarian academic couples moved to big cities or large research institutions where their partners may have an opportunity to find employment.

The role of partners was often mentioned during the interviews. As a result of the data obtained during the interviews with 38 participants who were in a relationship at the time of the relocation and with 11 of their partners, I was able to interrogate this topic further. Chapter 6 is devoted to a discussion of the role of the partners.

5.3 NOT AS FRICTIONLESS AS EXPECTED

Despite the general narrative of seemingly frictionless migration that was presented by many of my participants, they were not immune to challenges and risks. In my effort to understand these complexities, during the interviews, I have asked to elaborate on the experiences after the relocation and in some cases also asked counterfactual questions. Such an approach resulted in extensive, detailed, and complex descriptions of migration.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, when talking about their migration decision to move to Britain, many of my participants spoke about assumed cultural similarities between the countries and overall familiarity with British culture. However, when talking about their experiences after the relocation, a more nuanced picture emerged. When recollecting his first month in Britain, Mathias, a lecturer in his mid-40s, expressed his surprise at learning how different the reality was from his expectations:

I can remember at first when I moved here I was surprised how much differences there are between England and Germany. I thought it, Europe, there wouldn't be these big differences. I have been here before for conferences or research visits, so I'm not new to UK. But when I started to live here, I was quite surprised how different it is in the end. (Mathias)

The unexpected cultural differences were also prominent at the workplace. Berta, a manager in her early-50s, was typical of many participants who had to readjust to the unexpected cultural differences in her new office. Although she had been working for this British company already in Germany and knew the place and people at the British office, only after relocating to the British office did she become aware of the differences in working culture between the countries, even within the same company:

For example, the Germans are very direct, and say what they think also in the business. If you sit with your manager and someone disagrees, it would be very clear. Here in the UK it never happens, nothing of this will happen. And if you have a team and you asked them: “Are you happy with the subject? Is this okay?” - they would say yes, even if they are saying no. Or if you propose something, they know this is not good, it will fail - they would not say anything because they think it manager's responsibility. In Germany, everybody feels responsible for their job and task. You find more engagement and identification with the job, and here it's not. (Berta)

Mobile professionals like Mathias and Berta had to learn about these nuances of the British working culture and adjust their behaviour and expectations accordingly. Such accounts are in line with what Mulholland and Ryan (2014) found in their work on French highly-skilled in London. In a similar manner to my study, Mulholland and Ryan (2014) documented the difficulty of French professionals in adjusting to and aligning between two different work cultures: the French and the British. Observing these variations in regard to work culture raises our awareness of the importance of acknowledging cultural differences between various EU mobile nationals, and highlights the need to explore the ways in which these particularities of each national context impact experiences abroad. Furthermore, such observations draw our attention to the fact that the highly-skilled within the Western EU are not a homogeneous group, and despite some similarities in their descriptive characteristics, the everyday practices may differ.

By documenting such inconsistencies and tensions between the expectations and the actual experiences of the highly-skilled in my sample, I was able to interrogate beyond the presented portrayal and analyse the complexity of the everyday experiences of these movers. My study resembles other projects in showing that mobile professionals experience challenges with adapting to new and unfamiliar cultural working codes and work ethics

(Butcher, 2010; Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Froese, 2012; Nowicka, 2012; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014). However, in contrast to these projects, which focused on professionals working in culturally diverse environments, my research indicates that challenges are also present in a more homogeneous context. Indeed, even in the case of assumed cultural similarity between Britain and Germany, my participants had to learn new cultural codes and adapt to the accepted behaviour at work. My data indicate that although before the relocation the migration might have been regarded as frictionless and easy, the reality of relocation as well as the overall experiences post-migration of these German highly-skilled are rather complicated.

The need to adjust to the British work culture was mentioned by German participants across industries. In the case of managers, the dynamic between co-workers was one of the main points of difference, while those in academia mentioned the need to adjust to the requirements of the industry and workplace structure. Such findings contribute to the discussion by Nowicka (2012, 2013) and Weiss (2006, 2017) and show that even so-called Eurostars who enjoy transferability of education and skills may experience challenges with transferability of some of location-specific knowledge, such as work-ethic culture and behavioural codes.

In a similar manner to adapting to work-related ethics and behavioural codes, some participants spoke about the need to learn and adjust to the particularities of the local systems, such as the school system. In my sample, a third of participants had at least one child before the relocation, and all except one household have moved together with their children. As a result, they had to re-arrange their child's life in the new country, and enrol them in a local

school or pre-school facilities. However, many of these participants were unaware of differences in school systems and had to learn about them after the relocation. This was the case for Jens, a professor in his mid-40s. When describing his migration decision, he explained that it was relatively easy as he could relocate with his family and recreate his family life straight away. Before the relocation, Jens held the assumption of minimal differences in regard to schooling, and did not research the subject of British schooling at all. Only after the relocation did he understand the magnitude of the differences. He explained that knowing about it would have altered his relocation practices and would have changed his dwelling preference:

I think we should've discussed schooling, but we didn't. We weren't aware how important it is here. If you come from Germany, you take for granted good schools. You know, take for granted a certain standard and you're going to get. And here, you really have to make sure you're in the right area, and we were not aware of this. We chose the place to live purely on logistical reasons, like how close it is to the centre and that kind of thing, and did not consider schooling. We should have. We didn't know. (Jens)

Jens's quote illustrates unexpected challenges that some of my participants faced. While their own relocation and reemployment in Britain was easy and smooth, the overall experience of the households was more complex, as it had to account for children. Such findings suggest that highly-skilled migrants from affluent countries are not immune to challenges that other types of migrant households may experience. Indeed, from one side, Jens assumed overall similarity between countries, which contributed to a perception and expectation of an easy and frictionless migration and relocation. From another side, such an assumption affected his migration practices and resulted in a less thorough evaluation of migration. The majority of the participants in my study did not take into account school or

preschool facilities in Britain at the point of decision making. The unfamiliarity with the peculiarities of the local educational institutions resulted in unexpected difficulties and complications. One of the most common ones was the financial costs of British pre-school facilities, which surprised a lot of participants and added financial constraints to the entire households. The observed challenges in regard to the British school system in my study resemble a few other studies, such as those presented by Ryan and Mulholand (2014b) and Ryan and Sale (2013), who, in their research on French and Polish migrants in the UK, have also observed how unfamiliarity with the British system contributed to insecurities and presented an additional challenge for the everyday practices of these movers.

The unfamiliarity and differences between educational systems was a re-emerging topic among participants who had children in pre-school or primary school age groups. In contrast, three participants who had older children were more thorough in their research. For example, two participants contacted local schools in Britain and ensured a place in a particular class. For these participants, due to the age and schooling stage of their children (secondary or A-levels), ensuring schooling was among their top priorities. The variation in regard to the relocation practices among my participants with children suggests that in order to better understand the migration decisions, practices, and experiences of migrants, it is not enough to account for the presence of children but also for their age. Indeed, by incorporating children's age into my analysis, I was able to explain some of the differences in relocation strategies and experiences among my participants.

5.4 ALWAYS ON THE MOVE: TEMPORARY NATURE OF MIGRATION

The Eurostar thesis suggests that EU movers who are highly mobile, young, and single, take advantage of free mobility and move where the best opportunities are (Favell, 2008, 2013; Recch, 2008, 2015). Furthermore, this migration may present highly-skilled movers with financial and employment opportunities, allow them to experience new countries and cultures, and contribute to personal and career development (Beaverstock, 2005; Elliott and Urry, 2010; Beaverstock and Hall, 2012). However, according to my analysis, maintaining and managing such a mobile lifestyle was a complex task. Although all of my participants spoke about their migration in a positive way in some cases, such mobility led to a state of instability, insecurity, and temporariness.

One of the contributions of my analysis is that I was able document and interrogate the spectrum of experiences and motivations for relocation: from voluntary (aspiration for international career) to involuntary (shortcomings of industry, unfavourable career structures in the home country) decisions. As mentioned in Chapter 4, many of my participants seem to have internalised what can be described as boundaryless careers (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996) and used migration as a way to reshape their employment conditions and actively engage in their own career development. While such an approach contributed to the acceptance of labour migration, it also led to additional stress.

For example, a few of my participants saw international experience as a necessity for career development. Therefore, they sought opportunities abroad, and in many cases, accepted fixed-term contracts abroad. This was the case for Angelika, a researcher in her

late-20s. Angelika migrated to Oxbridge following a three-year post-doc contract a few months prior to the interview:

First of all, I wanted to go abroad. Going abroad also means broaden your horizons, seeing different systems, getting to know different people all of that. But the second reason is if you want to develop a career in academia you should have international experience. You want to be good in your system in your field, but also need to understand how it compares to other systems. (Angelika)

Angelika was typical of many participants who, in their accounts, linked international experience to career development and described their decision to seek employment abroad as a strategic move. Such accounts are in line with existing research. Not only the desire for international work experience among German professionals was found in other research projects (Stahl et al., 2002; Ognyanova et al., 2014), but mobility of professionals within the EU in general was suggested to become a normalisation of professional life, and in some cases an integral part of career development (Ackers, 2004; Scott, 2006).

Furthermore, according to Angelika and several other participants, having international experience would provide them with an advantage in the German labour market if they decide to return. This line of reasoning is supported by the research by King (2012) and Koikkalainen and colleagues (2016), who showed that in some cases returnees are considered ‘successes’ because they have achieved their goals in migrating, such as accumulating knowledge, and enjoy improved status upon return. The benefits of temporary migration for the purposes of obtaining international experience might partially explain why the highly-skilled Germans who have worked abroad for several years comprise the largest group in the rising return migration flow (Ette and Sauer, 2010; BMF, 2019).

However, while majority were willing to consider moving back, a few participants did not consider it to be a viable option. The variation in the length of stay in Britain highlighted the different patterns in regard to potential return to Germany. While those who had relocated to Britain more recently spoke more enthusiastically about potential return to Germany, those who had stayed in the country longer expressed concern about the actual ability to return and reintegrate into the German system. Furthermore, those who had stayed longer acknowledged that relocating again would be more challenging due to school arrangements, ownership of property, and established social circle; however, it was not out of the question. Regardless of the length of stay, when Brexit was mentioned, so was the option of returning to Germany. In the light of Brexit, a few participants expressed that they might need to make a decision about whether they wished to stay or relocate sooner than expected. A more detailed discussion on how unexpected events such as Brexit impact migration decisions and relocation practices and experiences, is presented later in this chapter.

Operating within this environment of temporariness and overall insecurity about the duration of stay in the country of residency and fixed-term contracts presented several challenges for some of my participants. Theo's account is exemplary in this regard. Before relocating to London, Theo, a professor in his mid-40s, had a six-year fixed-term contract in Germany where he worked as a team leader at a research institution. Despite having a very productive career in that institution, once his contract ran out, he had no option to renew it. He was keen to find a permanent position to reduce the negative consequences of a temporary stay on his ability to start a family, raise children, or buy property:

Because it is difficult to have this insecurity. Before you have a permanent position, you are under the pressure all the time that you have to move to another city, to another country and so on. This insecurity makes it very difficult to have kids for example. You want to have a secure environment for your kids, and you want to have a good school and this is all in jeopardy if you do not have security with your job. The security is for family, if you want to buy a house for example, you need a position where you can rely on a job for long-term, otherwise you don't get a loan. The bank will not give you a loan if you have only a job for the next two years. (Theo)

Theo's rich quote highlights the emotional component inherent to temporary contracts and short-term migration. Theo was one of a few participants who had experienced emotional challenges, had to postpone family formation, and was overwhelmed by the amount of work that had to be undertaken to mitigate the insecurities and instabilities of a mobile life. Indeed, while the literature suggests that professionals may choose to engage in migration to take charge of their careers and lives (Beck et al., 1992; Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Allvin, 2008; Thorn, 2009; Elliott and Urry, 2010; Beck, 2002, 2014), my findings highlight the costs and challenges that pursuing a boundaryless career and "do-it-yourself biography" may entail.

Theo's description provides an unusual insight into how the temporary nature of employment interferes with family formation, marriage, and childbearing. A few years before his relocation to Britain, while he was living in Germany, he met his future wife, Mona, a German scientist who worked in Denmark at that time. They decided to live together, but by the time she had secured employment in Germany to be closer to him, Theo's contract had run out. When he found employment and moved to London, she had to stay to finish her two-year contract in Germany which she obtained to be near him in the first place. Once Theo relocated, Mona started to search for a job in the UK, and after two years of long-distance

relationship she relocated to the UK. The situation that Theo and Mona found themselves in was not very unique. Several couples in my sample had to engage in long-distance relationship to deal with short-term contracts as they tried to combine career aspirations and family life. I discuss relocation strategies of couples in more detail in Chapter 6. This account draws our attention to the reality of the migration of professionals, and especially of dual-career couples, and to the challenges that individuals in these mobile households may experience. I noticed that several male and female participants have spoken about the challenges of combining temporary employment, expected mobility for career development, with desire and practical aspects of having a family life.

In a similar manner to other scholars (Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Carrozza et al., 2017), these findings demonstrate that some contemporary professionals may find themselves in a precarious situation in the labour market. Among my participants, I found variation in both the financial status and income range before and after migration. Such variation suggests that treating professionals from affluent countries as financially privileged homogeneous groups may be misleading. Many of German professionals in my sample relied on their income to support their livelihood, and, despite holding professional occupations, were not immune financial insecurities associated with temporary contracts.

Pursuing migration and accepting temporariness of stay was even more challenging for those participants who had relocated with children. This was the case for those German professionals employed in various German companies, such as BMW and Deutsche Bank, who were employed through expat contracts and needed to relocate again after a few years in Britain. However, this situation is not unique for intra-company transferees. In my study,

many coupled participants with children were employed in academia and had fixed-term contracts and were unsure if they could stay with their employer in Britain in the future. These temporary contracts present a challenge for these mobile households with children as they require these households to account for their children's future, and hence take into account possible educational systems.

