
Artículos

Exploring the contours of a EU in-mobility theory: an opportunity-based approach to EU citizenship and the need of a EU «culture of mobility»

Explorando los contornos de una teoría de movilidad interna en la UE: un enfoque basado en la oportunidad de la ciudadanía europea y la necesidad de una «cultura europea de la movilidad»

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Abstract

Due to current mobility patterns, basically related to the economic crisis and recent enlargements, EU citizens' free movement is being seen with fears and uncertainties by EU member states. This article explores the theoretical implications of the restrictions of EU in-mobility taking the ideal of EU citizenship as the main cornerstone, and it proposes an opportunity-based approach that can shape a potential EU in-mobility theory. Formulating these reflections from migration studies, I will also add arguments from the field of mobility studies, which allows us also to state that EU in-mobility is fundamental in the making of EU citizenship, European society and European legitimacy. Given the premise that governmental restrictions to freedom of movement are eroding the original idea(l) of EU citizenship, we may then ask: "how to transform EU in-mobility into a resource and an opportunity instead of a barrier and a risk?". At the end, I will argue that such EU in-mobility theory will need to address a "EU culture of mobility" in this new EU mobility age.

Keywords: European Union, member states, Citizenship, mobility, free movement, opportunity-based approach, EU culture of mobility.

Resumen

Debido a los patrones de movilidad actuales, básicamente relacionados con la crisis económica y las últimas ampliaciones, la libre circulación de los ciudadanos de la UE está siendo percibida

con temores e incertidumbres por parte de los Estados miembros. Este artículo explora las implicaciones teóricas de las restricciones europeas en la movilidad interna, teniendo como piedra angular el ideal de la ciudadanía de la UE, y propone un enfoque basado en la oportunidad que consideramos como la base de una potencial teoría de la movilidad interna en la UE. Formulando estas reflexiones a partir de estudios de migración, voy a incluir también argumentos procedentes del campo de los estudios de movilidad, lo que nos permitirá también afirmar que la movilidad interna en UE es fundamental para la realización de la ciudadanía, la sociedad y la legitimidad europeas. Teniendo en cuenta la premisa de que las restricciones gubernamentales en la libertad de movimiento están erosionando la idea(l) original de la ciudadanía de la UE, podemos entonces plantearnos: «¿Cómo transformar la movilidad interna en la UE en un recurso y una oportunidad en lugar de una barrera y un riesgo?». Al final voy a argumentar que una tal teoría será incompleta si no aborda la necesidad de una «cultura europea de la movilidad» en esta nueva era de movilidad interna en la UE.

Palabras clave: Unión Europea, estados miembros, ciudadanía, movilidad, libre circulación, oportunidad, cultura de la movilidad.

THE ISSUE: THE NEED TO THEORIZE CURRENT EU IN-MOBILITY

EU in-mobility¹ is multifaceted and reveals many of the most profound cleavages in the EU today. From the very outset it was considered as a sort of taken for granted natural European right. Control over EU-movers was not intrinsic to the idea of European Union, but rather the introduction of surveillance mechanisms in the external European borders (the so called Fortress Europe, Geddes, 2008). Already existing in the late 1960s, free movement was established as a principle underlying EU citizenship in the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and has become one of the most striking symbols for European integration and for the formation of a common European identity². In addition, EU citizenship is surely one of the most paradigmatic examples of the successful interplay of the economical, social and political dimensions of the EU. Free movement of persons-qua-workers is a cornerstone of the single market, being indisputably one of the greatest successes of the European Union. However, the free movement of workers by way of EU citizenship is currently creating particular tensions among member states, especially since the economic and financial crisis in 2008 and the EU's latest enlarge-

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1. In this article I speak about mobility as cross EU-border mobility. Thus I do not consider national, internal mobility or mobility between social strata, but rather EU-internal mobility (in-mobility) and more concretely among EU workers.
 2. There are obviously many books and studies linking EU citizenship and EU identity. See Eurobarometers's latest (2013), along with other notable perspectives: Kostakopoulou (2001), Tsalik (2007), Bellamy (2008), Checkel (2009), Marácz and Versteegh (2010), Cerutti and Lucarelli (2011), Geddes and Boswell (2012), and recently Triandafyllidou and Maroufouf (2013).

ment³. EU citizenship offers numerous opportunities for individuals⁴, but I will concentrate on free movement of workers, that is, the fact that citizens of the EU member states can circulate, settle and go anywhere within the EU for working purposes.

From the very beginning, the implementation of EU citizenship encounters the core problem of the EU integration processes: national sovereignty and the consequent national restrictions (Maas, 2008, 2013). The recent work of Blitz (2014) also opens up the ambiguous question of freedom of movement in relation to the restrictions still imposed by national borders and sovereignty, and the difficulties migrants face turning movement into successful settlement. We know that free movement restrictions were the key criteria to establish transitional period during the different stages of enlargement (Koikkalainen, 2011; Maas, 2005)⁵. Given current policy measures of some central receiving countries (such as Germany and England), however, we must ask: is free movement really free? (Aradau *et al.*, 2010; Benton and Petrovic, 2013; Carrera, 2005). This article explores the theoretical implications of the restrictions of EU in-mobility taking the ideal of EU citizenship as the main cornerstone. We know that free movement is always dependent on structural constraints, social barriers and individual factors, including ethnic and national affiliations, age, sex, gender, education level and linguistic ability, job status and profile, social and professional networks (Blitz, 2014). But our initial

