# Precarious citizenship:
# Rights claims of EU migrants in the UK

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# Abstract

EU citizenship comprises a set of rights, but it is most closely associated with free movement across member states. However, while free movers formally enjoy equal civil, social, economic and residence rights throughout the European Union, informal application of these rights is spatially uneven. Further, political rights of EU citizens remain curtailed as free movers usually cannot vote in national elections in their country of residency, but they can vote in local and external elections. This dynamic of inclusion and exclusion generates a democratic deficit, but it also produces emergent spaces of political action. My thesis engages with this opening to analyse how EU migrant citizens claim their electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights in Bristol: a culturally and economically vibrant English city, where the density of migrant networks generates a fertile ground for both political engagement and engaged research.

The study is theoretically informed by geographic and political literatures on citizenship and interdisciplinary citizenship studies – with the acts of citizenship approach being particularly useful – as well as social and political theory. It is empirically grounded in the English context and relies on qualitative, place-based research in Bristol. This includes interviews and ethnography with migrant voters and political campaigners, and interviews with labour and community organisers. Data collection took place over an extended period before and after the EU referendum. The thesis distinguishes between the *means* and *modes* of political action. The means are defined as organised social practices that enable acts of citizenship, and include voting, organising, and campaigning. Three overarching *modes* of claiming European rights emerge through this analysis, and they include enactments *along*, *across*, and *beyond* national frames. In this way, personal and collective rights claims serve as empirical proxies, or windows onto, European migrant citizenship.

The thesis argues that vulnerability is a powerful catalyst for political action unfolding through citizenship. It also shows that acts of citizenship, while often cast as revolutionary

moments, are in fact processual and iterative. Citizenship understood in this way endows individuals with capacities and infrastructures to collectively learn, question, and rebel – to identify matters of concern, to identify sites of intensive relations of power, and to articulate interests and take action.

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Cynthia Enloe, who influenced me greatly at Bristol University over a decade ago, once said that acknowledgements are the most important part of a thesis and that sometimes there is no need to read beyond them. She was right, no?

Kuba Jablonowski
Bristol, 11th March 2019

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This thesis follows the Chicago citation style to reference source material. All names which appear in text are cited in full when they first appear in a chapter, and the last name is cited thereafter. If they appear again in another chapter, the full name is used in the first cite. When only the first name is cited for a research participant, this indicates the person wished to remain anonymous and the name cited is an alias. Quotes from all written sources are cited verbatim. Quotes from research participants relied on intelligent verbatim transcription: any distracting repetitions and fillers were edited out and obvious speech errors corrected. Interviews conducted in Polish were translated to English by the author. No specialist abbreviations are used in the thesis, and the few abbreviations that appear in text are always spelled out when first used.

# Introduction | Citizenship: precarious, uneven, and iterative

European citizenship as a status comprises a set of rights, but it is most closely associated – and almost synonymous – with just one of them: the right to free movement. This right affords Europeans the liberty of living transnational lives unmatched by any other citizenship regime. For that reason it can be called "the world's first fully featured *supranational* citizenship[1]," even if the extent to which it is truly supranational remains a subject of debate. In a world deeply scarred by national borders, the European Union (EU) stands out as a unique space allowing its citizens to largely ignore them. Although much critical attention, especially in recent years, has turned towards scrutinising the external border of this supranational space – which is being upheld at a huge human cost – this only reinforces the framing of EU citizenship as a uniform space of privilege.

This study takes a different view. It is animated by the idea that this cherished citizenship status is precarious, because it is contingent, incomplete, and unevenly realised in space. Its unevenness is revealed by the contrast between the uniformity of its formal rights across the EU and the uneven standing of social groups within it[2], explored throughout this thesis. While freely moving Europeans formally enjoy full civil, social, and economic rights across the Union, the realisation of these rights remains fragmented and their political rights remain curtailed. EU migrant citizens typically lack the right to vote in national elections in their country of residence, where fundamental decisions affecting

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[1] Jo Shaw, "The impact of political and legal change on (supranational and national) citizenship regimes — the case of Brexit," accessed on 6th April 2018, https://medium.com/@userjoshaw/ brexit-the-impact-of-political-and-legal-change-on-supranational-and-national-citizenship-a5734 97d2487.

[2] Lynn A. Staeheli, "Globalization and the scales of citizenship," *Geography Research Forum* 1, no. 9 (1999): 60-77.

their lives are taken. This exclusion generates a democratic deficit in member states – but it also produces new sites of emergent political struggles. This tension between inclusion and exclusion in the practice – rather than principle – of citizenship, and new modes of rights claims emergent through it, are the focus of this thesis.