Observing these particular challenges was possible due to the characteristics of my sample where over 20 participants had at least one child in their household during the relocation. Due to the variation with regard to family size and children's age, I was able to observe how these factors impacted relocation strategies and attitudes towards temporariness of stay. The case of Madeleine, an office manager in her late-40s, provides a detailed description of the intersection between temporariness of stay, migration, and children's schooling. Madeleine was one of the few accompanying partners in my sample, and was more diligent in researching schooling options in Britain. She and her son accompanied her husband, Stephan, who was offered an intra-company transfer from Germany to the British office. When talking about their son, Madeleine mentioned that finding appropriate school and learning about the differences between the German and British systems prior to relocation was very important. When asked to elaborate, she explained that the expat contract is a fixed-time contract from two to over five years, after which Stephan is required to go back to Germany or relocate to a new location. Therefore, their stay in Britain was temporary. As a result, Madeleine felt responsible for securing an appropriate school for their son for this temporary period taking into account future migration and potential return to Germany:

The school a very big point because our son had to go to the secondary school. My husband talked with other people in the company, and I talked to one woman on the telephone, they were already in Oxbridge. This was quite nice because she told me what she has experienced, especially about the European School. I was thinking what happens when we go back, can he go back to his previous school? And it was only possible in a European school because they also taught in German and had guideline of what was necessary to know for German schools. We knew that after two years [if we decide to go back] he could go back to his school [in Germany]. (Madeleine)

Madeleine's account is also exemplary in another regard. Although I conducted interviews with both Stephan and Madeleine and both mentioned their son and his schooling, Madeleine was more open about discussing the specificity of this experience. The example of Madeleine highlights how including partners in my project added to a better understanding of the migration decision and relocation practices of these households. Moreover, as in the case of Madeleine, many such practical nuances of the relocation were dealt with by the partners of mobile individuals; therefore, they were able to provide a better description of the relocation practices. The role of partners in these mobile households is described in detail in Chapter 6.

As was mentioned by Madeleine, she enrolled her son in a European school which would allow him to continue his education in the German system despite living in Britain. This specific school which was mentioned by a few of my participants provided its services to many German parents employed in the area; however, it was closed down in 2017. Taking into account that presence of this European school impacted the decision and experiences of a few of my German participants, one may wonder to what extent the closure may impact future migration and experiences of migrants with children in this area.

In contrast to these accounts, participants who relocated with small children had to address a different set of challenges. According to many of these participants, the time before children reached school age presented an opportunity to re-evaluate migration and contemplate whether they wanted to stay in Britain, relocate somewhere else, or return to Germany. To illustrate the topic, consider the case of Bernhard, in his mid-30s, a father to a toddler. His son was born a few months before his household relocated, and was only two years old at the time of the interview. During the interview, Bernhard explained that, despite his son's young age, he had already thought about possible scenarios for the future and expressed his thoughts about going back to Germany when his son reaches school age:

If you want to add one thing [to migration decision], because I think the next decision that we would have to do is when the little one goes to school. Which might be not a very rational decision, but it's basically the point where you decide whether you want your child to go to this school system [British] or to that school system [German]. I think there we are undecided. But that could be a point where one would reconsider, not for us, but for him. (Bernhard)

Indeed, while a few participants, such as Madeleine, lived near the European school and could afford to enrol their child in the school, for others like Bernhard, this was not an option. Schools that provide German-equivalent education are not commonly found in England and require substantial financial means to cover the fees. As a result, enrolling children in such schools might not be an option for some German professionals. Comparing these observations with what is described in the literature highlighted the particularities of the experiences of some of my German participants. For example, my findings differ from what was observed by Ryan and Mulholand (2014a) for their French highly-skilled sample in London for whom, due to the French international school system, it is possible to keep their

children in the French school system even when living abroad. As such, some French mobile professionals have more schooling options, and their migration patterns may be affected by schooling preferences to a smaller degree than those of the German population. Such variation demonstrates the importance of treating EU professionals from affluent countries as a heterogeneous group, because certain characteristics of their countries of origin, such as education systems, may affect their migratory decisions, relocation strategies, and overall experiences.

While observing a preference for the German education system among some of my participants, I was curious to understand the underlying factors that shaped this preference. Foremost, by interrogating this topic I uncovered that using German language at home and enrolling children in Sunday school was not only an effort to create and preserve linguistic and cultural ties to Germany, but also to ensure that, if needed, their children had adequate German language knowledge to enrol in school or university in Germany. For some, preference for the German system was attributed to the fact that German education holds a good reputation worldwide. Others were dissatisfied with the costs as well as the extent of social inequality in the British educational institutions and wanted to avoid it if possible. Here, my findings are in line with Ryan and Mulholand's (2014a) observation of some French professionals who also preferred the French educational system to the British one.

Observing the tendency to re-evaluate migration once the child reaches school age is not unique to my study. Such findings resemble what was described by Ryan and Sales (2013) in research on Polish migrants in the UK, as well as Bailey and colleagues (2004) in their

research on mobile couples within the US. In line with what I have found, their projects also indicate that migrants consider children's schooling to be a point of re-evaluation: depending on the school preferences, they may choose to prolong the stay or decide to relocate to a different location. Furthermore, in a similar manner to my research, these projects also suggest that the relationship between migration, temporariness of stay, and children's education is not unidirectional. In contrast Bernhard mentioned above, who considered moving back to Germany for the benefit of his child's education, Marius spoke about postponing the relocation and prolonging the stay in Britain in order to avoid interfering with his child's education. When he started his interview, Marius, a researcher in his late-30s and father to two children, expressed his desire to move again. However, during the interview, a more complex discussion of migration emerged. When reflecting on his previous experience of relocating with a child and after having seen the impact of this migration on his two sons, Marius questioned the moral side of relocating with children:

I certainly would like to move again, but then again, I say things like - taking my child out of school, forcing him to go to another place. There are some moral aspects of doing that. One would have to balance it, seeing the whole picture. (Marius).

While the two quotes from Bernhard and Marius present two different scenarios and two different approaches to migration with children, they both have one thing in common — awareness of the potential impact of migration on the well-being and future of the child. In a similar manner, in their cross-US study, Bailey and colleagues (2004) have shown that schooling of the child was considered a pillar of parental responsibility for mobile households. Similarly, in her research, Ryan (2018) also showed that some Polish mothers

living in the UK felt an emotional responsibility for their children's well-being and schooling. Supplementing the aforementioned studies that focused primarily on female migrants, my data suggest that parental responsibility and children's education also play an important role for migrant fathers. Similar to the storylines presented by Marius and Bernhard, many other male participants spoke spontaneously about their experiences of relocation with children. These findings provide empirical examples of how fatherhood impacted migration decisions, duration of stay, and overall migratory experiences, and contribute to the discussion on migrant fatherhood, which, according to Kilkey and colleagues (2014) is an under-researched topic. Following this analysis, I suggest that scholars may gain a better understanding of the migration decision and experience of male professionals by going beyond the labour market and employment rhetoric and by incorporating the role of fatherhood.

5.5 INTERNATIONAL LIVES – DUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Interrogating the overall experiences and practices of participants in my study, I found that a large number of these participants had to navigate between Germany and Britain. From one side, as mentioned in Chapter 4, some participants deliberately chose locations that allowed for fast and relatively cheap travel between the countries. Such a strategy was adopted to minimise disturbance of the family and social life between those who stayed (such as extended family members and friends) and those who relocated. This was a reoccurring topic among both male and female participants. Consider the case of Christoffer, an associate professor in his early-40s, as an introductory to this topic. When discussing his migration and relocation practices, he acknowledged that the choice of destination country had been highly

influenced by his family situation: Due to his father's poor health, he intentionally relocated to a relatively close location with good transportation connections back to Germany:

Partly because of family reasons. My father is in poor health, and we wanted to be able to reach our families quickly in a case of emergency. (Christoffer)

Choosing Britain seemed to ease the maintenance of these relationships and simplified visits between the countries. It also contributed to the feeling of having dual lives and in-betweenness as well as high levels of stress associated with managing aspects of their lives in two different locations. This was especially prominent in the case where German participants had to address emergencies in Germany. Martin's account is exemplary in this regard. During the interview, Martin, a German researcher who relocated following a post-doc position, spoke a bit about his relationship with his family in Germany, mentioning only briefly that after his father's death, he had to fly back to Germany to take care of his mother. Martin hinted at the complexity of managing these dual responsibilities: towards this widowed mother in Germany and his wife and children in Britain.

In a follow-up interview, Martin's wife, Jeni, portrayed the situation in much greater detail. As presented in the methodological chapter, I intentionally conducted separate interviews with partners of some German professionals in order to gain a better insight into migration decisions and everyday practices. The benefits of applying such a methodological strategy are illustrated by this case of Martin and Jeni. In contrast to Martin, Jeni not only provided a more detailed description of Martin's relationship with his family during and after the death of his father, she also spoke about her own involvement in providing care for Martin's mother:

When his father passed away, he had to fly back to his mom every month for about half a year. We reduced it to about every two months now. It's not for practical matters that she needs us, but it's more the emotional support. She needs to talk to us on the phone every week maybe twice, three times. And because Martin sometimes is so busy, so we decided that I would talk to her as well to reduce Martin's pressure as well. (Jeni)

In a few cases, managing lives in Britain and obligations towards family members in Germany had resulted in a severe emotional stress. To illustrate the point, consider the case of Alissa. Alissa was offered a teaching job at Oxbridge University; however, a few months after the relocation, her mother suddenly passed away. She tried to help her family and commuted on a weekly basis between Germany and Britain for a period of over six months. Such travel interfered with her performance at work and resulted in high emotional cost as she tried to balance between what she was able to do under these circumstances and what was expected of her. In order to understand the situation better, I have asked her to describe that period and elaborate on whether she considered going back to Germany due to these events. She reflected upon the situation:

I didn't think it [going back] would be the right thing to do and my dad said that he didn't think it was a good thing. But I think looking back and looking how the situation developed, that deep down he wanted me to come home and take over, and not fill my mother's position but in a way yes, do that. I am coming from a small town and conservative background and I often wondered what the extended family was thinking. Nobody ever said it, but you know sometimes you have the strange feeling about these things. I think they thought it might have been my duty to do. I am pretty sure that they never thought about my sister or brother, who live close to my dad, nobody ever saw that as valid as if I have returned. (Alissa)

Although the interview took place a few years after the event, Alissa still found it difficult and emotionally challenging to talk about that period of her life:

It is very difficult to talk about Oxbridge as an experience. It was connected [to the death of my mother] and my father sold the house and I, we sort of lost our father because he found a new partner. The whole family situation just exploded and there was no such thing as a family unit anymore. (Alissa)

The quotes from Jeni and Alissa demonstrate the divergence between what migrants themselves believe they could provide and what they thought was expected of them by family members in the country of origin. Having to negotiate between these different expectations contributed to friction between family members and in some cases had a long-lasting impact and coloured the migration experience of the movers. My findings contribute to the discussion presented in *The Human Face of Global Mobility* (2006), an edited volume by Smith and Favell, where some scholars touch upon the personal issues and struggles that even the most highly-skilled migrants face, by showcasing the personal struggles and challenges of highly-skilled professionals from affluent countries.

Through my interrogation of the everyday practices I was able to document these challenges and tensions, and uncover the complexities of the experiences of some of highly-skilled Germans. This was especially relevant for participants who relocated with children. Similar to the findings in the wider scholarship on transnational care towards family members in the country of origin (Bailey et al., 2004; Baldassar, 2008; Ryan, 2008a; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Baldassar et al., 2014), I have found that some participants found themselves in the dual-caring situation: obligation towards the family members in Germany and caring responsibilities in Britain. In contrast to some of these studies, however, my study documented the role of transnational care in the context of highly-skilled migrants from affluent countries. Although one might assume that these highly-skilled migrants have the

financial resources and opportunities to travel to Germany frequently, according to my data, addressing transnational caring responsibilities was both emotionally and economically challenging. Furthermore, since many of the German professionals in my sample, especially early-career employees, received modest salaries in Britain, such an amount of travel despite, being relatively inexpensive and affordable, had led to financial burdens in some cases.

5.6 EMOTIONAL COSTS

The accounts presented by Jeni and Alissa highlight the emotional costs of migration that otherwise, from a bureaucratic, legal, and economic point of view, would seem frictionless. Even though I presented the role of emotional resources in Chapter 4, it is important to understand that having these resources did not necessarily eliminate all emotional challenges and frictions. In their book on *Mobility Turn*, Elliott and Urry (2010) urged scholars to “tackle the myths of mobility” and document and study mobile lifestyles that operate within high levels of anxiety, stress, and emotional challenges. In my project, I was able to do that.

Like many other participants, Mona, an associate professor in her late-30s, explained how stress and emotional hardships influenced her migration decision and impacted her location choice. Mona had worked in several European countries before coming to Britain in 2014. When talking about her migratory experience, she explained that she first considered relocating to Britain in 2006, when she was offered a post-doctorate position at Oxbridge University. However, she declined the offer as she considered it to be too stressful. When a second opportunity in Oxbridge presented itself in 2014, she decided to accept the offer.

According to her, what changed between the two offers was her confidence and belief in her ability to address the risks and the emotional stress that working in a place like Oxbridge University entailed:

Sometimes I think I wasn't ready for a place like Oxbridge back then [in 2006]. It would have really confused me. Now, having been more mature, having become much more confident in myself, my personality, I don't mind learning how to navigate it. I think even if I do something wrong, people would probably nicely explain it was not an appropriate thing to do. I am fine with that now. Now I can lean back and smirk around it, and say "that is interesting here", but back then, it had another effect on me. I felt really much like "oh sorry I did something wrong" and I felt like maybe I cannot breathe freely in the system like this. (Mona)

The case of Mona is exemplary of how the migration of professionals within the EU can be regarded as an emotionally destabilising endeavour. Although such observations are in line with other projects (Svašek, and Skrbiš, 2007; Ryan, 2008a; Svašek, 2010, 2012; Toader and Dahinden, 2018), my findings suggest that even in the case of seemingly frictionless migration of so-called Eurostars, dealing with personal perceptions, insecurities, and fear may also impact migration decisions and experiences.

Furthermore, resettling and reorganising life after the relocation also contributed to emotional challenges and elevated stress levels. Carolyn's account was a typical description of the first month of relocation among many of my participants. Although she originally moved for a 17-month contract, after realising how much effort it takes to settle, she decided to stay longer:

When I came over, I thought it would be nice to stay longer than 17 months, just because I realised that it's quite a lot of work to settle in. Like water, electricity, mobile phone. All those things. I just, you know about them, it's

always like, am I doing this for one and half years? Always thought it would be nice to stay for two or three years. (Carolyn)

A similar account was provided by Madeleine, introduced earlier in this chapter. Madeleine was one of those accompanying partners who actively participated in the reconstruction and organisation of the family life after their relocation. When reflecting upon the relocation, Madeleine spoke about the migration experience as being emotionally challenging and surrounded by a feeling of loneliness. She also pointed out the discrepancies between how others might perceive migration and how it is actually experienced by migrants themselves:

They always say, 'oh you have to be so lucky if you can live in another country' and then I said, 'yeah I'm happy to live in Oxford because I really like it here'. But nobody can feel or know what we are going through. Every single thing you have to think for, and things you have to do on your own. (Madeleine)

In addition to the stress of dealing with relocation, Madeleine also had to manage the property in Germany (dealing with the dual responsibilities as mentioned earlier in the chapter) which also led to elevated stress levels and contributed to a feeling of an overwhelming task. Her account is exemplary in terms of how migration that might have seemed frictionless and easy at first was more complex in reality. Although she initially wanted just to rent out her family's house in Germany, due to the unexpected difficulties and the stress associated with managing the property over a distance, she decided to sell the property. According to Madeleine, managing the tenants and addressing the bureaucracy of renting out while living in Britain resulted in additional stress:

Now we sold it because we rented it out and there were so many problems with tenant, at the end we were happy when they left the house. It's very difficult when you're so far away and the tenants are a little bit difficult. At some point when the telephone rang and they were on the line and I saw it, I thought: "What's happening now, again?" (Madeleine)

Finally, interview with Madeleine is exemplary of other interviews with accompanying partners. Indeed, as many of these accompanying partners were in charge of some aspects of relocation, their accounts provided complementary description of migration decision as well as everyday practices after the relocation. Although the number of interviews with accompanying partners was small, by interrogating the everyday practices and experiences of these partners of German professionals in my sample, I documented their active role in reorganising family life after migration. Such findings contribute to the discussion on the active role of partners (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Kofman, 2004; Ho, 2006; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014c; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015), and challenge the simple notion of the "trailing spouse" as a blind follower. I discuss this topic in more detail in Chapter 6.