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3. The relation on new mobility patterns and the current financial crisis in Europe has been one of the first frameworks of discussion, especially with the added dimension of the political union's prolonged crisis (Minderhoud, 2013; Triandafyllidou and Maroufouf, 2013; B. de Witte, A. Heritier *et al.*, 2013; Guiraudon *et al.*, 2015). The enlargement of EU accession in 2004 (the so called A10 countries: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia) was accompanied by fears and uncertainties for the existing EU member states, changing the framework and patterns of mobility (see for instance, Ruspini and Eade, 2014). One of the most controversial topics that surfaced during the negotiation debates was the Schengen Agreement concept of free movement and what the integration of new workers would mean for national labour markets. The elections in the United Kingdom, for instance, were prime platforms to stage the debate of post-accession migrations (see seminal recent works, for instance, Goodhart, 2014; Okólski and Salt, 2014).
 4. EU citizens as EU workers are supposed to have some additional rights: a) Right to freely enter and exit any Member State; b) They cannot be discriminated against in any way as concerns working conditions; c) Right to remain in the country where they worked; c) Restriction of the free movement of workers, particularly as regards access to specific jobs, may be introduced only in certain circumstances related to the necessity to ensure public security, public health or public policy. There are relevant studies on EU citizenship that already aimed to evaluate the virtues and limits of the citizenship of the Union from a multidimensional understanding. See among others Closa (1992), La Torre (1998), Wiener (1998), Eder and Giesen (2001), Dobson (2006), Bauböck *et al.* (2007), Shaw (2007) or, more recently, Scherz and Welge (2014).
 5. For instance the entrance of Greece (1981) required seven years of transition period, Portugal and Spain (1986) seven years of transition, as well as the last enlargements (Poland, Bulgaria, Romania Croatia). The exception was the entrance of Finland, Austria and Sweden without any free movement restriction.

concern is how EU in-mobility constrained by government's requirements may curb European citizenship and European structure of work opportunities. This theoretical reflection seeks just to propose an opportunity-based approach for a potential EU in-mobility theory, leaving for further research the development of the policies that may follow. Given the premise that government's restrictions to freedom of movement are eroding the original idea(l) of EU citizenship as an opportunity for in-mobility, we may then ask: "how to transform EU in-mobility into a resource and an opportunity instead of a barrier and a risk for the EU citizenship ideal".

Departing from demographic data, political discourses and state's differentiated approaches towards EU in-mobility, I will show that there are different mobility regimes that are being developed inside the EU's supposed free movement territorial area. Formulating these reflections from migration studies, I will also involve the emerging field on mobility⁶, which share the assumption that mobility is essential in the making of societies (Baerenholdt, 2013), and allow us also to state as premise that EU in-mobility is fundamental in the making of EU citizenship, European society and European legitimacy (European Commission, 2016; Handoll, 1995; Gerhards *et al.*, 2015).

What becomes clear is that, given these first pieces of evidence (section 2), there is a need to propose the main approach of a potential EU in-mobility theory. I will then review how the EU has approached mobility as an opportunity to frame EU citizenship (Section 3) and how this seminal approach is being challenged today by the formation of three visions (that of the individual, that of the member states, and that of the EU), which does not necessarily coincide and that must frame a potential mobility theory together with the fact that there is an emergent triangular in-mobility regime in the EU that also challenge the ideal of EU citizenship as free movement (section 4). Then I will propose the need to shape a EU in-mobility theory, based on the premise that the EU needs to ask Member states to avoid that their fears and uncertainties related to the internal market and welfare impact of in-mobility push them to implement policy measures that contravene the basic EU citizenship right of free movement. This condition is in my view key to pursue a theory that sees EU in-mobility as an opportunity and not as a fear and a burden (Section 5). At the end I will argue that this potential EU in-mobility theory would need probably to introduce the notion of a "culture of mobility" for this new EU mobility age to revitalise the EU political project and for the ideal of citizens' free movement (Section 6).

6. Within current mobility studies (Cresswell, 2006; Urry, 2007), there is already a large literature addressing international migration and mobility in Europe from a multiplicity of perspectives (Jensen and Richardson, 2004; Benhabib and Resnik, 2009; Jensen, 2013), and an emerging literature addressing EU in-mobility from several disciplines (mainly from economics, demography, sociology, and politics); but there is perhaps less analysing it in the context of the current economic and financial crisis and the last processes of EU enlargement. See, among the most recent: Ackers and Gill (2009), Dobson (2009), Fassmann *et al.* (2009), Balan and Uzlaş (2010), Black *et al.* (2010), Collet (2012), Bertoli *et al.*, (2013), Currie (2013), van Mol (2013), van Mol and Timmerman (2013), Vargas-Silva (2013), and especially Blitz (2014) and Favell (2014).

SOME EVIDENCES BEFORE ENTERING INTO THE THEORETICAL DEBATE

Since the Schengen period, the EU has provided the closest thing to a *laboratory on internal open borders*, making symbolic, political, administrative and other types of barriers visible. Now that this mobility is increasing, from the initial 2% in 2005 to more than 3.3% in 2012, at approximately 17 million (Vasileva, 2012; Benton and Petrovic, 2013), and since it is mostly oriented toward labour, a new trend in the EU is emerging. At the beginning, EU movers were seen as students with Erasmus and other EU mobility programmes. They also comprised retired people (Rodriguez *et al.*, 1998; King *et al.*, 2000) and there is also a field focusing on Tourist mobility (Janoschka and Haas, 2013). In this article we basically concentrate on workers' mobility, since, as we will show, they embody the current tensions between the original idea(l) that EU citizenship acquires a political, economical and social European meaning through free internal movement. The fears and uncertainties perceived by members states in relation to the negative impact on internal labour market, economies, and national welfare system if this EU citizenship right is allowed without restrictions, become the premises of our theoretical reflections.