Research presented here engages with this opening to describe and evaluate how EU migrants enact citizenship. Personal and collective rights claims serve as empirical proxies for researching injustices and concerns from which such claims emerge, and which form the social backdrop of the study. Through its focus on the interplay between inclusion and exclusion generated through free movement, this thesis shows that vulnerability can be a powerful catalyst for political action unfolding through citizenship. It also shows that such enactments, while often seen as subversive and revolutionary moments of impulsive creation, are iterative – because they both build on and resignify entitlements codified in the formal construction of EU citizenship. This is not to dispute the transformative potential of migrant citizenship, but to show that civic transformations currently afoot often unfold in quieter registers of political action than literatures on this topic tend to acknowledge.

A wide body of critical literature on migration and citizenship informs this thesis theoretically, alongside selected readings about cosmopolitanism and democracy more broadly. Empirically, this place-based study is grounded in the context of Bristol, a diverse and engaged city. Bristol turned into a key site of Brexit-related campaigning in the immediate aftermath of the 2016 EU referendum. This is evidenced by the emergence of a pro-EU campaign Bristol for Europe, which was the first and largest amongst similar campaign springing up in cities and towns across the UK. More importantly, a citizens' rights campaign the3million – named after the estimated count of EU citizens resident in the UK – also emerged in Bristol. While the3million quickly evolved into first a national and then international campaign, its formative months in Bristol serve as the empirical basis for one of the three substantive chapters of this thesis.

The thesis distinguishes between the *means* and *modes* of political action. The first are defined as organised social practices that enable political enactments. Three fundamental

means are identified – voting, organising, and campaigning – and they serve as case studies, or windows onto EU citizenship, because they correspond with its three main sets of rights: electoral, socioeconomic, and residence respectively. In the process of data analysis, three overarching themes were identified as the *modes* of citizenship action – claiming rights *along*, *across*, and *beyond* national frames – and they served to organise collected data for further, narrative analysis.

The choice of specific opportunities for data collection meant that in my analytical work the selected windows onto EU citizenship (the *means* of political action related to sets of rights: electoral, socioeconomic, and residence) significantly aligned with the themes emergent from them (the *modes* of claiming rights). For that reason I decided to orient my analysis across the latter three themes but retain voting, organising and campaigning as chapter titles and narrative devices. In this way, each empirical window provides a narrative exposition for the discussion of one primary mode of rights claims that comes most strongly through it.

The first two chapters provide an overview of the conceptual framework and research methodology. They also review literatures on migration and citizenship, and elaborate on the concept of cosmopolitanism. This part of the thesis has four aims. First, it outlines my understanding of key concepts used throughout the thesis. Second, it reviews key debates in theoretical and empirical literatures that inform it. Third, it describes research design and methods this study relies on, and it comments on the issues of ethics and positionality which are shown as an integral part of the methodology. Finally, it presents a diachronic account of the empirical work to show how data collection and analysis unfolded, and narratively connect conceptual and methodological underpinnings of the thesis. These aims are realised across two chapters.

Chapter 1, on *Conceptualising citizenship*, reviews literatures on migration, citizenship, cosmopolitanism, and has a two-fold focus. It starts with a review of normative perspectives rooted in legal and political studies to unpack the formal construction of citizenship and to introduce the key concept of democratic iterations. Further, it elaborates on cosmopolitan perspectives. It then introduces the theory of acts of citizenship and tunes

it to the study of mundane or routine political enactments which are not always intentionally political. Finally, it proceeds to review geographic literatures which unpack spatially uneven experiences and practices of citizenship, and the role of place – as well as presence in place – in political activism. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the seminal work on citizenship by Thomas Humphrey Marshall to break up this "experience and practice of citizenship" into three key parts relevant for the study of EU rights claims – namely electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights – and justify the empirical windows through which data was collected. This exposition ends with the presentation of my two overarching research questions and three sub-questions, where each sub-question corresponds with Chapters 3, 4, and 5 respectively.

My own argument presented here is that studying acts of citizenship geographically attunes them to two fundamental aspects that are often left out of focus when citizenship is researched and theorised through deterritorialised and performative frames. One is the role of ordinary action in the social field, which grounds acts of citizenship and underpins their intersubjectivity – that is, makes them meaningful to people. The other aspect, which remains in productive tension with the first one, is the place-based situatedness of citizenship action and, crucially, the role of instituted and networked social relations and infrastructures, as well as discursive practices. Institutions, networks, and discourses matter insofar as they make up the context in which any acts of citizenship unfold, and they are concurrently remade and rearticulated through each such enactment. This remaking and rearticulation is seen as the essence of citizenship as an iterative process, where no enactment of rights can be simply dismissed as routine or apolitical.