5.7 UNEXPECTED VARIABLE — BREXIT

As mentioned earlier, although Britain was chosen intentionally due to Freedom of Movement to minimise costs associated with legal barriers, some of my participants found themselves in the exact situation they had tried to avoid due to the Brexit vote. Brexit represents an unexpected challenge that German participants in my study had to address. As a third of my sample was interviewed during the preparation for the Brexit vote, these participants also spoke about how the vote might impact their lives as well as which new

challenges they might need to address. Like many other participants, Theo, a professor in his early-40s introduced earlier, expressed his concerns about his future in Britain after the vote. According to him, although he intended to stay in Britain until retirement, the changing political climate in Britain has interfered with his plan:

It was really meant to be until retirement. This perception maybe changed after vote on Brexit. That can be frustrating for foreigners, of course, and adds to insecurities. We are not the biggest fans of the UK and the politics and that is why we would also accept something back in Germany or Switzerland.
(Theo)

While some participants in my sample discussed the possibility of moving to a third country, a few also contemplated the possibility of going back to Germany. Such a finding is in line with recent research on Brexit, which documents that young EU migrants intend to go back earlier than they expected due to Brexit (Lulle et al., 2017). Similarly, several projects have documented the negative experience and uncertainty of Brexit on the mobility of various EU movers within the UK, such a Polish, Spanish, and Romanian migrants (see Ryan, 2015; Lulle et al., 2017; D'Angelo and Kofman, 2018; Owen, 2018; McCarthy, 2019). My study suggests that such experiences are also found among the German population.

In a similar manner to Theo, a few participants had an emotional response and described the event in terms of frustration and feeling unwelcomed. In my effort to understand the reasons behind such a response, I included historical and national aspects in the analysis, such as accounting for the specific role of Germany in the European project. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, Germany was one of the core members of what is now known as the European Union. Through the decades, Germany remained one of the contributors and supporters of the EU in general and Freedom of Movement in particular. In the course of the

project, I noticed that many of my participants had a strong positive attitude towards the European project and Freedom of Movement. It can, therefore, be suggested that an emotional response to Brexit was a result of a collision between their personal opinions about the EU which they grew up with and the anti-EU sentiments expressed in Britain.

In addition to frustration and uncertainty regarding the future, a few participants acknowledged practical challenges that might arise due to Brexit. All participants, except a few of those who were married to British citizens, did not have British citizenship and did not intend to apply for it. Among the most commonly mentioned concerns was the future of pensions. This was especially prominent in the case of those German participants who had worked across various EU countries and were not sure if they would stay in Britain until retirement. For these participants, the inevitable question was how to guarantee pension benefits while taking into account the impact of Brexit. This kind of concern was exemplified by Phillipa, a researcher in her late-30s. She and her husband Sebastian had worked in a few EU countries before they settled in London a few years prior to the interview. Although she spoke about her migratory history within the EU in a positive way, when reflecting on the current situation of Brexit, she contemplated her retirement and expressed concerns not only about her own, but also about her husband's future pension:

Again, the conditions are what scared us the most. It is even more for Sebastian because my pension was essentially made in Germany and Portugal, so that is covered by the European law, but the UK — we do not know how, how this, and the negotiations are going to develop. (Phillipa)

Insecurity over retirement schemes and pension rights of EU mobile citizens have long been found to hinder migration within the EU, even prior to Brexit (Heinz and Ward-

Warmedinger, 2006; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Carrozza et al., 2017). In my study, I have documented that legal and political changes in the light of Brexit also contribute to insecurity over retirement schemes and pension benefits. This situation has increased insecurity over the future, adding to the overall costs of mobility, and may also impact migrants' decisions to prolong or shorten their stay.

For a few of my participants who were married to British citizens, the issue of Brexit had another practical concern. Depending on the outcome of the vote, these participants would consider applying for British citizenship. This was the case for Teresa, a publisher in her early-30s. Teresa relocated to Britain to be closer to her now-husband, a British citizen. While before the vote she did not consider applying for British citizenship, she explained that if Britain did not stay in the EU, she would apply for it. Such a decision was aimed at reducing the potential costs and complications of mobility between EU countries, such as Germany and the UK:

If they stay in the EU there is no reason for me really to apply for the citizenship, but if they don't stay, I would apply. It shouldn't be a problem because I lived here for so long, and I am married to a British, my English is ok. I think the history probably might be a problem. I don't know if I have to do a test. I didn't look into it actually. I will only do it if they don't stay in the EU just to be able to travel without complications. (Teresa)

Events like Brexit suggest that EU movers, German professionals included, are not necessarily immune to challenges that non-EU migrants face. Legal privileges, such as the right to move and stay in the country, might be taken away, which may change not only the legal and social position but also the financial one. Such data highlight the complexity of

mobile lives and hint at the inherent risks, insecurities, and challenges even in the context of highly-skilled migration between affluent EU countries.

5.8 CONCLUSION

Following the analysis of my data, it became apparent that the mobility of German highly-skilled was not as easy and frictionless as first presented. My data indicate that although some of the experiences of relocation were easy and frictionless, others were challenging and added to the emotional and financial costs of the relocation. First of all, despite an open border policy and Freedom of Movement, my participants did not feel they are able to move everywhere. According to the data, several aspects narrowed down the potential pool of destination countries within the EU, such as the general development of the country, language competence, and presence of professional networks.

For some male and female professionals as well as their partners the relocation involved unpleasant experiences and unexpected challenges. Despite the assumed similarity of Germany and Britain, many participants had to address the cultural differences after the relocation. In a similar manner to Nowicka (2012) and Weiss (2006), my data contribute to the current discussion on the degree of transferability of knowledge and skills, highlighting the location-specific context of such knowledge. By engaging with the current debate on the challenges that the highly-skilled face when adjusting to a new working culture (Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Butcher, 2010; Froese, 2012; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014), my data suggest that even professionals who move within geographic and cultural proximity are not immune to cultural and linguistic obstacles.

Furthermore, analysing my data revealed that for many professionals, the mobile lifestyle contributed to instability and insecurity over future employment, financial situation, and in some cases affected the entire household. My study contributes to the discussion of boundaryless careers (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Thorn, 2009) by showing the personal costs of pursuing them. Indeed, some of my participants had to account for children's schooling, address transnational care obligations, and deal with unexpected events such as Brexit.

Chapter 6. BALANCING BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL DESIRES AND FAMILY LIFE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

When I met Johann, a manager in his mid-50s, in his office at one of the largest aerospace companies in the EU, he seemed to be a typical mobile professional who took advantage of the seemingly frictionless mobility within the EU. During the interview, however, a more complicated story emerged. Although he has willing to move anywhere, the decision to move as well as the choice of the destination country were not entirely up to him:

I personally wouldn't have a problem moving to Italy or other country, I don't like to go back to Germany. But since my wife is American, we have to go somewhere where she's able to get around. (Johann)

Johann's account was not unique in this regard. As was mentioned in the methodological chapter, I did not anticipate the role of significant others when I began the project; in the course of doing the research, however, I noticed the effect of partners on all stages of the migration decision, as well as migration and relocation practices. As a result, when possible I have conducted interviews with both partners of the household. In my analysis of 38 interviews with German professionals and 11 interviews with partners of these core participants, I was able to observe not only the role of partners, but also variation in regard to migration strategies that couples adopted in order to deal with migration. In this chapter, I focus explicitly on the relocation strategies of coupled interviewees in my sample. This chapter is organised as follows. The first section addresses the reasons, processes, and relocation practices of couples who decided to relocate together to Britain. The second

section presents those couples who also decided to move together, but whose relocation took place in two stages. The following two sections present less observed and consequently less examined strategies of mobile households, namely, when couples move together after both having secured employment in Britain, and couples who decided to engage in LDRs. Lastly, a short discussion concludes the chapter.

6.2 FIRST STRATEGY: MOVING TOGETHER AFTER ONE PARTNER HAS FOUND EMPLOYMENT IN BRITAIN

Moving together with partners and children was the most widespread strategy adopted by couples. As mentioned in Chapter 4, among the reasons to move within the EU was that Freedom of Movement allows couples to relocate together with other family members, such as partners and children, without additional paperwork. This strategy was adopted by both single-career and dual-career households, with both male and female leading migrants. In practice, the relocation of these households took place when one partner has secured employment in Britain and was accompanied by the other partner either at the same time or a few weeks after. While observing such practices, I wanted to uncover the reasons behind choosing such a strategy as well as the experiences of those who were involved.

For many of my participants who chose this strategy, the decision to move together was the only possible option, and they would not consider relocating without their partners and children accompanying them. This motivation was discussed by both male and female professionals. This kind of rationale was observed during the interview with Lucas, a manager in his early-40s. Although he was keen to relocate, he would have accepted such

move only if accompanied by his wife. In his case, the wife was willing to move with him. His story highlights the role of partners in pursuing labour migration and hints at the interplay between individual career aspirations and family life:

I started looking around for institutions offering good positions in this area, which is a quite specialised area. It was not that easy, because I am now married again with my second wife. I consulted, of course, with my wife, before making the move. She was interested to move with me, because I didn't want to go alone. The outcome was positive, she also wanted to get experience here, so we decided and I decided to accept a job. (Lucas)

According to my analysis, the majority of my participants who chose this strategy acknowledged the desire to recreate family life as a main motive. Such findings are in line with the body of literature on family migration that also show that the desire to recreate family life in the new location may lead couples to pursue relocation together (Ho, 2006, 2011; Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Ryan and Mulholand, 2014b,c; Clerge et al., 2017).

The preference to move together was even more prominent for couples who were in LDRs or did not share the same accommodation in Germany before the relocation to Britain. Catarina, a manager in her early-30s, was typical of several participants who had moved to Britain to be closer to their partner. While before the relocation Catrina and her partner both lived in Germany, Catarina lived in Hamburg and her partner, Albert, lived in Frankfurt. Due to their work commitments and specificity of their fields they could not find jobs close to each other in Germany and found themselves in a weekend relationship for a few years. Therefore, when the opportunity to move to London presented itself, Catarina thought it would be the best option that would allow them to live together for the first time:

I have a partner and we live here together in London now. He was in Frankfurt before; we're doing weekend relationship Hamburg-Frankfurt. He had tried to get a job in Hamburg which didn't work. When my opportunity came up to move to London, I thought why don't we both go to London and meet there. My motivation to take the offer was very much private in order to finally be in the same location with him. (Catarina)

The preference for moving together was even more profound for couples with children. During the interview, Maria, a medical specialist in her mid-30s, explained that although she and her husband used to have an LDR, living together became their priority since the birth of their first baby. Therefore, once he was offered a position at Oxbridge University, she decided to quit her job and relocate with him:

I think priorities change a bit. I couldn't imagine just be away from my son during all week or my husband being away from him during the week and to have a long-distance relationship again. I think we are both quite happy now to live together. (Maria)

This was not an isolated case. A large number of my participants had some experience of LDRs; however, they all expressed a similar desire to reunite once children were involved. Such data resemble what was observed by Schaer and colleagues (2017) in their research on early career academics in the UK and Switzerland. According to their data, all couples who were in LDRs and did not share dwellings preferred to reunite after having a child. Together with my findings, such data contribute to the discussion on the role of children on migration decisions and relocation practices for some highly-skilled. Accounting for the presence of children in research on mobile professionals, and in particular, may highlight the underlying factors and additional explanation for the specific relocation practices, especially for dual-career households. I present a discussion on couples in long-distance relationships in my sample later in this chapter.

By interrogating the role of partners, I was able to document the mechanisms through which having a partner and having a desire to relocate together impacted both the decision-making and the job application process. This pattern is illustrated by Clemens. In a similar manner to many other participants, Clemens, a teacher in his early-30s, who relocated together with his wife and their two children, described how he consulted with his wife about her location preferences:

She knew that I always wanted to go somewhere else, we spoke about that a lot and I always asked her when I had a job offer, I asked her what do you think about Brazil? Or how about Spain? And when she said 'yeah why not', then I thought about applying for it, and when she said 'no - I don't want to go there with my children', or 'I would not be able to learn the language', or 'that's not the quality of life I need', or 'it's too dangerous' - then I say okay, and don't even apply. (Clemens)

Such an account is exemplary in showing the role of partners not only in terms of decision making but also the choice of destination countries. Such a pattern was observed across different household types, from single breadwinners, such as Clemens, to dual-career households. These findings are in line with larger scholarship which demonstrates the impact of partners on migration decisions and relocation practices (Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Ryan et al., 2009; Tharenou, 2010; Melzer, 2013; Branden, 2014).

While such accounts were informative and provided a description of the role of accompanying partners and the household dynamic as they saw it, I wanted to explore the experiences of accompanying partners from their own perspectives. By analysing the interviews with some of the accompanying partners, I found that a few of them followed to Britain to support their partner's career aspirations. This was true for partners in both single-career and dual-career households. This aspect was illustrated by Elsa, a mother of two young

children, in her mid-30s, who relocated to Britain following her husband, Gilbert, a post-doc at Oxbridge University. During the interview, Elsa spoke with enthusiasm about Gilbert's career and his passion for being a researcher. While at first she portrayed the decision to support Gilbert and relocate as a full-hearted emotional decision, later in the interview she also spoke about the practical and financial aspects of it. Namely, Gilbert was the main contributor moneywise, his position was better paid than hers, and therefore they would be better off following him:

I think he is a main breadwinner and even if I find a job in library, I will not earn as much. (Elsa)

While continuing the discussion, Elsa reflected on another reason that led her to support Gilbert's decision to migrate. Elsa herself was born in the former USSR and migrated to Germany later in life. Due to this migration background, she thought that moving together with Gilbert to a new country would allow him to experience migration. In turn, she hoped that this migratory experience would help him to understand her better and strengthen their relationship:

It [living in the UK] is good for our relationship as I have already experienced migration, and he is now experiencing it, and I think it will be easier for him to understand me. (Elsa)

The interview with Elsa illustrates a complex and multi-layered decision for accompanying her husband. Not only that was it a financial decision (financial betterment of the entire household) but also a personal one (desire to have this shared experience of migration). Such findings contribute to the scholarship on family migration (see Mincer, 1978; Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Melzer, 2013; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholland,

2014c; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015) that challenge the simple notion of a “trailing spouse” as a blind follower, by showcasing the variations in play that motivate partners to accompany highly-skilled migrants abroad.