However, the last Eurostat data suggests that, despite enlargements, the percentage of mobile residents of the community has not changed considerably in recent years, although some growth in this regard is still perceptible (Duszczyk and Matuszczyk, 2014). In 2007, when a majority of the member states renounced transitional periods in freedom of movement for workers who were nationals of the states that acceded to the EU in 2004, the percentage amounted to 2.3. This means that in practice EU enlargement contributed 0.8 percentage points –i.e. approximately 2.9 million people– to that share. The fact that the potential of workers' free movement is not fully utilized is proven by the data concerning the shares of non-nationals residing in the member states of the community with the largest populations. In those states, the number of EU citizens exercising the right to free movement of persons is lower than that of third-country nationals (i.e. non-EU). For example, in Germany –the EU country with the largest population– the percentage of EU citizens (EU 27) residing there without German nationality amounts to a mere 3.4%, while third-country nationals account for 5.65% of the total population. The situation is similar in France (2.1% vs. 3.8%, respectively). In the United Kingdom, the percentage of EU citizens does not differ much from that of third-country nationals (3.7% vs. 3.9%, respectively). Luxembourg is the country with the largest share of EU citizens in the total population: foreigners from other member states account for almost 40% of its residents. Since almost a quarter of the young people in the EU are unemployed, freedom of movement within the EU could help to provide them with new opportunities. This new EU in-mobility regime with EU movers concentrated in the northern zone –having origins in new Central European and southeast members (A8+A2) along with southwest members in financial crisis and social turbulence (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece)– is seen with growing concern by many member states and by the EU itself.

On the basis of an analysis of the positions of the member states, which change fast, Duszczyk and Matuszczyk (2014) have categorized them in terms of attitudes

towards freedom of movement for workers. The greatest differences in this respect can be observed in the case of EU-15 states. This group includes both the most sceptical countries, such as the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, on the one hand, and Germany and France, on the other, who recognize the problems but oppose solutions that might impact the rights of EU workers. The member states that acceded to the EU in the 21st century display a rather uniform position and favour maintenance of the solutions currently in place. At the same time, owing to the scale of migration, countries such as Poland, Latvia and Lithuania have begun to perceive the adverse consequences of free movement of workers, particularly from the view point of the demographic situation. The states that were subject to transitional periods until recently –Bulgaria and Romania– and Croatia, which still is, have thus far favoured the fastest possible elimination of restrictions. Based on the categorisation drawn by Duszczuk and Matuszczyk (2014), we can state the following classification (Table 1).

TABLE 1.

CLASSIFICATION OF STATES BY ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE FREE MOVEMENT OF WORKERS

States that favour introduction of significant restrictions	UK Austria The Netherlands Denmark Cyprus Greece
States that favour introduction of the option to suspend the freedom temporarily (e.g. in times of high unemployment)	Belgium Luxemburg Italy Germany Sweden
States that recognise the problems but oppose any significant changes	Spain Portugal Finland Malta Ireland Slovenia Norway
States that favour maintenance of the present regulations	Poland Hungary Lithuania Latvia Estonia The Czech Republic Slovakia
States that favour elimination of restrictions	Romania Bulgaria Croatia

Source: own elaboration, based on the categorisation drawn by Duszczuk and Matuszczyk (2014).

The analysis concerning mobility of EU citizens suggests that Romanians are the largest group residing in other Member States (almost 2.4 million), followed by Poles (1.8 million) and Italians (1.3 millions). From the same study (Duszczuk and Matuszczyk, 2014) we reproduce Table 2 showing the most prominent groups of EU migrants living in EU Members states.

TABLE 2.

THE MOST PROMINENT EU GROUPS IN EU MEMBER STATES

	EU-27	EU-15
Belgium	Italy	Italy
Germany	Italy	Italy
Hungary	Romania	Germany
Italy (2010)	Romania	Germany
Poland	Germany	Germany
Portugal	Romania	United Kingdom
Romania	Italy	Italy
Spain	Romania	United Kingdom
Sweden	Finland	Finland
United Kingdom	Poland	Ireland

Source: elaboration based on International Migration Outlook 2013 –OECD and Population by sex, age group and citizenship– Eurostat.

The contributing factors of EU in-mobility include both economic ones (small, but real differences in wages and working conditions between the largest member states) and social ones (the costs related to emigration, including language-related issues). Among recent factors, one should also point out the adverse impact of political discussions, which have increasingly put forward arguments favouring restriction of the free movement of workers (Duszczuk and Matuszczyk, 2014: 18).

REVIEWING THE LINK BETWEEN EU CITIZENSHIP AND EU IN-MOBILITY: THE ORIGINAL OPPORTUNITY-BASED APPROACH AND ITS CURRENT LIMITS

The promotion of EU in-mobility has been a central part of the European agenda for more than 25 years. This is a particular illustration of the suggestive argument, put forward by Baerenholdt (2013), that a politics of mobility assumes new understandings of social relations and societies not trapped in territorial containers (i.e., member states). The mobility of Europeans, however, has not primarily been seen as an end in itself, but rather as an opportunity to make European society and to strengthen EU citizenship (Council of the European Union, 2008). It has always been assumed that

this mobility can be done without member state restrictions or specific measures and conditions for EU movers. The promotion of labour mobility is one of the most important measures for cushioning the outcomes of the financial crisis for young people⁷. This also fundamentally proves that the EU has always promoted mobility as an EU asset, and *not* as it is presently seen today as a burden and constraint for member states.