Chapter 2, on *Researching citizenship*, presents the study's methodology and comments on the issues of research ethics and positionality to show how the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 1 was operationalised for empirical work. In addition, Chapter 2 outlines the progress of data collection and analysis diachronically, and thus serves as a narrative device linking the conceptual and the empirical aspects of the thesis before research findings are organised into the three main themes – or *modes* of rights claims articulated *along*, *across*, and *beyond* national frames – in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 respectively. The chapter begins with a reflexive section dedicated to the issue of

positionality, and to the personal, social, and political context from which this study emerged. Then it moves on to discuss research design, and reviews studies similar to mine to evaluate their designs and methodologies. It also makes a case for Bristol as a suitable place to conduct my research by describing the city's social, economic, and political past and present, and reviewing other studies recently conducted in Bristol as a city characterised by vibrant political culture and high density of political networks. After this discussion, the chapter presents a detailed breakdown of the data collection process, including four tables listing all interviews with reference to the analytical themes and data collection strands, and showing the timeline of data collection. This is followed by a reflection on research ethics, which is organised around the issues of consent and anonymity. Finally, towards the end of Chapter 2, the process of data analysis is explained to justify my choice to combine narrative and thematic approaches to evaluate the empirical material.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of the thesis present my empirically grounded analysis, which informs the theoretical argument sketched out above and developed throughout the text. These chapters read empirical evidence against theoretically and empirically informed literatures on migration and citizenship.

Deciding how to structure this analysis was an important and intricate part of the research process. This was partly to do with the research design and method, and partly the broader social and political context of the study. First, the fundamentally open-ended character of intensive designs and qualitative methods meant that, while providing some answers, my interviews and observations inevitably also opened up further questions which remained only partly explored. Second, the rapidly changing external context of the study meant it would be wrong to approach the data collected at different stages of the process in exactly the same manner. The EU referendum provides the most obvious illustration of this changing context given that until the vote, research participants typically spoke of their EU citizenship rights as if they had them, and not as if they were at risk of losing them – but this abruptly changed after the vote to leave. For that reason, it would be methodologically problematic to analyse interviews conducted before and after the referendum and read themes emerging through them in the same way. While at the time

of writing there is still little academic work published on the issue, initial quantitative research seems to confirm a clear change in political awareness and a steep rise in civic and social engagement of EU migrant citizens after the referendum[3].

My aim was to ensure that the research presented here substantially expands on the existing knowledge base, and that the messy, incongruous and sometimes contradictory processes taking place in the social field do not get wrapped up in the comforting blanket of social theory to form a neat narrative on things that are anything but. As John Law insists in his work on messiness of social science methods, bringing up the performative character of research forces us to admit that "realities can be made independent, prior, definite and singular" only "because they are being made that way" by researchers[4]. In this process of remaking realities, anything that does not fit with the methodological assumptions is repressed, or "systematically Othered", to make space for a neatly organised set of findings, coherent within its own framework but with a very problematic relationship to the world "out there[5]." For that reason, my task was to reflexively engage with understated, counterintuitive and often simply baffling enactments that have stubbornly refused to overlap with many of the analytic categories that were part of my original research plan.

What follows then, in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, is an effort to retain fidelity to the strands of data collection (which were structured around the three windows onto EU citizenship and include claims of electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights), while maintaining the attention to themes identified during data analysis (that is the *modes* of claiming rights along, across, and beyond national frames). Therefore, the empirical analysis is organised around three means of claiming rights that underpinned the process of data collection –

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[3] Marta Pont and Daniela Peta, "What do citizens want from Brexit? Survey findings," accessed 11 July 2017, http://ecas.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Brexit-survey-report_final_final.pdf.

[4] John Law, "Making a mess with method," in *The Sage Handbook of Social Science Methodology*, ed. William Outhwaite and Stephen P. Turner (Beverly Hills and London: Sage, 2007): 595-606.

[5] Ibidem.

voting, organising and campaigning – which largely overlap with the three overarching themes of claiming rights *along*, *across*, and *beyond* national frames. While in cases presented here means and modes of political action typically intersect, this is partly down to the choice of openings for empirical work. It is not my argument that means and modes of political action are in any kind of stable relationship to each other. Instead, I argue that migrant citizens use their rights and draw on institutionalised means of political belonging – national, transnational, cosmopolitan – to enact their politics in specific spatiotemporal contexts, and that they concurrently learn to be political through these frames.