Karolina, a lawyer in her mid-30s, provides additional reasoning for accompanying her now-husband, Max, abroad. During the interview, she explained that, as a couple, they considered three destination countries: USA (Karolina’s country of origin), Germany (Max’s country of origin) and Britain. Ultimately they decided in favour of Britain:

It is just the general idea that it would be easier for me to find a job in London than for him to find an academic job over here [in the US], especially because I’m more open in what I want to do [career-wise]. I could go to a law firm. I could go to a non-profit organisation. I think there’s just more options [for me]. (Karolina)

For some couples, employment considerations and career aspirations of each individual partner impacted not only the decision to migrate but also destination country for the entire household. In case of Karolina, because she was more flexible career-wise and would consider a larger pool of opportunities than Max, she was the one who followed him and his career aspirations. Such findings resemble Green’s (1997) work where she also found that in some dual-career households, the leading migrant is most likely to be the one who has a location-constrained career.

Accompanying one’s partner, however, did not necessarily mean prioritising one career over the other. For a few of my participants, this strategy had a different meaning and was regarded as a practical and temporary strategy. This kind of rhetoric was presented by Demian. Demian, a lecturer in his early-30s, decided to terminate his contract in his previous

country of residency and accompany his now-wife to Oxbridge. According to him, as a couple they decided that the one who secured a lucrative position would be the leading migrant, while the other would follow and seek employment after the relocation. As his now-wife was the first to be offered a position, he moved together with her to Oxbridge:

I had a post-doc job in another university, but in the end of 2012 she [his partner] applied for a job in Oxbridge and she got it. And we just decided to move to the UK; it was that simple because in a relationship with another academic is tricky especially financial reasons. You have to make a few choices. For us it was always very clear that the one of us who gets the better job will basically be, the meaning was clear that we're going to move here with her getting this job. (Demian)

This quote illustrates the decision-making of a few dual-career academic couples in my sample. Furthermore, such data contributes to the growing body of literature on mobility of households where both partners are academics (Froese, 2012; Gimenez and Morgan, 2017; Schaer et al., 2017; Toader and Dahinden, 2018). Although Demian was also keen to develop his own career, as a household they decided to focus on his partner's employment first. In my effort to understand this pattern, I examined the intersection between career stage and migration. According to my analysis, professional portfolio or career stage impacted migration decisions and determined who was leading migrant. In practice, in a few dual-career academic couples in my sample, those participants who had finished PhDs or post-doctorate positions first, and those who applied for a higher and more prestigious position, were leading migrants and were accompanied by their partners irrespective of gender. Such data contribute to the discussion by Raghuram (2000, 2004) who also found that some dual-career families may prioritise one member's career over the other due to professional portfolio, irrespective of gender.

While the examples presented above describe the decision to move together as a cohesive and unified one, such a decision was not at all easy for some accompanying partners. Observing such variation was possible due to the large number of participants and separate interviewing tactics, which allowed to document inconsistencies in the migration decision in several households (for more information on methodology see Chapter 3). This kind of tension was observed in the case of Lutz and Alicia. During my interview with Lutz, a German professional in his late-20s, he focused on the rationale in pursuing migration, and mentioned that he relocated together with his partner. His account was similar to many others and seemed to portray a harmonious, easy decision with some excitement about the relocation. However, when conducting a separate interview with Alicia, a different story emerged. According to Alicia, she felt that accompanying Lutz was the only possible option, she felt that she could not disagree with the decision to move and had to relocate with him:

I've been trying to explain it before. But I think he is the one supporting financially at the moment, he's the one who pays. I am supported financially. So, yes. We are a team. But this financial aspect differences, so, you know. I can't say no. (Alicia)

As can be inferred from Alicia's quote, although she considered them to work as a team, she was aware that the partnership was an unequal one. Alicia's account presents an unusual insight from a very open discussion over the financial matters in a migrant household. Only two other partners spoke about the role of finances on the migration decision. However, this particular reason might have played a greater role than acknowledged by my participants. Several factors might have contributed to this tendency of my participants to omit information about finances. First, financial-matters are a sensitive topic to discuss during

interview, especially in the case of highly-skilled migrants from affluent countries who are typically assumed to have a good income and financial freedom. Second, participants were keen to present a more cohesive story focusing on the advantages that migration to Britain provided rather than on the challenges and obstacles associated with it. Noticing such a tendency of some of the participants, during the interview I probed and asked counterfactual questions to better understand the motivations and experiences. Such findings highlight the challenges inherent in studying the migration of professional households and the need for a sensitive yet comprehensive interviewing process.

A reoccurring theme in my analysis was the role of accompanying partners in organising life after the relocation. The case of Steffen provides an illustration of this topic. Steffen, a researcher in his late-30s, has relocated together with his wife and a new-born baby. During the interview, he explained that deciding to relocate together was assumed to provide several advantages. Not only could they recreate their family life, but also there were specific circumstances of a maternity leave which provided the time for his wife to settle their lives in Britain:

We decided on this particular job and we had just had our first child in July that year. When we actually moved, he was three months old. So, in a way, there was no desire, I think, on her [his partner's] part to come to the UK and immediately start on a job, but it was actually a good time to use it to settle in and spend time with the child and settle in with the local community. (Steffen)

Steffen's account is typical of a few participants who relocated with small children. I found that a number of participants moved to Britain when they had toddlers or small children, with partners on maternity leave. Existing research suggests that couples may choose to coordinate childbearing with migration of the household to reduce the cost of

migration for the entire household, because childbearing incorporates the woman's temporary absence from the labour market (Breugel, 1996; Kofman, 2004). While these studies did not necessarily examine highly-skilled migration within the EU context, my study suggests the relevance of this factor in explaining the dynamics in some highly-skilled households relocating between affluent EU countries as well.

Steffen's account further demonstrates the role of partners in reorganising life after the relocation. In this case, while Steffen started to work immediately after the relocation, his wife was responsible for resettling in the local community. The role of partners in managing the relocation was mentioned during interviews with many of my interviewees who relocated together with their partners. Moreover, during interviews with accompanying partners themselves, some also described their roles in managing the practical side of the relocation. This was true for both male and female accompanying partners. The topic was exemplified by Roland, a business advisor in his late-30s, who had decided to terminate his employment in Germany and accompany his wife who was offered an intra-company transfer to the London office. In order to understand his rationale and decision making, I asked him to elaborate on his decision:

If I stayed in Germany, she would be alone [in Britain]. There are so many things to organise with relocation. And doing it by yourself, it may be exhausting. It is a good time being unemployed; it was helpful that I helped to organise the private life and she could focus on her job. I also took care of our dog. (Roland)

Accounts of the accompanying male partners, such as those of Roland and Demian, are still rarely observed in the research on mobility. My data contribute to the existing literature (Tenn, 2010; Melzer, 2013; Branden, 2014) by illustrating variation in the migration

trajectories of highly-skilled households, and by providing examples of mobile households where female professionals are leading migrants and are accompanied by their male partners.

While the numbers are small, they provide empirical evidence and reveal the active role of accompanying men in the relocation and readjustment of the entire household. While in other projects, researchers (Cole, 2012; Bernard, 2014; Clerge et al., 2017) showed that some male partners follow their wives as a way to solidify the relationship, in my project, I show that there are also practical considerations in relocating together: to help with the relocation and reorganisation of life after the move.

Despite the fact that relocating together with a partner seemed to simplify the relocation of the entire household, migratory experiences of these accompanying partners themselves was not always easy. This was observed in the case of both female and male accompanying partners. The pattern is illustrated by the case of Samuel and Sabine, lecturers in their mid-40s. The couple relocated to London back in 2006, after Samuel was offered a position in the city. As a result of the relocation, Sabine had to terminate her contract in Germany. Seeing Samuel's fast and seemingly frictionless transition between the German and British labour market, they assumed that, after the relocation, Sabine would have a similar experience as they had similar qualifications and employment history. Surprisingly for both Samuel and Sabine, it took her almost two years to find part-time employment, which was possible only after Samuel used his professional networks to help her:

We were very naïve in terms of thinking there are so many opportunities. She is going to wander into the next office and get a job offer. But [there] were so many jobs and so much competition that she really struggled. She really did struggle. (Samuel)

Only a small share of accompanying partners in my sample, despite being highly-skilled themselves, were employed during the first year after the relocation. Indeed, although in principle Sabine could apply for jobs in Britain after the relocation due to the free movement of workers, recognition of qualifications, and her linguistic competency, in practice, it took her over two years to get access to the local labour market. Such data challenges the narrative of frictionless mobility of so-called Eurostars, and shows that for some highly-skilled migrants from affluent EU countries relocation may be a challenging experience. As shown by this example of Samuel, the challenge in finding employment in the new country put emotional and financial stress not only on Sabine but on the whole relationship and presented a long-term challenge for the entire household.

While exploring the employment aspirations of the accompanying partners, I found that the desire to integrate into the British labour market not only stemmed from a financial need but more so from a desire to practice one's profession. Moreover, the accompanying partner's education and employment status before migration seemed to be almost irrelevant in terms of participation in the British labour market after relocation. While a small share of accompanying partners did not intend to seek employment right after the relocation due to small children in the household, others were (willingly or not) unemployed or employed in part-time jobs. Several of these participants, both male and female, had to engage in part-time jobs and volunteer before finding full-time employment in Britain. Sabine and Elsa, introduced earlier, illustrate how employment became an unexpected challenge for the entire household. Such data contribute to the wider scholarship on the mobility of professionals within the EU that shows variation in regard to the experiences of highly-skilled migrants

(Weiss 2006; Csedo, 2008; Nowicka, 2012, 2015; Erel and Ryan, 2019). However, in contrast to these studies, my data demonstrate that even within one national group of highly-skilled Germans, there is variation in regard to experiences and labour market outcomes post-migration, showcasing the challenges with transferability of education and knowledge even in the case of migration between affluent EU countries.

Furthermore, while various research projects indicate that accompanying female partners face difficulties in finding employment after the relocation of the household (Raghuram, 2000; Eby, 2001; Ho, 2006, 2011; Kofman, 2012; Foebker, 2019), in my study I found that these challenges and obstacles were common for male and female accompanying partners. Male accompanying partners who relocate without securing employment faced similar challenges of reemployment and social isolation as some of the female accompanying partners did. Such a finding contributes to the existing body of literature (Smits et al., 2003; Cole, 2012; Bernard, 2014; Clerge et al., 2017; Foebker, 2019) and provides a description of the complexity of the experiences of accompanying male partners also in the context of highly-skilled migrants from affluent EU countries.

Finally, observing such similarities of experiences and challenges across genders suggests that understanding employment of accompanying partners post-migration would benefit from going beyond the gender role discussion. Future research may benefit from incorporating labour market characteristics of the destination country, professional networks, and institutional constraints. My data on accompanying male partners contributes to the emerging field of research on challenges and opportunities experienced by accompanying male migrants in highly-skilled households (Cole, 2012; Bernard, 2014; Foebker and Imani,

2017; Foebker, 2019). While these studies have recorded both opportunities and challenges experienced by the migrants in the non-EU context, or by those migrating third countries to the EU, my findings showcase that highly-skilled accompanying male partners from affluent EU countries are not immune to these challenges.

Migration experiences of several households in my sample were also impacted by unexpected challenges. This was the case for Catarina and Albert, introduced earlier in this section. As previously mentioned, relocation to Britain presented a chance for the couple to live together for the first time; therefore, when Catarina was transferred to London, they decided to relocate together. Such a decision was based on the assumption that Albert would be able to secure an intra-company transfer to London. While he had discussed this option with his superiors and got an informal approval, his reassignment took longer than expected. This resulted in a year-long commute for Albert, who was living in London but had to commute back to Germany on a weekly basis. While explaining their migration decision and living arrangements Catarina commented:

I moved [to London] and he had to do a year of commuting because his company wouldn't let him switch immediately [to the London office]. But after one year of commute he was placed here and now, there's no more traveling involved. (Catarina)

During the interview with Albert, he presented a similar account:

I was commuting the first year, I moved between Germany and the UK, we got some things sorted out and I then transferred to London. (Albert)

According to the interviews with Albert and Catarina, the challenges associated with Albert's employment impacted the overall dynamic between the couple and resulted in high

levels of stress and uncertainty. Such accounts provide another example of the unexpected challenges that mobile households may face after relocation. As can be inferred from my data, the topic of unexpected challenges after relocation was a recurring motive. Indeed, as I mentioned in Chapter 5, events such as Brexit may also become unexpected and unpredicted challenges for intra-EU migrants after relocation.

During these interviews, many of the accompanying partners, both male and female, expressed how proud and supportive they were of their partners' career ambitions. Some of these accounts resemble what was identified by Kanter as a "two-person single career" (Kanter, 1977). The concept was used to describe couples where wives devoted themselves to supporting their husbands' careers. Although Kanter wrote about highly ranked executives who moved abroad accompanied by their wives in the '70s, my data suggest that this concept may still be relevant today to explain some of the relocation practices and migration decision within mobile households.

6.3 SECOND STRATEGY: FOLLOWING THE PARTNER AT A LATER STAGE

One of the original contributions of my project is that I was able to observe several patterns of behaviour adopted by different couples in my sample. While the majority of participants relocated together with their partners right away or were followed shortly afterwards, several households decided to adopt a different strategy. Even though they relocated together, what differentiated them from the couples discussed earlier is that they moved to Britain in two separate stages: leading migrants relocated after accepting a job offer in Britain, and their partner followed within the next six to twelve months. In my effort to

understand the rationale for choosing this strategy, I analysed interviews with leading migrants and their partners.