Mobility is a notion that in its very origin was conceptualized as something pleasant for individual experience and knowledge acquisition and not as a “headache” for EU movers and member states. In its original form in-mobility was seen as an opportunity for EU movers and member states. This was the key foundation of free movement as a driver of European citizenship, deemed to function as one of the EU legitimating resources (Recchi, 2008: 213). From a theory-based economic viewpoint, in-mobility represents the European market counterpart to monetary union. From a theory-based political viewpoint, free movement is held to promote European integration at the level of citizenship. As clearly stated in the Action Plan for Mobility (European Commission, 2002), individuals who make use of free movement rights are expected to appreciate EU citizenship and to endorse European unification more enthusiastically than geographically immobile Europeans. EU movers could be seen, then, as pioneers of the EU (Favell and Recchi, 2009). EU mobility makes individuals aware of the role of the EU and of their own Europeaness.

Taken historically, we know that in-EU mobility is not new. The first pioneers of Europe were possibly southern labour migrants (Italy, Portugal, Spain, Greece) who migrated to northern Europe (the UK, France, Germany and Belgium) and helped with the reconstructions of the labour market in the 1960s and 1970s, and the consolidation of their Welfare States, only stopped, as we know, by the first welfare crisis of the 1973 and the experience of return during the 1980s and 1990s. Almost all the current literature analysing current EU in-mobility share the idea that the context of financial crisis and the last enlargements are probably key-dimensions to understand emerging patterns, and that EU in-mobility is nothing more than a normal path of the development of a single European Market with normal European labour competitiveness⁸. But in this turbulent context and the subsequent economic imbalances between different EU countries, in-mobility is not seen by all with the same parameters. This addresses concerns on existing inequalities in Europe and raises essential questions as: who gains from free mobility? Can the ideal of EU citizenship, where the principle of free EU in-mobility is essential, be more than an ideal as long as socio-economic inequalities between (and

7. See European Commission (2002, 2010). In September 2013, 5.6 million young people between 15 and 24 were unemployed in the EU 28. This equals an unemployment rate of 23.5%. In some southern countries like Greece and Spain, as many as half of young people are not able to find a job (European Commission, 2013).

8. Some recent books highlighting the demographic drivers and policies of intra-EU movement are, among others, Bruno de Witte *et al.* (2013), Benton and Petrovic (2013), Caviedes (2014), Recchi (2015).

within) member states are so vast? Workers in richer EU countries who fear wage dumping by labour migration from the East for instance –is it rational for them to embrace free mobility ideals? The EU citizenship ideal appears based on an assumption that free mobility takes place between equals, which is certainly not the case. For individuals and probably for economic actors, it can be as an opportunity and resource for development and be better-off, but for others it can be as a burden and risk.

What becomes also evident is that in-mobility is already in public discourse, and it is increasingly being politicized in most of the EU countries (Van der Brug *et al.*, 2015), for different reasons and expectations. Almost all EU countries are confronted with different arrangements of opportunities, threats and risks, and thus interpret the new migratory trend(s) differently and react with the formulation of different social and policy measures (see for instance Travis, 2016).

These mobility narratives are, in this historical moment, the basis of a difficult puzzle that precludes the common initial perception in the EU of mobility as an opportunity for strengthening EU citizenship. The (unfulfilled) ideal of shared welfare market and labour system would suggest that increased in-mobility of EU citizens could strengthen the economical and political pillar of the EU integration process, but in fact this touches a core issue concerning the impediments for fulfilling ideals of free movement: the vast differences between welfare systems and labour rights between EU countries, and the (perhaps justified) fear of more advanced welfare states that a process of development towards “one system” would be based on the “least common denominator” principles, in practice eroding the welfare states of the north. Within this premise, there are three potential normative perspectives that frame the tension. The first is the ideal of the EU as a de-bordering space of free market and personal movement, as a union of European states. The second is the current EU mobility regime, with three different mobility areas (North, South, East) expressing different trends and perceptions. The third is concentrated on the governmental level of the member-state, which in most cases restricts this mobility.

EU in-mobility was indeed an important new issue in the last election campaign of the European Parliament in May 2014. It is definitively also at the centre of European states’ concerns, as illustrated by recent decision of Switzerland to restrict entry of EU citizens, along with Germany and UK restricting certain rights to EU movers and inviting them to abandon the country if they are unemployed. The accompanying policy formulation and political discourse, instead of seeing mobility as an asset, express it as a burden. Cameron’s opinion article in the *Financial Times* (26 Nov. 2013) entitled “Free movement within Europe needs to be less free” certainly marked a turning point, which connected the political discourse with public opinion on these issues. The media debate with Merkel declarations in Reuters (1st Dec. 2014), when she declared that Cameron was not jeopardising EU’s freedom of movement, was also very influential (Rinke, 2014)⁹.

9. We can also report some other leader declarations influencing public opinion. For instance, Cameron, during the past UK elections (Nov. 2014) insisted: “If you elect me as Prime Minister

In some cases, restricting mobility has even been discussed on EU ethnic grounds, as the case with Romani in Germany, Italy, France and Spain, coming from different EU countries (Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria, among others) (Gehring, 2013; MacMahon, 2015). Indeed, the need to give a policy answer to these emerging new mobility trends has been on the EU agenda as a pending task since Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of member states¹⁰.

CURRENT THREE VISIONS OF AN EU MOBILITY THEORY AND THE EMERGENCE OF A TRIANGULAR MOBILITY REGIME

Today's formation of three visions and a triangular in-mobility regime is challenging the original opportunity-based approach of EU citizenship. At this point, we may ask which are the theoretical implications of these differential views towards EU in-mobility and to what extent and in which way can these implications actually affect the original opportunity-based approach of in-mobility? And considering this latter aspect, to what extent the structure of opportunities associated to EU in-mobility might acquire different implications depending on the specific groups of EU citizens or the specific EU Member States taken into consideration? In other words, to what extent the recognition of the right to free movement through the institutionalization of the EU citizenship status actually offers a different set of opportunities that count with a diverse substantive meaning across different EU Member States (host and home countries) and for different groups of Europeans (take for instance, the two different cases of migrants workers from Central and Eastern Europe residing in Western European countries *versus* lifestyle migrants residing in Southern Europe)? This is essential, the enormous diversity between EU citizens in cultural, religious, socio-economical terms make visible that this ideal often appears to assume a standard type of "EU citizen": white, Christian, highly skilled, etc. In light of all these normative enquiries, it might be useful to summarize the differential opportunities and risks/constraints associated to EU in-mobility from a multi-dimensional perspective including: a) individuals (further distinguishing between

in May, I will negotiate to reform the European Union, and Britain's relationship with it. This issue of free movement will be a key part of that negotiation. If I succeed, I will, as I have said, campaign to keep this country in a reformed EU. If our concerns fall on deaf ears and we cannot put our relationship with the EU on a better footing, then of course I rule nothing out." (Dominiczak, 2014). We can also mention Donald Tusk, the centre-right Polish Prime Minister, that took the presidency during this last 2014 semester, when he says: "No one reasonable can envisage the dark scenario of an EU without Britain... Many of the suggestions for EU reform put forward [by David Cameron] are sensible... We can work together to eliminate any welfare abuse by EU migrants" (Lindsell, 2014)

10. The work promoted by Bertelsmann Stiftung on "Harnessing European Labour Mobility", published in April 2014, is here of great interest, offering various scenarios.

specific categories such as EU stayers, EU movers labelled as lifestyle migrants and EU movers who respond mainly to a labour-driven migration profile); b) EU Member States (further distinguishing between EU sending countries and EU host countries); and, of course c) the European Union.

With respect to the *individual level*, it gives EU citizens the opportunity to leave a respective home country in order to work in another country in the EU without the need for (the often limited) residence authorisation or work permit (in the case of labour market mobility). With regard to employment and unemployment, the opportunity to move freely within the borders of the EU is of particular importance in the course of the current economic crisis (beginning in 2008), when especially young people in the southern/eastern member states left their home countries in order to look for work abroad (Fassmann *et al.*, 2009). The same is true in the case of long-lasting economic imbalances between different regions/countries of the EU. The most striking example here are the economic imbalances between most of the (North) Western European countries on the one hand, and the (South) Western and Eastern European countries on the other hand. As a consequence, there is continued in-mobility from the latter countries to the former ones. However, the improvement of career opportunities is probably not the only motivation of current in-mobility, since the direction is not so clear when other motives, such as minimal social systems and a working class labour system (e.g. low-skilled job opportunities), can also explain why the biggest population of Romanians still lives in Spain (MacMahon, 2015). There is a much differentiated set of motives behind individual mobility.

From a *member-state point of view*, the free movement of people offers the opportunity to adjust to fluctuations in supply and demand of labour. These fluctuations are due to demographic reasons (shortage or surplus of people of working age; shortage or surplus of young people for vocational training programs), along with economic reasons, as economic crises encourage mostly qualified people from other EU countries to move or to support and encourage the (at least temporary) migration of unemployed people to another region or nation-state in the EU. Working or studying in another EU country also entails the opportunity to gain work experience abroad that becomes useful after returning to the home country or region (Assets include European networks, improved language skills, new, specialised skills, etc.). It happens, though, that persons coming back from abroad have problems with returning to the local labour market owing to the long break. This follows mainly from attitudes of employers fearing greater salary demands of the returnees. Furthermore, some sending countries have profited from remittances of the (mostly young and middle-aged) people working abroad in two ways. Firstly, the remittances have increased the purchasing power of the domestic population who have stayed in their respective home countries, thus increasing domestic demand. Secondly, the remittances help to prevent people from poverty (limited to family members). This argument, however, is primarily limited to Eastern European countries (Kahanec, 2013: 2). As we have also to interpret mobility patterns from the sending countries too, we must also be aware of the demographic consequences of one-way mobility flows,

such as loss of human capital and ‘brain drain’. The outflow of young people from CEE countries, for instance, is one of the most important factors in the acceleration of societies’ ageing, as has been noted by some recent reports (Duszczyk and Matuszczyk, 2014). This last argument highlights a potential risk of rising mobility in the course of the free movement of people.

On the *EU level*, the primarily assumption was, and still is, that a high in-mobility in the course of the free movement of people fosters the development of the single European market and thereby increases the economic productivity and, as a consequence, the international competitiveness of the European Union (Ferencz and Watchter, 2012; Frenz, 2012: 448). Thus, economic integration was and still is the predominant objective of the (former and current) architects of the EU. However, a second leading strand of the thinking of European policymakers since the late 1950s has been that once economic integration is established, political and social integration will follow automatically (Fligstein *et al.*, 2012: 106-7). Hence, the free movement of workers promotes the development of a common European identity indirectly¹¹. The same is true for institutional schemes, like the Erasmus and the Leonardo da Vinci programmes, which aim to foster in-mobility among students or young people through vocational training¹².