By interrogating the experiences and reasons for this relocation strategy adopted by interviewees, I uncovered that choosing such a strategy relied on practical considerations. In particular, a few German professionals who relocated ahead of their partners did so to evaluate their job and potential life in Britain before relocating the entire household. Such a strategy was chosen to evaluate whether the decision to accept the job and relocate to Britain was the right decision for the professionals themselves and for the family. The interview with Philip, a senior lecturer in his early-40s, provided insight into this topic. He first explained that he relocated following a new position at Oxbridge University, while his wife followed him almost six months later. When asked to elaborate on the decision, he explained that this was a “responsible” practice on his behalf; only after he felt confident in this new position, did he feel he could ask his wife to relocate. After spending time in Britain and having confidence in the move, his wife terminated her contract in Germany, sold their apartment, and relocated:

In a way I’m going over and then it was up to me in a way to say ‘I think this job is secure.’ And then, she would start making other arrangements— start terminating her job, coming over, selling the flat or renting the flat, which is what we did in the end. Those kinds of things. (Philip)

For a few participants, choosing this strategy was the only available option, as it provided the necessary time to organise the relocation of the entire household. As mentioned in Chapter 4, many German professionals were surprised by how fast they were able to secure employment in Britain; this, however, left them no time to organise the move itself. In these

cases, the partner who stayed behind had to address the practical aspects of organising the relocation of the household, such as selling or renting out the apartment, as well as terminating his/her employment contract. This was the case for Bernhard, a researcher in his early-30s, who relocated to Oxbridge six months ahead of his wife:

I think it was relatively clear from the point where I accepted the offer that the plan was that she would join me, but it was also clear that it won't be on the day that I moved. Because she had a job. (Bernhard)

Pursuing migration in two stages was also a financial strategy. For example, Ula, a lecturer in her late-20s introduced earlier, was offered a position as a lecturer and had to move within a few weeks after accepting the offer. Her partner had to stay in Germany to manage the relocation, renting out their apartment, terminating all contracts, and organising the shipment of their belongings. Only after almost eight months of this organisation was the couple reunited in Oxbridge:

Because of the shortness of time. I wanted to start as early as possible because I really wanted to get a job right away, but at the same time, my partner wasn't ready and we had a flat in Germany, and you have those practical issues. I wanted to have those things as planned in order to minimise costs. (Ula)

Although Ula also took an active part in the relocation, advised and assisted with some of the issues, her partner had to organise the majority of the move after Ula moved to Britain. These quotes highlight the active role of partners in managing the relocation. By organising and managing the practical issues in Germany, the partner provides the necessary assistance and practical support for the mobile professional. Such a strategy minimised the financial costs that might have been associated with spontaneous relocation as well as reduced the overall stress by distributing the amount of work that had to be done before the relocation.

Although the literature has ample of examples of how partners contribute to the recreation and reorganisation of family life after relocation (Kofman, 2004; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014c), my findings also illustrate the role of partners before the relocation of the entire household, as well as in the case of two-stage relocation. Such observations challenge the simple notion of a “trailing spouse” as a blind follower and highlight the active role of those partners in managing the relocation of the entire household.

While the intention to follow at a later stage was aimed at reducing the costs of such migration for both partners, after the relocation, the experiences of the following partners did not differ from those of the accompanying partners who relocated right away. As described earlier in this chapter, after the relocation, partners had to recreate the family and social life, and, if desired, start seeking employment in Britain.

6.4 Third strategy: moving together after both having found a job in Britain

Among my participants, two couples chose to apply for positions in Britain together and to relocate only after both had secured an employment contract in the same city. Although a rare strategy in my sample, acknowledging the particularities of this strategy benefits our understanding of the variety of strategies and practices that highly-skilled households may choose. As such, my data demonstrate different paths of the migration of highly-skilled households and goes beyond the traditional model of migration which is characterised by a leading migrant and a dependent follower.

While conducting the interview with participants in this category, I noticed that the main reason to choose such a strategy was to ensure the relocation of the entire household while

also guaranteeing the career development of each member. The pattern is illustrated by Franziska, a post-doctoral researcher in her early-30s. She and her husband were searching for jobs because their contracts in Germany could not be prolonged. At that time, they also had their first child. The desire to move together while not compromising their careers guided their relocation. They decided to apply separately for two positions at the same institution or the same city to allow them to relocate together. During their first attempt, they both applied for a position in a research institution in Hamburg and while her husband got an offer, Franziska did not. They decided to decline his offer and continue the search. Eventually they applied for two positions at Oxbridge University and were offered two positions in different departments at the same university:

[Before we came to Britain] my husband was offered a position in Hamburg. I sent [my CV to the same place as well] but I didn't get even to interviews. I discovered two jobs in Oxbridge, we both were invited and we got the job. (Franziska)

When asked to elaborate on why they declined the offer from Hamburg where her husband was offered a position, and whether she considered following her husband to Hamburg and searching for employment after the move, Franziska replied:

I didn't like the idea to go and have no job. I hated it. The worst time was maternity leave. I need a job to feel like a person. (Franziska)

It seemed that adopting such a strategy was possible because these couples did not face acute time pressure for finding a job which allowed the migration decision-making to be prolonged, and allowed them subsequently to relocate once the best-perceived option was available. Although relocating together while having employment for both partners was

considered to be the best option by the majority of my interviewees, many acknowledged that finding employment in the same city for both partners prior to the move was considered to be very challenging. As a result, many did not engage in this strategy, and decided to relocate together after only one partner found employment in Britain.

While examining the portrayals presented by these two couples in my sample, I found that their attitudes towards migration as well as practices in relocation differed from other couples in the sample. For example, the application process required both spouses to actively seek and apply for positions abroad in the same location at the same time. This required cooperation and job searching for each partner. Indeed, as was mentioned by Franziska in the quote above, she and her husband both made separate applications simultaneously for the positions at Oxbridge University.

However, applying separately to different positions was only one of the possibilities that I witnessed in my sample. Judith and her partner Adam, lecturers in their late-30s and parents to a small child, decided to try and apply together for a “joint position”. In a practical manner, they applied for one position, but asked for each to be employed part-time. Despite considering it to be unconventional with a high degree of uncertainty, their application was successful and they were both offered part-time contracts in one of London’s universities:

We thought that there would be no way that any university would give us two [separate] positions. And since we work in the same area, it’s a bit difficult. One possibility would’ve been to apply to two positions which are very close. But when this position here came out, what we did instead, and that was really an experiment because we wanted to see how people react to that. We applied jointly to one position. We said that we are happy with half the position each of us. We were successful so it worked well. (Judith)

Choosing such a strategy is only possible for partners in dual-career households where both have similar career profiles. The question therefore remains as to how common such a scenario is among dual-career couples in the general population. In my sample, out of 38 couples, 12 couples had been working in similar areas. The observed similarities of portfolios in those households may be explained by the fact that some of these couples met during university studies, conferences or at work.

While relocating together after both found employment was not a widespread strategy, it may become more common in the future. Indeed, in recent years, some companies as well as universities have begun to offer positions for both partners of the mobile household. Despite being a relatively new and occasional practice, one might wonder whether this is an emerging trend corresponding to a new need in a mobile society of professionals. Following my data, it can be suggested that providing such packages may have a positive impact on migration on dual-career households, allowing to combine employment of each member abroad and family life.

6.5 FOURTH STRATEGY: LONG-DISTANCE RELATIONSHIP

The three scenarios presented throughout the chapter share one aspect in common, namely the desire of the household to relocate together and, if that is not possible, to reunite in a timely manner. However, this was not the case for all the German professionals in my sample. For six participants, moving together or reuniting soon in Britain was not a practical option. These couples decided to engage in long-distance relationship (LDRs) and while one partner had relocated to Britain, the other stayed in Germany or moved elsewhere. All except

one of these couples did not have children. Although at the time of the interview only six participants were in LDRs, almost a third of my sample had at some point engaged in LDRs with their current or previous partner.

The case of Christoffer, an associate professor in his early-40s, provides an illustration of the topic. Christoffer was one of the few male participants who initially relocated to Britain following his wife, who got a position at Oxbridge University. Although he spent a year with her in Oxbridge, he found a position and relocated to the North of England, while his wife stayed in Oxbridge. They decided to engage in an LDR and met at weekends for almost six years:

She's also a musicologist [like myself] and it will be very difficult to find jobs together in the same city. This meant that for six years we only ever met for the weekends and I was visiting her at Oxbridge and she was visiting me.
(Christoffer)

Christoffer's story was typical of many of my participants who were in LDRs at the time of the interview or those who had previously experienced them. In my effort to understand these experiences more fully, I consulted with the wider scholarship on LDRs. While LDRs are not a new phenomenon, they are oftentimes observed in the case of economic migrants or mobile students who, due to legal or financial restrictions, are unable to relocate with their partners (Reuschke, 2010; Beauchemin et al., 2015). Although some research on mobile highly-skilled also indicates a growing tendency among dual-career couples to engage in LDRs (Elliott and Urry, 2010; Neustaedter and Grenberg, 2012; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015), only a few scholars have observed and examined this in the EU context (Reuschke, 2010; Murray-Close, 2019). Therefore, by interrogating the rationale behind choosing such a

strategy as well as documenting the particularities of the dynamic of relationships between partners in such households, I aimed to address the gap in the literature.

Additional example of the LDRs in my sample is presented by Angelika, a lecturer in her late-20s. After finishing her PhD in Germany, she applied for a position at Oxbridge University and got a job offer. Her partner, Carl, stayed in Germany to finish his PhD and consequently was offered a position in the USA. According to Angelika, because she has three-year contract in Britain and she is unsure whether she will stay in Britain for longer, asking Carl to relocate and seek employment in Britain was considered to be counterproductive. By the time Carl had secured employment in Britain she might have had to move again to a new location. Therefore, engaging in an LDR was considered by both to be a good strategy:

I mean we did our PhD together in Bonn. Carl had another year when I was finishing. I needed to get a position somewhere else my scholarship was running out. He needed to stay for one more year. And then we decided that Europe might be a good idea and if not then the US. He is staying in academia as well, that means that it is not clear where he will end up in the closest future. (Angelika)

During the Skype interview with Carl, he also explained that an LDR was a part of their discussed future as both are interested in pursuing academic careers:

We are currently living in different countries which is just basically part of how's the job process goes. But basically, in three to five years down the road, if we can find permanent positions, then living together and starting a family would be top priority. (Carl)

These two quotes also draw our attention to the fluidity of living arrangements and the role of different life stages on mobility. In a similar manner to other couples who engaged in

LDRs, Angelika and Carl had lived together before they decided to seek employment in different countries. Moreover, they planned to move together again in a few years when they decide to have a family. Such observations highlight the link between different types of living arrangements and life stages. For example, prioritising careers may lead some professionals to engage in LDRs, whereas prioritising family life may result in a higher priority for a shared dwelling. As I have already discussed earlier in this Chapter, some couples who decided to prioritize family formation or/and had small children gave higher importance to living together and decided to relocate together despite potential worsening of career or employment of one of them after the relocation.

Furthermore, such data contributes to the scholarship on mobility of households of early-career academics (Froese, 2012; Gimenez and Morgan, 2017; Schaer et al., 2017; Toader and Dahinden, 2018). I have mentioned previously in this Chapter that while some dual-career couples employed in academia prefer to relocate together despite worsening or stagnation of one of their careers, others, such as Angelika and Carl, decided to engage in LDR. These findings demonstrate that even within a specific group, such as households of early-career academics, couples may choose different relocation strategies depending career and family considerations.

When analysing the interviews, I uncovered that a strong motive in choosing LDRs among my participants was ensuring the career development of both partners in the household. This kind of attitude is best illustrated by Theo, a professor in his mid-40s, who relocated to London a few years ago. His partner, Mona, wanted to follow him to London. Despite seeking employment in London, she was unable to find employment in the city and

therefore extended the search and applied for positions across Britain. She successfully got an offer from at Oxbridge University and, after signing the contract, she relocated. As a result, while Theo and Mona both lived in Britain, they did not share a dwelling and met during the weekends.

During the interview with Theo, he spoke about their migration decision and the fact that although he was happy that Mona eventually followed him, he also encouraged her to pursue her own career goals. Therefore, when she got an offer from Oxbridge University and not London, he was supportive of her move despite the fact that they would continue living apart. Currently, they both rent apartments in each location, and have what they described as a “weekend relationship”. When talking about the complexity of combining migration and family life, Theo said:

We were discussing options how can we make it happen to find a place where we both can work at our career stage. The higher the career stage, the more difficult it gets to find a place for both. We often discussed and it is not an easy solution actually, so we have to be also flexible in the sense that we will accept not to live together again for a while. For example, like it is now, we live in two different cities, we accept that we can only be together during the weekend, or see each other once or twice per week. (Theo)

My findings contribute to the current debate on LDRs. Available research on LDRs of professionals suggests that couples may choose to engage in LDRs voluntarily to ensure personal independence (Levin, 2004; Reuschke, 2010). Moreover, in their book on *Mobility Turn*, Elliott and Urry (2010) suggest that this type of relationship is becoming a new form of family type across Western societies. Although my participants also described the decision to engage in LDRs as a voluntary and rational option, examining these narratives alongside the actual details of the decision revealed a more complex portrayal, and showed that LDRs

were mostly associated with employment constraints. In a similar manner to that mentioned by Christoffer earlier, many couples have found themselves in a situation where LDRs became a necessity, the only viable option that allowed career and some form of family life to be combined. Indeed, despite the fact that legally, due to free movement, those couples could have relocated together and share a dwelling in Britain, the labour market and employment considerations have prevented some from doing so. Such findings contribute to the emerging field of research on LDRs in the EU context (Reuschke, 2010; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2017; Murray-Close, 2019), suggesting that employment constraints may account for some LDRs even in the case of highly-skilled migration between affluent EU countries.

In addition to my curiosity in understanding the motivations for accepting LDRs, I was also interested in examining the overall experiences of those who engaged in them. As mentioned in the methodological chapter, many participants in my sample experienced LDRs at some point in the relationship. Furthermore, nine participants were in LDRs at the time of the interview: six German professionals and three of their partners.

When analysing migration experiences of these couples, several aspects emerged. First such theme was the supportive nature of partners as well as trust in the survival of relationship across a distance. This aspect is exemplified by Berta, a manager in her early-50s, who accepted a post in Britain, while her partner stayed in Germany. When I met Berta, she had been living in Britain for two years and visited Germany every two months. Although she had to travel to Germany for work purposes, her frequent travel was also associated with her

desire to maintain the relationship with her partner. During the interview, Berta explained that she would have not moved without his support:

We discussed this of course and he was supportive, so otherwise maybe I would not have done it and we said okay see how it goes and maybe he will come later. We said - I trust you. I'd move and then he stays and then we see how it goes and then I can always go back. Not in the same company, but I would go somewhere else, I mean it's always a possibility. (Berta)

This kind of attitude was also expressed by Andreas, a research associate in his late-30s. Andreas moved to Britain after obtaining a contract at Oxbridge University while his girlfriend had stayed in Germany. According to Andreas, choosing the LDR strategy to deal with their career goals was not considered to be a threatening or unexpected decision; on the contrary, it was a deliberate and thought-through option:

We both knew that it would be very likely that a long-distance relationship would have to happen if we both wanted academic jobs after the PhD. You really have to be very lucky to find two jobs in the same city. We kind of expected it; it was not a very big discussion. It was never a question of not doing it for the sake of the relationship. We also were very confident that the relationship could cope with it. It was not very threatening. (Andreas)

Andreas's account provides an additional illustration of the complexities of the intra-EU migration of dual career couples where both are academics. In a similar manner to Andreas, Carl, and Angelika, a few other participants expected LDRs to be part of their life. I was curious to understand this displayed acceptance of such practices and the overall decision to engage in LDRs. Following my data, it seemed that such tendencies of my participants may be attributed to several factors. First, high levels of education and specialisation and expressed strong desires to stay within a specialisation narrowed down the pool of potential employers and destination countries. As a result of this specialisation, partners in these

highly-skilled, dual-career households had to seek employment in different locations. Furthermore, accepting LDRs was also associated with fixed-term contracts. As these contracts were short-term, relocating as a couple was considered counterproductive by a few of my participants, for example, Angelika who was mentioned earlier. Such data demonstrates the challenges of combining academic career and family life for academic couples. These data contribute to the growing body of research on the intra-EU mobility of academics (see Ackers, 2004; Bennon and Locke, 2010; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2017) and suggest that while the EU attempts to facilitate such mobility, one needs to account for the personal price that the movers may need to pay.