An EU in-mobility theory begins to produce theoretical arguments at the interplay of individual, member-state and EU level. Within this framework of analysis we can identify tensions in order to define challenges. Tensions are generated by the imbalance between opportunities, on the one hand, and barriers, fears and risks on the other hand. Challenges focus on the how to transform the discourse of “in-mobility as a burden” into a discourse of opportunity, as it was originally linked to EU citizenship. The potential hardening of economic imbalances between regions of the EU can lead to a rise in EU resentments in the disadvantaged regions and countries. High net migration might lead to fears of foreign infiltration or of welfare shopping among the domestic population and to a strengthening of anti-European parties. Table 3 gives a rough summary of the tensions and challenges we can identify, capturing the multiplicity of visions¹³.

11. See references note 2.

12. See, among recent work and documents: Cairns (2010), European Commission (2010), Sigalas (2010), Wilson (2011), Teichler (2012), Powell and Finger (2013), Souto-Otero *et al.* (2013), Raghuram (2013), Mitchell (2014).

13. This Table has been produced following two main sources: first, during an expert discussion group with representative of Eastern (Poland, Hungary, Romania) Southern (Italy, Spain, Portugal) and Northern (England, Sweden, The Nederland, Belgium and Germany) that took place during the preparation of an Horizon 2020 project, in May 2014. Second, and in addition to the different recent studies on EU mobility put forward in different endnotes, it might be useful to see the different reports of the European Commission on the citizenship of the Union (available at Eudo-Citizenship website: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/policy-documents?-type=noEC>) to the discussion on the approach of the EU towards mobility.

TABLE 3.

TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES OF EU MOBILITY

TENSIONS	
Opportunities	Barriers and Risks
At the Governance Level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · That free labour mobility might relieve the sending countries of some redundant labour (especially in times of crisis) and of the associated fiscal burden during recession years. · Demographic change as a European challenge: that free mobility within the EU can help solve the demographic challenges in other member states. · Long-term benefits due to brain circulation: that experiences gained abroad can be useful after returning to the home country. · Long-term benefits for European integration: that the development of a European identity and the building up of emotional bonds in other European countries on the individual level can lead to a higher acceptance of pro-European politics on national and supranational levels. · Better understanding and acceptance of cultural differences that we encounter in the societies of particular member states. · Economic gains through remittances, especially for Central European and southeast member states. · Modernisation of EEC economy and society through the transfer of new ideas and models of relations in society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · That free movement of workers could lead to unregulated competition for qualified employees throughout the European Union. · That the long-term need for qualified workers in the (north/western) countries can result in limited brain circulation. · Long-term losses because of brain drain. · Hardening of economic imbalances between different regions of the EU. · Growing demands on the social infrastructure in host countries or cities (specialised service centres, housing markets, welfare provisions and services). · That on-going, high-net immigration can ferment resentments towards migrants and the free movement of people and might strengthen anti-European parties, and that increasing of support of anti-European (anti-migration) parties might hamper European integration. · Consolidation of existing stereotypes and emergence of new ones about societies of sending states (with migrants as typical representatives of their respective societies) and of receiving ones (with employers and other hirers as typical representatives). · That sustained mobility outflows might be a one of the most important factors accelerating the ageing of societies in sending countries. · Emergence of a migration rank order in the receiving countries: that some ethnic groups are welcome, while others are not (Romanian Romani, for instance). · Fears of welfare shopping.

13. [cont.] These reports generally capture the narrative of the European institutions towards free movement as a core legal entitlement granted by the EU citizenship status; and they identify barriers/constraints to free movement across EU Member States.

TENSIONS	
Opportunities	Barriers and Risks
At the Individual Level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Opportunity to work, study or just live in another country of the EU without the need to have a residence authorisation and a work permit. · Free and unlimited labour migration as an advantage in times of crisis or during long-lasting economic imbalances between different regions of the European Union. · Chances for a better quality of life in other EU countries. · Free and unlimited labour migration as an important career step. · The constitution of a European circle of friends: building up European identity and emotional bonds in other European countries. · European identity: that the EU as a project wins if people identify more with it. At an individual level, the benefit is arguably more one of broadening one's horizons than of developing an EU identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Moral conflict, implicit obligation to leave vs. the will to stay: that, in the case of young people finishing their education, due to lack of a culture of mobility, the freedom of movement can be interpreted as a burden for people with strong bonds to their home country/region. · Moral hazards (also part of the normative frame): that "leavers" might be stigmatised in their home region for leaving the country during difficult times and returning after this time (if at all). · The loss of young, active, brilliant people: the possible loss of bonds in the home country/region (especially in case of long-term migration) leading to the destabilization of local communities. · That the obligation to be mobile (in the course of studies, as a necessary career step or an implicit obligation, etc.) might collide with family responsibilities (e.g., child or elder care). · Risk of aggravating interpersonal relationships, leading to separation or divorce. · New models of family: that migration families, "transnational families", and "distant families" face problems of relations between parents (abroad) and children.

Source: own elaboration.

This Table 3 does not seek to be comprehensive, but only to capture the current tension EU in-mobility is causing. It also allows us to formulate the current theoretical challenge that a potential EU in-mobility theory would need to incorporate. This requires to transform (to recover, following the historical dimension of my argument) what is initially seen as a concern (EU in-mobility) into an asset and an opportunity for the future of the EU. The permanent question is how to create greater mobility opportunities and how to continue to use in-mobility as a resource for defining EU citizenship in the whole EU project, as it was originally established (see Section 3).