While my participants spoke about LDRs as a seemingly easy and even expected choice, maintaining this type of relationship was not always an easy task. Foremost, some couples experienced financial challenges associated with living in two separate locations and transportation costs. Although the literature suggests that in some cases mobile workers may benefit financially from relocating alone due to lower living expenses and ability to leave the family in the family-owned dwelling in the country of origin (Beauchemin et al., 2015; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015), this was not the case among my participants. My study resembles other projects (see Walsh, 2009; Neustaedter and Grenberg, 2012; Kiriakos, 2014; Carrozza et al., 2017) that show financial costs of such living arrangements. Indeed, this kind of financial burden was expressed by Max and Carolina, presented earlier in the chapter. For a while, the couple engaged in LDR and lived in London and San-Francisco, two cities known for their high costs of living and high rent. Despite being employed in relatively well-paid positions, the rental costs together with the cost of travel between the countries presented a financial

challenge. The financial costs of maintaining LDRs have negatively influenced several couples by worsening the financial situation, hindering savings, and postponing buying property.

In addition to financial hardships, I also witnessed emotional challenges that such arrangements put on the entire household as well as on each partner. Spending time apart from each other and being uncertain about the next time they will meet, as well as the overall obscurity about when the situation will change, all contributed to high levels of stress, increased the emotional costs, and in some cases, led to friction between partners. Indeed, while some participants and their partners provided a cohesive and positive description of their LDR experiences, it was not the case for everybody.

To illustrate the case, consider the case of Rudolf and Erika. While conducting an interview with Rudolf, a researcher in his early-30s. According to Rudolf, having an LDR was considered a valid and manageable option for both partners. He explained that he relocated to Oxbridge following a one-year contract and, due to this temporariness and insecurity of his position at Oxbridge University, his girlfriend stayed in Germany. While his contract was initially one year, he stayed longer because it was extended several times, leading to a four-year LDR:

I was very happy with the work and it was okay with the long-distance relationship. I would always prefer to have my girl with me. The fact that I frequently travelled between Germany and the UK that was actually okay. And although three years sounds like a long time, time is running so fast. I think I would continue to have this long-distance relationship right now with the job that I have now. I also have the flexibility to be in Germany more often than I had before, which was the reason for me to extend once again without thinking much because so it doesn't come along with specific costs. If she

[girlfriends] decides to stay in Germany or somewhere else — I could mainly be at that place and sometimes in Oxbridge. That would be one option. And the other option would be long-distance relationship and the third option would be for her to come to this place. So, lots of options. (Rudolf)

However, during the Skype interview with Erika, a different story emerged. At the time of the interview, she had been in an LDR with Rudolf for over four years. The insecurity over Rudolf's employment and the temporary nature of his contracts had, according to her as well, prevented her from following him until now. However, that year she intended to relocate to Britain as she could not see herself continuing with the LDR anymore:

He said that he would come back, he would apply for other jobs soon. But you know based on my experiences - soon was not soon enough for me. And I thought just to make sure that we don't have this long-distance relationship anymore I should come to the UK because otherwise you never know what soon means. I think already when he prolonged his contract for the first time, we were thinking about options and then we did not find a good option for me. I didn't want to make compromises on my education and my job ideas. But over the years it became more and more a realistic option because he was serious about staying longer and so I became more serious about joining. (Erika)

In these quotes from Rudolf and Erika, one can observe a complex combination of factors and experiences that partners in LDRs may have to address. First, Erika's account is very emotional and it hints at the emotional difficulties and frustrations that living in LDRs may have on partners. Indeed, existing research suggests that migration may be experienced as an emotionally destabilising event for the entire household (Svašek, and Skrbiš, 2007; Baldassar et al., 2014; Albrecht, 2016; Toader and Dahinden, 2018). My data illustrate that such emotional difficulties may be part of the overall LDR experience, and present a challenge to relationships during the period of this arrangement.

Furthermore, the two quotes illustrate two different portrayals of the same story. Observing such a difference of opinions about migration and the current situation was rare in my study. My data suggest that conducting separate interviews with both partners within the mobile household benefitted our understanding of the dynamic and variation of perceptions between those involved in migration within the household. In fact, I witnessed such a variation in terms of the migration experience in only two other couples; all other interviewed couples described a more cohesive story with similar descriptions. The observed trend of cohesiveness might be partly explained by participation bias. Those partners who were more likely to agree to participate in this research might have also been more likely to have agreed to relocate and have a cohesive narrative at home.

While I have documented several challenges associated with LDRs, according to my analysis, such a living arrangement also had a positive aspect; namely, it contributed to better work performance. Living alone while being in a relationship allowed these participants to devote more time to work, which in turn increased their productivity. During the interview with Mona and her partner Theo, Angelika and her partner Carl, each described this positive aspect of having the distinction between private and work life. In a similar manner, Rene, whose wife and children stayed in Germany, reflected on how having the separation between working and family life had a positive impact on the overall experience and the work environment:

It's an environment here, brilliant students and so I really like this aspect. Quite frankly also a family situation [is good]. When I am here for the week - I am sort of off the hook, no obligation, I can go to College lunches and dinners, I can fully concentrate on my research. The hardest part was always

a little bit for my wife. I am always paying slightly for that when I'm home a week. (Rene)

At the time of the interview, Rene, had been living in Britain for seven years, and had commuted to Germany on a biweekly basis. Furthermore, due to his wife's employment commitments in Germany, relocation of the entire household to Britain was not considered an option. While Rene was enthusiastic about this situation and its positive impact on his career, he also spoke about his wife's support and willingness to take on responsibility for care of their two children when he is absent. Despite the seemingly good situation at work, Rene also exhibited feelings of guilt towards his family. Such accounts highlight the actual experiences and difficulties within the complex dynamics between partners in LDRs.

6.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I addressed the role of partners in migration decisions and relocation practices as well as the overall migratory experience of German participants in my sample. Interrogating the data from 38 participants who were in relationship at the time of the relocation and 11 of their partners helped in uncovering underlying reasoning that led to choosing a particular relocation strategy, and provided insight into the spectrum of experiences of individual members and entire households.

Many of the migrants in my sample relocated with their partners. The prevalence of coupled movers in the sample is not surprising taking into account the age cohort and life stages of my participants. Moreover, as was suggested in Chapter 4, free movement within the EU may have also contributed to the prevalence of coupled movers, as it simplified the

relocation of German professionals to Britain together with their family members. While all the couples except six intended to relocate together or reunite in a timely manner in Britain, through my examination of the data, I was able to identify three different patterns of relocation. Some couples relocated together right away after one found employment in Britain, others relocated in two stages, and finally, two couples relocated only after both partners had found employment in the same city. Such findings contribute to the wider scholarship on family migration (Wills and Yeoh, 2000; Eby, 2001; Hardill, 2002; Smits et al., 2003; Ho, 2006; Cooke, 2008; Vohlídalová, 2014, 2017; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015) by showing variation with regard to strategies that couples may adopt to deal with migration even when they decide to move together. Uncovering such variation in regard to the relocation strategies of those who prefer to move together is one of the main contributions of my project. Through examination of each strategy, I uncovered some of the underlying patterns and reasons for selecting each strategy.

By probing and exploring experience and everyday practices in these households, I was able to uncover a more nuanced and complex portrayal of the role of partners. Foremost, my work adds to the critique on concepts of the “trailing spouse” (Ho, 2006; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015). However, my findings go beyond this discussion and demonstrate the active role of both male and female partners in organising the relocation both before and after the relocation. Indeed, due to the fact that some of the male participants in my sample had relocated to accommodate their female partners’ migratory desires, I contribute to the emerging field of research on accompanying male partners through

interrogation of their experiences (Cole, 2012; Bernard, 2014; Foebker and Imani, 2017; Foebker, 2019).

Finally, six couples in my sample decided on a different relocation strategy and engaged in LDRs. Although the number of these households in my sample was small, due to the richness of my data, I contribute to scholarship in this area by providing examples of such strategy in the context of the mobility of the highly-skilled within the EU. For these couples, engaging in an LDR was the only acceptable strategy that allowed to combine family life and career goals. Indeed, analysing the interviews with these couples revealed the complexity and ambiguity in regard to experiencing LDRs. While all of my participants in LDRs described it as a voluntary and low-risk option, the circumstances of such living arrangements were always associated with limitations in the labour market, such as fixed-term contracts or lack of proper employment for the accompanying partner.

These examples of German dual-career households contribute to our understanding of complexities even for dual-career mobility between EU countries. While from a theoretical point of view EU nationals may be accompanied by their partners who may enjoy transferability of their own education and work experience and access the labour market after the relocation, in practice limitations within the labour market may prevent partners from accompanying. Such findings contribute to our limited knowledge on LDRs in the EU context (Reuschke, 2010; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2017; Murray-Close, 2019). With the growing number of temporary positions for professionals as well as expected high levels of mobility for early-career professionals, the question remains about the extent

to which such arrangements will become more popular in the future, and how they will affect both the individuals involved and society as a whole.

Chapter 7. CONCLUSION

My research interests in the migration of professionals between affluent European countries was sparked by my own mobility as a non-EU citizen within the EU. I was fascinated by the migration decisions and relocation experiences of some Western European professions who decided to leave their home countries where they enjoyed good quality of employment and standards of living. Pursuing these interests has resulted in this PhD project. As was mentioned in the introduction chapter, by addressing this aspect of mobility in the thesis, I aimed to contribute to the wider literature on the mobility of the highly-skilled between affluent countries by investigating four research questions:

1. What are the primary motivations for highly skilled migrants, who are already in employment, to move from one affluent European country to another?
 - a. What do they expect from such a move?
 - b. How are these expectations realised in reality?
2. Are there any national differences in employment practices or in labour market structure that impact the decision to move or the relocation practices and experiences?
3. How is the cultural and national identity experienced and how does it impact the outcome of these relocations?
4. How do migrants navigate between migration and family life?
 - a. What role do partners have in migration decisions and practices?
 - b. What impact do children have on the migration?
 - c. How do wider caring relationships impact mobility?

As discussed in the methodological chapter, I addressed these questions through examination of the case study of German highly-skilled living migrants and working in Britain. By using various strategies to reach this under-researched group, I was able to collect 64 interviews, with 19 female and 34 male German professionals and four male and seven

female partners of different nationalities. The high number of participants as well as variation in regard to the gender of each leading migrant, family status, and living arrangements of couples in my sample resulted in a multi-layered and multi-faceted portrayal of migration. Using rich qualitative data from these interviews, I organised the thesis into three empirical chapters. Each chapter revolved around a specific theme. Chapter 4 focused on factors that contributed to the expectation and experience of easy and smooth migration; Chapter 5 focused on the challenges and obstacles faced during relocation, and Chapter 6 examined the impact of partners on migration and relocation practices. In this concluding chapter, I summarise and discuss key aspects that transcend each individual chapter and answer my research questions. By bringing these aspects together, I highlight my contribution to the wider scholarship.

7.1 NAVIGATING BETWEEN THE EXPECTATIONS AND REALITIES OF HIGHLY-SKILLED EU MIGRATION

Abolition of border control and recognition of qualifications and diplomas may facilitate the mobility of EU citizens within the region and simplify the relocation itself (Heinz and Ward-Warmedinger, 2006; Favell, 2008, 2013; Nerb et al., 2009; Koikkalainen, 2014; Young et al., 2014; Recchi, 2015). As a result, some mobile Western Europeans may enjoy mobility within the EU where ethnicity, inequality, barriers, and cultural disadvantages are removed. However, some empirical evidence shows that mobility, even of such privileged groups as Western professionals, may still entail barriers and challenges associated with relocation

within the EU (see Ackers, 2004; Nowicka, 2012; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a,b,c; Weiss, 2017; Ryan, 2018).

While I have discussed at length aspects of migratory experiences of my participants in Chapters 4 and 5, in this section, I want to focus on the mechanisms behind some of these experiences. In my research, I was able to analyse how the EU as a geo-political entity, through the Freedom of Movement principle and acceptance of qualifications, facilitated the relocation of German professionals in my sample on the personal level. Some of these experiences do resemble experiences of the so-called Eurostars discussed by other scholars (Favell, 2009, 2013; Koikkalainen 2009, 2014; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a,b,c; Young et al., 2014; Recchi, 2015). As described in Chapter 4, the fact that Britain was part of the EU was often mentioned as a contributing factor that simplified the decision to move within the region and eased the relocation itself. By analysing my data, I found that many participants experience easy and smooth migration.

It became clear that many of the participants seemed to internalise Freedom of Movement and described migration within the EU as “natural”. The legal right to move within the EU, to seek employment, and be accompanied by family members without needing additional paperwork contributed to their decision to relocate within the EU. This was oftentimes presented in contrast to relocation to the USA, which was considered as a viable option employment-wise, but one that required additional paperwork. Such accepting attitudes of many of my participants may be attributed to the specific circumstances of growing up in Germany. Indeed, as mentioned in the introduction chapter, Germany was one

of the core countries to establish the EU and Freedom of Movement, and German nationals are the third largest group of EU movers living in another EU country (Eurobarometer, 2018).

The role of Freedom of Movement on the migration became even more apparent when Brexit was mentioned. As the majority of participants moved to Britain to reduce bureaucratic and legal barriers, in the light of Brexit they found themselves in a situation they had wanted to avoid. Foremost, such data demonstrated that even these movers are not immune to unexpended challenges, which may have a lasting impact on their migratory experiences, length of stay, and add to the financial and emotional costs of relocation. These findings add to the discussion (see Iredale, 2001; Raghuram, 2004; Heinz and Ward-Warmedinger, 2006; Nerb et al., 2009) by demonstrating that for some highly-skilled from affluent countries, who might have a large pool of destination countries, legal aspects still play an important role in migration and may not only impact location preferences but also relocation experience.