It is certainly obvious that the opportunities/risks of EU in-mobility depend on the country's perspective, since we assume the interpretation will not be the same in the country of reception as it is in the country of origin. For instance, a greater scale of departures may result in fundamental disturbances in social structures. If sending countries such as Poland and Spain –to give two different examples– do not experience

return migration on a large scale, then long-term emigration will have the greatest impact on their economic, demographic and social situation. The increasing fears, however, cannot solely be traced back to too much immigration from other EU countries, but are also driven by the rise of third-country migration.

Given most of the EU demographic statistics and policy measures in the last years (see Section 2), we can say that there is an emerging triangular mobility scheme between, roughly stated, North, South and East-Central Europe. These three mobility trends can be characterized as the main sources of the aforementioned dissonance between and within the respective EU member states today.

- a) *From South to North*: The migration primarily of workers and qualified people from the southwest member states of the European Union (Italy, Spain and Portugal, for instance) to the northwest ones (Belgium, Germany, the UK and Sweden) over the course of the economic crisis between 2008 until today.
- b) *From East to South and from East to North*: The continued migration from post-socialist countries from East-Central European member states (Hungary, Poland, Romania) to the northern and southwest ones since 2004 and 2007. For instance, concentrating our attention on the northwest states of the EU as destinations excludes the bulk of Romanian migration (or mobility) to or within the EU. There are signs of recent increase in mobility towards Germany, France and UK, but Italy and Spain continue to be the main destination of large-scale migration.

In summary, a new triangular mobility scheme is underway, reframing European societies, and forcing the rethinking of the EU's project and of the ideals of EU citizenship founded on "mobility as an opportunity". There is currently not a shared consensus regarding whether current EU mobility should be considered an indicator of crisis or as an opportunity to contribute to solve the crisis. This marks a new phase in comparison to past mobility experiences. At this moment, instead of being seen as an opportunity and a chance to diminish economical tensions from sending countries, sometimes in-mobility is seen as a barrier and a risk for people, as a loss of human resources (brain drain), or as an additional threat (of lower-class EU movers) for receiving countries. This fact also needs to be reassessed from an overall EU point of view. Intensified EU mobility has taken place amidst increased currents of global South-North migration. Much of the new (national) governance of recent mobility has been initiated by this latter process –and not simply as a response to the 'outflow' from 'the East'. EU movers are even hierarchized, and Eastern Europeans are still welcomed more readily than many "visible minorities" from elsewhere (apart from the Roma, who seem to be unwelcomed everywhere, Gehring, 2013; Parker and López Catalán, 2014).

From these in-mobility dynamics, several policy questions arise. Given the focus we are following, we may ask how can something initially seen as a barrier and a risk be transformed into an opportunity for the EU's project as body politic

overall, and for EU citizenship, in particular? Which mobility policies are required to increase the positive aspects of EU in-mobility and to lessen the negative impacts? Yet, given the exploratory character of this article we cannot fully develop these questions. What we can do at this stage is rather to ground the legitimacy of this opportunity-based approach of EU citizenship for a potential EU in-mobility theory.

THEORETICAL QUESTIONS: HOW TO TRANSFORM EU IN-MOBILITY INTO A RESOURCE AND AN OPPORTUNITY INSTEAD OF A BARRIER AND A RISK FOR THE EU CITIZENSHIP IDEAL?

This question is essential and touches the very core of the issue I want to address. This generates other legitimate questions such as ‘who gains from EU in-mobility?’ ‘Whose ideal is this, really?’ The fact is that intra-EU open borders is related to (elite) economic interests in flexibility (of workers). Workers in poorer EU countries evidently have an interest in being free to move for work. However, and I think that this is and will be increasingly important: the middle classes across (particularly Western) Europe are likely to become ever less supportive of free mobility, as is clearly the case in the UK but also in other EU countries. And beyond ideologies and ideals, speaking out of self-interest, do they have any reason to support free mobility? I think that this is a central explanation behind the curbed project of EU citizenship.

As we have seen, the view of EU citizenship as an opportunity is far from being shared by all member states today. It is therefore no surprise that, even if the ability to look for a job is one of the fundamental freedoms of the single market, regional workforce mobility within the EU is still relatively low in comparison to other geographic areas, such as in the US. In line with the European Commission’s EU Citizenship Reports, EU citizens must “enjoy their rights in their daily lives, without being confronted with unnecessary obstacles”.

Today, when mobility rates are rising, and more and more EU citizens have benefited and still benefit from free movement, the political discussion in both the sending and receiving countries is dominated by possible disadvantages and threats (and fears) with regard to this mobility (brain drain vs. brain circulation; the fear of long-lasting economic imbalances between sending and receiving regions; the fear of foreign infiltration in the receiving countries, etc.). The assumption of existing tensions regarding the free movement of workers can be illustrated along various Eurobarometer studies, which surveyed individual perceptions about gains and losses of in-mobility for the respective nation states. The practice of European citizenship through the exercise of EU in-mobility can lead to a higher acceptance of pro-European politics on the national and supranational level. The majority of Europeans interviewed over the past ten years state that freedom of movement, study and work anywhere on

the continent is what best represents the EU (see Eurobarometer, 2013; Eurobarometer Standard, 2013).

While the majority of the domestic population in most EU countries, for instance, disagree with the opinion that mobility is beneficial from an economic and cultural viewpoint (Eurobarometer, 2012), most Europeans (60 %) think that people moving within the EU is a good thing for European integration (Eurobarometer, 2010: 72). More than one-fifth perceived increased mobility as problematic for the domestic labour market. A second sign that in-mobility is not solely perceived as an opportunity but also as a risk can be seen in the fact that 34 % of the citizens in the EU 27 think that their chances of finding a job abroad are actually better than the chances of finding a job in their own country, but only 17 % envisage working abroad at some time in the future (Eurobarometer, 2010).