In addition to the legal aspects of the EU, general knowledge and awareness of the cultural, linguistic, and political context of the EU in general and individual Member States, such as the UK, in particular also contributed to the relatively easy transition between countries. As was discussed in Chapter 4, the assumed cultural proximity between Germany and Britain as well as English language competence were among the reasons for accepting relocation to Britain. Indeed, the fact that participants were proficient in English was one of the main reasons for being able to secure employment in Britain. Furthermore, awareness of British history and cultural references helped to ease the relocation from psychological and social points of view and helped to connect migrants to the new location and people.

However, as was discussed in Chapter 5, the transition was more complex and less straightforward than they had expected. As I have discussed, professionals had to adjust to the local work-culture and language nuances that they were unaware of before migration. Such findings suggest that although some forms of knowledge, such as qualifications and language competence, are transferable across borders, other forms of knowledge, such as work-culture and behavioural codes, are not as easily transferable and are location-specific. While such findings are in line with other available research from the EU and non-EU context (Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008; Butcher, 2010; Ho, 2011; Froese, 2012; Nowicka, 2012; Mulholland and Ryan, 2014), I show that despite general knowledge of the local culture and competence in the local languages, mobile professionals are still confronted with issues and need to learn the local culture and behavioural codes. As such, my study contributes to the discussion by Nowicka (2012) and Weiss (2006, 2017) highlighting the challenges of transferability of location-specific skills even in a relatively similar context.

Furthermore, I found that transferability of skills and knowledge was not always easy. As discussed in the methodological chapter, many accompanying partners (interviewed and not) had high education diplomas and spoke the English language, but still faced challenges and obstacles in terms of entering the British labour market after the relocation. As presented in Chapter 5, for those partners who came without securing employment, transition between the German and British labour markets was more challenging. These challenges were observed for both male and female accompanying partners alike, and were observed irrespective of the occupational and educational characteristics of the partner. According to my data, in many cases employment-related challenges that partners experienced after the

relocation were both unexpected and unaccounted for. First, as many leading migrants themselves were able to find employment in Britain and experienced a relatively easy transition, they assumed that their partners, who held similar credentials, would have similar experiences. Second, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, many of the participants intentionally relocated to locations where they presumed their accompanying partner would have a higher chance of finding employment. Despite these intentions and assumptions, finding employment for partners was challenging and took longer than expected. The mismatch between these expectations added to the emotional and financial challenges of the entire household.

Such data suggest that applying transferability of skills to all, and assuming similar experiences of relocation and labour market outcomes, even within a specific group of German professionals in Britain, may be misleading. The experiences of those partners who relocated without securing employment and were themselves highly-skilled faced several challenges and resembled to a high degree what is discussed in the literature on accompanying partners from non-EU or less skilled backgrounds (see Raghuram, 2000; Bagchi, 2001; Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Eby, 2001; Ho, 2006; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015; Schaer et al., 2017), rather than the experiences of their own mobile partners. In such cases a leading migrant, oftentimes a male, moves following employment contract and hence has a smoother easier transition in contrast to dependent follower, oftentimes women, who move without employment. According to the authors, some of the discrepancies in migratory experiences between these partners in highly-skilled/dual-career couples — in terms of labour market participation and employment outcomes after relocation — are oftentimes

associated with legal aspects of their relocation, gender, the active role in reorganisation of life and caring responsibilities, and professional networks. While many of these studies examined highly-skilled households in non-EU context, in my study of German highly-skilled in Britain, I show that the same challenges may impact the experiences of highly-skilled couples in the EU context, with the legal aspect being the only exception. Overall, this discussion suggests that simply removing legal barriers for accompanying highly-skilled partners might not necessarily change their employment and labour market outcomes and a more complex approach to their reemployment needs to be developed.

In my effort to analyse the data taking into account gender, I examined motivations, experiences, and relocation practices for male and female professionals separately. While there is a gender imbalance in my sample, with 38 male and 26 female participants, analysing this relatively large number of female participants provided insight and deepened the understanding of the migration of female professionals as well as the role of female accompanying partners. Among the female participants, 14 relocated following a job offer, five relocated following a partner but secured employment before the relocation, and seven relocated following a partner without securing employment. Observing such variation in regard to the migration paths of women is not unique to my study; other scholars have also highlighted the different relocation strategies that female migrants may employ (see Kofman, 2007, 2012; Bagchi, 2001; Mäkelä et al., 2011; Thang et al., 2002; Boyd and Grieco, 2003; Raghuram, 2004; Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Ackers, 1998, 2004; Tharenou, 2010; Nagy and Primecz, 2014; Rishardson et al., 2014).

As was discussed in Chapter 4, for female professionals who relocated after securing employment, motivations in relocation, desired job characteristics in Britain, as well as migratory experiences and transition between the two labour markets resembled those of male professionals. They described seemingly frictionless mobility, followed their career aspirations, were employed according to their qualifications, and overall experienced a smooth transition employment-wise. Such data resemble Edwards and Wajcman's (2005) findings in which they show that males and females exhibit similar career aspirations, work attitude, and commitments. While their research was focused on managers, in my study I found similarities between male and female professionals across occupations. Furthermore, while scholars suggest that female professionals may be motivated to seek employment abroad to overcome gender barriers in the local context (Thang et al., 2002; Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Tharenou, 2010; Rishardson et al., 2014; Nagy and Primecz, 2014), I did not find support for this motivation among female participants in my sample. This can be attributed to the overall high levels of gender equality in the labour market in Germany.

Within the group of female professionals who relocated following employment, I interviewed those who were single at the time of their migration as well as those who were married and were accompanied by their male or female partners. Documenting and interrogating the migration decisions and experiences of the female leading migrants contributes to our understanding of this type of migration, an under-researched topic (Thang et al., 2002; Smits et al., 2003; Tharenou, 2010; Vohlídalová, 2014; Clerge et al., 2017). While the number of female leading migrants who were accompanied by partners in my sample is disproportionally lower than the number of male leading migrants who were

accompanied, the overall experiences and motivations within these households as well as the experiences of each partner resembled couples with male leading migrants. Accompanying male partners in these households took an active role in organising and managing the relocation and experienced a similar set of challenges in their own reemployment after relocation.

Investigating experiences of participants have highlighted the role of emotions in the migratory experience of the highly-skilled. As suggested by Elliott and Urry (2010), a mobile lifestyle may result in high levels of anxiety, stress and emotional hardships. Indeed, in Chapters 5 and 6, I demonstrated how relocation can be a stressful event and lead to emotional hardships. For example, caring obligations for ageing family members left in the country of origin as well as feelings of obligation to secure the future for children not only results in an additional financial burden, but may also lead to emotional one. Furthermore, those who relocated together with partners faced additional challenges associated with reconstructing the life of the accompanying partner, which in some cases led to emotional challenges for the accompanying partner as well as the leading migrant. In the case of movers who decided to engage in an LDR, the insecurity and difficulties of living apart also contributed to emotional stress.

Such data resembles other available research that indicates that emotional hardships and challenges are highly contextualised and oftentimes associated with social and family life (Bailey et al., 2004; Baldassar, 2007; Svašek and Skrbíš , 2007; Ryan, 2008a; Ryan et al., 2009; Elliott and Urry, 2010; Baldassar et al., 2014; Toader and Dahinden, 2018). However, while I was able to observe the emotional aspect and challenges across social and family-

related aspects of the mobile life, I also documented concerns and stresses in the employment sphere. In Chapter 5, I discussed the unexpected challenges of adapting to work culture, the temporariness of employment, and overall insecurity over duration of stay. Such data contribute to the current debate on the role of emotions in migration (Bailey et al., 2004; Baldassar, 2007; Svašek, and Skrbiš , 2007; Ryan, 2008a; Ryan et al., 2009; Svašek 2010, 2012; Baldassar et al., 2014; Toader and Dahinden, 2018) and show that emotions also play a role in employment life. My data demonstrate that even in the case of highly-skilled migrants who relocate between affluent countries who may otherwise experience seemingly frictionless mobility, pursuing relocation may lead to emotional burdens and challenges both in family-related and employment-related aspects.

In addition to a wide spectrum of emotional challenges, through my analysis, I was able to document the emotional resources that contributed to self-confidence in dealing with relocation and contributed to a perception that the move was relatively easy and frictionless. These emotional resources include feelings and beliefs as well as acquired tools that influence one's ability to deal with emotionally charged situations (Hochschild, 1979; Reay, 2004; Zembylas, 2007). Due to the richness of my data, I was able to explore the mechanism behind these resources, which, according to my data, were accumulated and developed through previous migratory experiences as well as through family support (both financial and emotional). I suggest that accounting for the emotional resources is especially relevant for the study of migratory experiences of highly-skilled or those from privileged backgrounds, as they might have had previous migratory experience or may rely on family support. Such data show how emotions (resources and burdens) intertwine with the migration decisions of

mobile professionals and as such adds to the scholarship (see Skrbiš, 2008; Svašek, 2010, 2012; Albrecht, 2016). Furthermore, while many projects have examined the emotional aspects of mobility of migrant women (both as leading migrants and as accompanying partners), only a few projects have examined it across both genders (Svašek and Skrbiš, 2007; Toader and Dahinden, 2018). My findings are in line with these rare examples and suggest looking beyond the gender dichotomy that implies one specific emotional scenario for mobile men and another one for mobile women.

7.2 ARE THERE ANY NATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES OR IN LABOUR MARKET STRUCTURE THAT IMPACT THE DECISION TO MOVE OR THE RELOCATION PRACTICES?

As discussed earlier, Freedom of Movement within the EU contributed to the migratory decision of mobile professionals in my sample and simplified their relocation. However, taking into account this EU context, one wonders whether some country-specific characteristics impacted both the decision to relocation to Britain as well as experience after relocation. As the majority of participants relocated with employment-related motives, I was able to examine and analyse the influence of employment practices and labour market structures in Britain on decisions of my participants. In this section, I bring together my findings related to the labour market and employment and put them into the wider theoretical context of mobility of professionals.

Foremost, most of the academic literature attributes the attractiveness of some affluent EU countries for highly-skilled migrants to technological advancement and employment

opportunities (Bauer and Kunze, 2004; Solimano, 2008; Reuschke, 2010; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2014). Indeed, as I showed in Chapter 4, British infrastructure, its reputation, and the size of the financial, higher education, and research industries, all contributed to the appeal of the British labour market. Furthermore, taking into account that previous research on German emigration identified low job satisfaction and a lack of professional opportunities or career prospects among the reasons for German professionals to relocate (Remhof, 2008; Erlinghagen et al., 2009; Erlinghagen and Stegmann, 2009; Seidler et al., 2010; Verwiebe et al., 2010), my study provides some empirical support for the relevance of these factors in understanding more recent emigration trends. Furthermore, I observed how the efficiency of the recruitment and hiring process in the UK facilitated the decision to move. These characteristics were oftentimes contrasted to the recruitment and hiring practices in Germany, which were considered to be lengthy and inefficient. Such findings draw our attention to a less-documented characteristic of the British labour market that seemed to positively affect the decision to migrate and the relocation itself.

In my analysis, I found that focusing on labour market structure and employment practices is too narrow an approach in the examination of the labour migration of the highly-skilled. I found that accounting for intrinsic job characteristics is as important aspect. In the context of highly-skilled migration, researchers on the sociology of work have suggested that in skilled occupations employees not only respond to financial incentives and job security, like those in less skilled occupations, but also express a desire for a challenging and intellectual job (McGregor, 1960; Herzberg et al., 1959; Taylor, 1972; Herzberg, 2003; Edwards and Wajcman, 2005; Warhurst et al., 2012; Felstead et al., 2015). In Chapter 4, I

presented a detailed discussion and showed that there is an array of non-pecuniary aspects of employment that attracted my participants, such as the intellectual job level relating to autonomy, a sense of meaningfulness, and self-fulfilment. These findings are in line with what was identified by other scholars (Bradley et al., 2000; Guest, 2001; Anton et al., 2012; Felstead et al., 2015). By applying these concepts to understanding the migration of professionals between affluent countries, this project contributes to our understanding of the motivations of highly-skilled migrants. Incorporating this theoretical discussion provided addition insight into understanding the reasons behind the mobility of previously employed German professionals.

In this section, however, I want to emphasise the economic incentives and the overall financial aspect in the migration of the highly-skilled. In Chapter 4, I demonstrated the importance of financial incentives in accepting relocation for many of my German professionals. While the majority of participants did not report betterment of their finances or improvement in their standards of living, they emphasised that the securing a specific wage range which ensured a similar lifestyle was a precondition for relocation. While some of the participants earned higher wages in the UK than in Germany, this higher income did not always translate into a better financial situation for the entire household. As described in Chapter 5, in some cases, a higher income was offset by additional costs, such as higher living expenses in Britain, travel costs to maintain family relations or LDRs, and temporary unemployment of a previously employed partner. In addition, many were employed on fixed-term contracts and had what can be described as a modest income. Therefore, the range of income was an important motivation and was considered carefully before relocation. The

variation in regard to socio-economic characteristics as well as income range across my sample of 64 participants demonstrates that highly-skilled migrants are not a homogeneous group and they do not necessarily enjoy the same financial privileges, such as high income or higher socio-economic status. My finding contributes to the current debate on the role of financial incentives for highly-skilled workers (Ransome, 1999; Gorz, 1999; Muirhead, 2004; Felstead et al., 2015; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Carrozza et al., 2017) and demonstrate that financial aspects, such as a higher income, are important motivations for some highly-skilled migrants, including those from affluent countries.

Finally, there is some suggestion that highly-skilled migrants, especially from affluent countries, may enjoy a privileged situation (Portes et al., 2001; Solimano, 2008) where they have a lot of employment opportunities and they are free to move anywhere due to high demand for their skills. My analysis indicates that navigating these opportunities was not always easy for professionals. I observed the tensions between the desire to constantly pursue best available opportunities abroad and constraints of relocation. Indeed, many of the German professionals had previous migratory experiences, were undecided with regard to their length of stay in Britain, and were ready to relocate again if a better employment option presented itself. Turning to the body of literature on boundaryless careers and the “do-it-yourself biography” framework helps us to understand this phenomenon. In this context, mobility is assumed to benefit the worker and put the individual in charge of their career and life (Arthur, 1994; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Thorn, 2009; Elliott and Urry, 2010). However, my analysis demonstrates the costs and challenges for individuals who pursue a boundaryless career and “do-it-yourself biography”. According to my analysis, taking responsibility for

one's career meant being in a constant state of evaluating potential opportunities while taking into account the challenges of relocation and the interests of their children and partners. This led to emotional costs, postponing family formation, instability and uncertainty about the future, and so on. Moreover, my findings call for critical exploration and questioning of the effects of a boundaryless career on the lives of professionals. Given that many of the professionals across industries in my sample had been employed on fixed-term contracts, my findings invite a question of the extent to which their mobility can be described as a personal preference or a result of the shortcomings of contemporary work contracts. My project contributes to the scholarship on boundaryless careers (Arthur, 1994; Arthur et al 1995; Vaiman and Haslberger, 2013) by showing the complexities in which mobile professionals navigate their experiences along a spectrum of voluntary (desire for international career) to involuntary (fixed-term contracts) factors.

7.3 HOW IS THE CULTURAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITY EXPERIENCED AND HOW DOES IT IMPACT THE OUTCOME OF THESE RELOCATIONS?

Available research shows the complex way in which ethnicity and nationality impact migration decisions and migratory experiences in the EU. While some research suggests that the highly-skilled, especially those from affluent countries, may enjoy mobility where national/ethnic disadvantages are removed (Favell, 2011; Padaiga et al., 2014; Ognyanova et al., 2014; Young et al., 2014), others show how experiences of other highly-skilled, even within the EU, are influenced by national stereotypes (see Weiss, 2006, 2017; Csedo, 2008; Ryan, 2018). In my effort to analyse the data, I incorporated a national and ethnic lens into

examination of the migratory experiences of German professionals in Britain. Reflecting on national and ethnic characteristics of the sample was particularly advantageous due to the complex historical relations between Britain and Germany as well as due to Brexit, which has brought the national lens back into the discussion on EU mobility.

Taking into account the national lens was instrumental in understanding participants' overall experiences. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, the German population in UK may find themselves in a complex situation. On the one hand, they operate within the context of the World Wars and anti-German sentiments that are still present today, and on the other, they seem to be portrayed as good workers who integrate more easily than other foreign European workers (Steinert and Weber-Newth, 2008). In my study, I found that only a few participants had experienced Nazi-related comments and that this usually happened in private spheres. Others seemed to enjoy what can be described as positive stereotypes, where Germanness was associated with good organisation skills and work ethics. First, these findings contribute to an understanding of the under-researched topic of general experiences of German professionals in Britain (Wlasny, 2017). While some research examined the German population in the historical context (Panayi, 1995; Manz et al., 2007; Steinert and Weber-Newth, 2008; Duxbury-Neumann, 2017), my project adds to the recent yet rare examples of research on German emigrants (Meier, 2014b; Wlasny, 2017). Second, on the theoretical level, such findings provide examples of how favouritism or positive prejudice impacts relocation and migration. While empirical research has ample examples of negative discrimination and its impact on labour market outcomes in the country of destination (see Carlsoon and Rooth, 2007; Csedo, 2008; Wrench, 2008; Baptiste, 2015), through my

research I show that there is a spectrum of experiences, and while in some spheres Germans may face negative prejudice and intolerance, in others they may enjoy positive prejudice and favouritism.

While participants spoke about favouritism as part of the migratory experience, it was an unexpected outcome of their relocation to Britain. In other words, Britain was not chosen with an anticipation of this positive prejudice. However, as discussed in Chapter 5, many German professionals in my sample had intentionally relocated to places where their foreignness was less visible by choosing destinations where they spoke the local language, were familiar with the local history and politics, and where their ethnic and national characteristics or physical appearance allowed them to blend in. Such findings demonstrate that highly-skilled migrants from affluent countries, who otherwise may enjoy a privileged situation, are aware of the potential negative consequences surrounding their foreignness in the destination country. Moreover, as they have opportunities and are able to choose between various destination countries, the ability to blend in may be a more decisive factor in the migration decision.

Furthermore, the majority of participants did not consider themselves to be “unwelcome foreigners” in Britain, but rather referred to their legal right to reside in the country. According to my analysis, such attitudes can be derived from the fact that many have internalised the notions of Freedom of Movement, accepted migration within the EU and the EU citizenship. This can be explained by the fact that they grew up in Germany, which has been a frontrunner in terms of Freedom of Movement and one of the core countries contributing to the development of the EU project. This specific context also helped to

explain their negative emotional response to Brexit, which was described by participants as undermining and a “betrayal” of the EU project. Therefore, while Favell (2011) suggests that some mobile Western Europeans may enjoy mobility in which national and ethnic barriers are removed, disregarding the impact of nationality may be misleading even in the context of Western EU migrants. I suggest that by bringing the national lens into the discussion, we may gain a better understanding of how these national characteristics of Western Europeans are renegotiated and reconstructed to benefit these movers, and how they impact the overall migratory experiences.

Furthermore, I uncovered how nationally-constructed practices impacted migration experiences. For example, in Chapter 4, I discussed how participants preferred hiring and recruitment practices in Britain to the rather lengthy process in Germany. In contrast, in Chapter 5, I discussed how discrepancies in work-culture between the countries led to unanticipated challenges and obstacles. Such findings show how national difference between Germany and Britain in terms of the hiring practices and style of communication at the workplace impacted the relocation experience. While incorporating the national lens into the discussion on EU mobility is not new, it is typically used to examine the migration experiences of movers from less affluent to more affluent countries within the EU (see Weiss, 2006, 2017; Csedo, 2008; Ryan, 2018). My findings suggest that accounting for the national differences may be beneficial in the research of migration even between affluent EU countries.

7.4 MANAGING MOBILITY AND FAMILY LIFE

As can be inferred from the three empirical chapters, migration takes place in a wider social context. In my analysis, I uncovered how partners, children, and extended family in Germany can all be impacted not only by migration decisions and experiences, but also the relocation strategies of both male and female participants. Analysing my data through the lens of transnational relations highlighted the complexities of migration of highly skilled Germans and added an additional layer to the analysis of their experiences. In this research, transnational relations were usually discussed in the context of providing care for family members back in Germany and ensuring transgenerational relations between children in Britain and grandparents in Germany. For many of my participants, these considerations impacted location choices, resulting in them seeking employment within the EU, rather than in the USA — a location that otherwise was considered to be attractive. In the case of transnational care, despite the fact that moving between Germany and the UK was relatively simple and cheap due to freedom of movement and available transportation, providing such care and support was challenging both emotionally and financially for several of my participants. These findings contribute to the wider scholarship on transnational care towards family members in the country of origin (Bailey et al., 2004; Baldassar, 2008; Ryan, 2008a; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Baldassar et al., 2014) by showing how these concerns and challenges also impact migration of those mobile professionals who relocate from affluent EU countries.

In the case of children, several themes emerged in the course of my analysis. While I discussed various aspect related to migration with children in all chapters, here I want to bring these aspects together. The impact of children has been discussed by both male and

female participants, usually in regard to transgenerational relations and schooling. Analysing the storylines revealed that these aspects operate within the notion of “parental responsibility”; namely, participants felt responsible for the overall well-being of their children. While not all the participants took into account the impact of relocation on their children prior to the move, many became more aware of it post-relocation, and discussed it during the interview. While such findings contribute to a growing scholarship on the role of children on migration (Bailey et al., 2004; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ghosh, 2014; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014a; Kilkey and colleagues, 2014), my findings contribute to the emerging field of migrant fathers. Indeed, due to a high number of male participants who were fathers, I documented how fatherhood impacted experiences, relocation practices, as well as the duration of stay of these mobile professionals.

Finally, due to a large number of coupled participants in my sample, I was able to document variation in terms of the relocation practices among these couples, and to explore and interrogate the relocation practices of households as well as the individual experiences of both leading migrants and their partners. As discussed in the literature, the migration of couples may affect each member in a different way and redistribute family caring responsibilities in the family (Mincer, 1978; Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Hardill, 2002; Ackers, 2004; Melzer, 2013; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015). Indeed, accompanying partners, usually women, were not only more likely to recreate family life in the country of destination but also experience loss of earnings (Raghuram, 2000; Eby, 2001; Ho, 2006; Schaer et al., 2017) and social isolation and anxiety (Willis and Yeoh, 2000; Ho, 2006; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014c). All three empirical chapters touched upon the role of partners

in the migration decision and relocation practices, as well as how their own relocation experiences impacted the entire household and the experiences of leading migrants. In this section, I want to bring together these various aspects from each chapter into a larger theoretical discussion.

Foremost, I want to draw attention to the complex roles and experiences of accompanying or following female and male partners, and discuss how accounting for their experiences and role has facilitated our understating of the relocation experiences of German professionals in my sample. On the one hand, as I discussed in Chapter 4, partners were actively involved in organising the relocation before the actual move (closing up business in Germany) as well as reorganisation of life following the relocation (schooling for children, finding an apartment). According to all the participants, this facilitated relocation for the entire household. These findings contribute to the discussion on the role of partners (Wills and Yeoh, 2000; Kofman, 2004; Ryan and Sales, 2013; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014c; Clerge et al., 2017), challenge the simple notion of the “trailing spouse” as a blind follower, and highlight the actual activities of those partners. On the other hand, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, many of these partners faced a complex reemployment process and experienced professional and personal challenges, despite the fact that many were also highly-skilled, competent in English, and could enter the labour market without additional paperwork. These challenges led to emotional and, in some cases, financial challenges not only for the partner but also for the entire household. This spectrum of their experiences demonstrates the role of partners and shows how their own experiences impact households’ migration on financial and emotional levels.

Examining the experiences of partners also provided a better description of the relocation practices of couples and reasons for choosing each strategy. Existing scholarship suggests that some couples may decide to relocate together while others may choose to engage in LDRs (see Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Murray-Close, 2019) depending on gender-role attitudes, occupational characteristics, and financial capacities. While I discuss four strategies in Chapter 6, here, I want to focus on two of them — relocating after both having found employment and deciding to engage in LDRs — because they are less researched to date.

The first strategy, relocating only after both have secured employment in the same city, although a rare strategy in my sample, highlights the variation in regard to strategies that dual-career couples may choose. Such data contribute to the theoretical discussion on family migration and challenge the traditional model of migration which is characterised by a leading migrant and a dependent follower (Wills and Yeoh, 2000; Smits et al., 2003; Raghuram, 2004; Cooke, 2008; Tharenou, 2010; Kofman and Raghuram, 2015; Clerge et al., 2017). While these studies have described the reasons for couples to prioritise one member's career over the other, in my study, I demonstrate variation and show that some couples may decide not to prioritise one career over the other, but pursue migration only after both career aspirations are addressed.

Second, despite the number of those who engaged in LDRs in my sample being low, due to the richness of the data, I was able to examine complexity and ambiguity of their experiences. Scholars contemplate the extent to which this living arrangement among dual-career couples stems from personal preferences or is the outcome of labour market obstacles

and legal constraints (Levin, 2004; Elliott and Urry, 2010; Reuschke, 2010; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Murray-Close, 2019). In my study, despite the fact that all of these participants described LDRs as a voluntary and low-risk option, the circumstances surrounding these living arrangements were always associated with limitations in the labour market, such as fixed-term contracts and lack of proper employment for the accompanying partner. Such findings demonstrate complexities even in the case of the highly-skilled from affluent EU countries: While in theory EU nationals from affluent countries may be accompanied by their partners who may enjoy transferability of their education and work experience and access to the labour market after relocation, in practice, limitations in the labour market may prevent partners from accompanying, resulting in LDRs.

Furthermore, due to a large number of academics in my sample, some of whom had academic partners, I was able to observe the migration decisions and relocation strategies of dual-career academic couples. While the numbers are low, the extensive qualitative data contribute to the growing scholarship on the mobility of academics (see Ackers, 2004; Bennon and Locke, 2010; Froese, 2012; Giorgi and Raffini, 2015; Vohlídalová, 2014, 2017; Toader and Dahinden, 2017; Gimenez and Morgan, 2017; Shaer et al., 2017; Schaer et al., 2017). Through my analysis, I was able to document variation in regard to how these couples approached migratory decisions and which relocation strategies they subsequently adopted. As discussed in Chapter 6, some academic couples relocated after one partner, regardless of gender, got a job offer in Britain. This strategy was usually associated with seniority and prestige of the obtained position and desire to migrate as a family unit, in the hope that the other partner would find employment eventually. Another strategy adopted by academic

couples was relocating together after both found employment (associated with a desire to combine family life while not compromising on career development). Finally, a few academic couples engaged in long-distance relationships (usually associated with temporariness of employment and location problems in terms of combining both careers). Observing such variation in response to migration demonstrates that treating a specific group of academic couples as a homogeneous group may be misleading, as they vary in terms of motivations and relocation strategies and therefore in their overall experiences of migration. My findings contribute to the literature (Vohlídalová, 2014, 2017; Gimenez and Morgan, 2017; Shaer et al., 2017; Toader and Dahinden, 2018) by showing how family dynamics between partners, the presence of children, and field of expertise of each partner impact the relocation strategies of these couples. Future research will benefit from a focused and comparative examination of the different relocation strategies employed by dual-career academic households.

Lastly, what can be inferred from all three empirical chapters is that many German professionals faced challenges in managing the complexity of combining their career aspirations and family life. For example, reorganising family life and establishing new routines after the relocation proved to be problematic regardless of whether they relocated with their partners or engaged in an LDR. Furthermore, family obligations towards extended family back in Germany and concerns about children added an additional dimension to the complexity of mobile professionals' migration which otherwise could be considered frictionless and easy. My studies contribute to the growing body of scholarship on highly-skilled Western Europeans (van Dalen and Henkens, 2007; Koikkalainen, 2009, 2014;

Koikkalainen et al., 2016; Ryan and Mulholland, 2014c; Young et al., 2014; Foebker and Imani, 2017; Foebker, 2019) by showcasing the complexities and spectrum of experiences of mobile professionals in the context of highly-skilled migration between affluent EU countries.

7.5 FINAL REMARKS

In the light of the recent developments surrounding Brexit, and steps taken to leave the EU, future research would benefit from a follow-up study examining the experiences of these German professionals in post-Brexit UK. Among other issues, such a study could interrogate how these political developments impact participants' overall experiences and future plans, such as whether they intend to apply for citizenship, return to Germany, or relocate to a new destination. From a theoretical standpoint, such an examination would contribute to the discussion on EU mobility by examining the effect of returning border control on the migration experiences and relocation strategies of EU citizens.

An additional avenue for research would be to examine the migration experience of couples who did not survive the relocation. In my study, I interviewed a large number of participants who were in relationships, and interviewed both members of 11 households. Although I know that three couples out of 38 couples in my sample have separated or divorced since the relocation, I was able to examine the migratory experiences only of surviving couples at the time of the interview. This type of data is more likely to depict the enabling types of partner, those who mainly supported migration, and less likely to capture those who might have disagreed, hindered the relocation, or not followed their partner. Future

research would benefit from examining the migration decisions and experiences of couples who did not survive, and divorced or separated before or after the relocation. Conducting interviews with members of these households may provide a better understanding of the impact of migration on household dynamics.

While there are more things to be learned about the mobility of the highly-skilled in the EU in general and about German mobile professionals in particular, through my work, I have tried to enhance our understanding of this type of migration. Indeed, observing and learning about the complexity of mobility among these German professionals, the challenges of combining family life and migration desires, and the difficulty of navigating the contemporary world of careers and mobility, helps in the development of a theoretical framework.

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