We assume there are reasons coming from the EU structure of mobility opportunities, from a lack of knowledge about mobility and from a mobility culture that needs to be introduced into the debate. The way the EU and the states will give answer to these new patterns of mobility and its effects will certainly determine the EU political future. The non-discrimination of EU movers and the development of corresponding policies to remove administrative obstacles and formalities need to be developed to shape a potential theory on EU mobility. There is then a need to transform what is initially seen as a concern (EU mobility) into an asset and an opportunity for the future of the EU. The enduring theoretical question is, then, how to create a structure of opportunities for greater EU mobility. Which policies and services are necessary? This includes pre-departure, upon arrival, during the stay, and upon return (if return is desired).

Therefore, the main guiding thread of all particular analyses will look to introduce into this emerging EU in-mobility debate the question of how to transform the initial negative reaction (as shown by some political leaders' discourses and decisions in Germany and the UK, for instance) into an opportunity for people first, and for states and the EU as a whole later. This opportunity-based approach drives the discussion on welfare and economical challenges, as well as political challenges.

To recapitulate, what this new EU in-mobility age is showing us is that *there is a new gap between demographic dynamics, on the one hand, and processes, structures and institutions, on the other, which are reacting to national interests instead of EU ones*. For instance, Spain is proving to be an interesting case, as it is still attracting immigrants (the "poorest" ones) but losing their own citizens (the "best ones", "the youngest and most educated ones"!). The same is true for Poland, which has shifted from typically emigrating to other member states of EU to simultaneously stimulating immigration from Ukraine and elsewhere. These are good examples of similar scenarios in different parts of Europe. All these reflections have to be channelled through a revitalised European citizenship, and maybe, the way to reaffirm EU citizenship integral function for the EU project is to propose new concept of a "EU culture of mobility", which can strengthen the opportunity-based approach we are defending.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: A NEW EU MOBILITY AGE FOR EU CITIZENSHIP AND THE NEED OF A “EU CULTURE OF MOBILITY”

EU citizenship constitutes one of the clearest illustrations of both the achievements and limitations of EU integration processes. It undoubtedly constitutes an achievement because it is, worldwide, a unique case of supranational citizenship. On the other hand, however, it still presents major limitations, especially due to the fact that some of the rights guaranteed by EU laws are yet not fully secured by current national or local practices. This chronically unsteady situation can hinder the survival of EU citizenship as a distinctive EU category.

This is why I suggest that in the process of reassessing the original idea of EU citizenship and strengthen its key role for promoting EU key value of free movement, we need perhaps to *incorporate mobility as an EU culture*, and then speak about the need of a *EU culture of mobility*. The premise is that a *EU culture of mobility* considers mobility a resource for defining EU citizenship for the whole EU project as the political and economic freedom of movement.

A *EU culture of mobility* would then encourage *mobility policies* managing both inward and return flows, whereas efforts to regulate mobility as ‘migration’ are likely to lead to permanent settlement. It will then seek to re-establish the original idea of mobility as something pleasant for individual experience and knowledge acquisition and not as a “headache” for EU movers and member states (because of its impact in public opinion, welfare, etc). A *EU culture of mobility* would also strengthen the idea that to move without policy and legal restrictions across member states is a condition of Europeanness, as something good in itself, as an opportunity instead of the current view of EU in-mobility as an individual effort without in most time governmental support. A *EU culture of mobility* would promote temporary free movement as a value in itself, because it fosters interaction among EU citizens and an internal intercultural context for community cohesion (Cantle, 2012).

Current EU in-mobility makes also clear that the differences between migration, emigration, immigration, and movers are no longer obvious, and they depend most of the time not only on the state perspective but also on individual intentions and subjective feelings. Following this notion of *EU culture of mobility*, EU border-crossing or in-mobility denotes that the movers have some plans to return, that they have no initial life project in the country of destination, and that this temporary dimension distinguishes it from migration in which people have no initial plan to return and are open to building their life prospects in the country of destination from the very beginning of their migratory process. This distinction is obviously open to discussion, since empirical studies on international migration show that people redefine their plans during migration (Massey *et al.*, 1998). Free movement, in the sense of short-term, temporary mobility (for reasons of labour or study, for instance), rather than permanent migration, can be interpreted in the mutual interests of both sets of states, since EU movers acquire language, skills, career improvement and training, and other

social, economic, expertise capital that they can after develop in their country of origin (Favell, 2011).

This category of “EU culture of mobility” is connected with a broader debate on “democratic mobility theory” that has not been conceptually explored. It takes into account the role of EU citizens’ networks and trans-european ties. The notion of “EU culture of mobility” might be linked to the “culture of migration”, put forward by Cohen and Sirkeci (2011). It was first theorized by Kandel and Massey (2002) as the cultural beliefs and social patterns that influence people to move. The culture-of-migration argument, simply put, is that migration is a learned social behaviour; people learn to migrate, and they learn to desire to migrate.

The notion of a “EU culture of mobility” will also highlight the idea that the way EU and its member states will give answer to these new patterns of EU mobility and its effects will certainly determine the EU’s political future. It is therefore essential to spread principles of non-discrimination towards all EU movers, to develop policies to dismantle all administrative obstacles to EU citizens exercising their rights, and to dissolve all tensions and concerns related to the free movement of EU citizens within EU labour market. Only in this way can a “EU culture of mobility” within the EU be achieved. EU citizenship threatens to become a broken ideal for revitalizing the EU project. On the other hand, it could enable the EU to realize the ideal of *a common culture of mobility*.

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