The empirically-informed part of the thesis starts with the discussion of *voting* practices of EU migrant citizens in Chapter 3 as claims to electoral rights. It mostly draws on observations of and interviews with voters in Polish external elections held in Bristol. This analysis is supplemented with a section on participation of Polish migrant citizens in local elections, which further substantiates the argument that migrant participation in place can draw on strongly ethnicised political imaginations. The discussion is organised through the contrast between the politics of presence[6], a concept used in border studies to articulate the intersection of migrants' simultaneous claims to mobility and place, and my argument on the politics of absence, where I show that mobility and place alone are insufficient to fully explain migrant modes of citizenship. This is because the politics of presence privileges *here* and *now* of migrant politics, while my research shows that *there* and *then* – the latter being either past or future oriented, or both – can be equally important. In particular, the chapter shows that political narratives of migrant citizens can be still articulated through the national frame and ethnicised notions of proximity. Amongst those, the two key tropes emerging through the narratives I collected and analysed were the tension between physical distance and emotional proximity to the country left behind, and the notion of being pushed away from Poland because of political or economic conditions. Chapter 3 therefore shows how political imaginations of

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[6] Jonathan Darling, "Forced migration and the city: irregularity, informality, and the politics of presence," *Progress in Human Geography* 41, no. 2 (2017): 178–198.

European migrant citizens – based on the case study of Polish nationals voting in Bristol – travel through space and transcend national boundaries, but at the same time remain animated by local, place-based concerns.

Then follows Chapter 4, where I move on to discussing *organising*, which I understand as practices of building or connecting various social networks – that is instigating and, to various extents, institutionalising – relations between people that are conducive of political action. In this case, this politics mainly serves to claim socioeconomic rights in the workplace and in the community. This is both in the sense that such organised networks might be utilised as political devices, and in the sense that their arrangements and capacities in themselves may result in political effects. This chapter draws on data generated through interview research with labour and community organisers in Bristol. It shows how they claim EU rights *across* national frames. Their actions often draw on ethnic networks to reach and mobilise other migrant citizens, but they also transcend national frames and produce new socio-political connections and formations by exercising *individual* rights *collectively*.

Chapter 5 investigates *campaigning* – that is exercising influence through advocacy and media, and parliamentary outreach – to claim and defend residence rights in the aftermath of the EU referendum. EU citizens I observed and interviewed for this part of my research were acting on, and ensuring the enforcement of, rights deriving from national and supranational legal regimes. They were responding to the condition of human vulnerability and the experience of injustice. The chapter mostly draws on evidence collected in the context of unfolding Brexit to show the unprecedented mobilisation of migrant citizens when their rights were violated. This chapter further elaborates on, and most fully develops, my overall argument on vulnerability inherent in citizenship and concurrently shows how this precarity can be tapped and mobilised at times of crisis and used to act politically.

Enactments of citizenship described and analysed throughout the thesis are not politically transformative because they are revolutionary – across all cases studied they are not – but because they are iterative. Each chapter shows how political awareness can develop in

migrant citizens through re-enacting established and often mundane or routine political practices: participating in external elections, joining a trade union, starting a family club, or engaging in political lobbying. It shows how these (re)enactments matter because they re-signify the meaning of such practices.

Citizenly iterations are not politically revolutionary, but they are politically consequential and therefore transformative. The thesis also shows how rights claims that emerge through citizenship are not instant events but prolonged processes – migrant voters often only took part in elections after years spent abroad, and organisers took years to develop political awareness – and thus illustrates that politics of migrant citizenship is not just spatially but also temporally uneven.

This unevenness – as opposed to the uniformity of EU citizenship as a normative construction – is central to this thesis. Rights claims are shown as emerging from a personal and experiential context. The narratives of research participants demonstrate how they were becoming aware that their individual concerns are structural, and so political. This politics is submerged in the mundane and it often may appear routine, but it is at the same time extraordinary and transformative. The source of such transformations, however, lies not in subverting existing oppressive structures but rather, from *recognising* and *articulating* them as oppressive – which enables diverse modes of political participation and inclusion.

The three overarching means of political participation I discuss overlap with the three modes of acquiring political obligation identified by Bhikhu Parekh[7]: through engaging in social practices (which overlaps with voting), through membership in social organisations (which overlaps with organising), and through basic human predispositions (which overlaps with campaigning spurred by the sense of vulnerability generated by the

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[7] Bhikhu Parekh, "Citizenship and political obligation," in *Socialism and the Common Good*, ed. Preston King (London: Frank Cass, 1996): 259-289.

Brexit process). As it will be shown throughout Chapters 3, 4, and 5, however, citizenship needs to be conceptualised as something broader than a sense of obligation. As I argue, cosmopolitan and diverse practices of EU citizenship in the UK, which I tracked through Bristol, are manifestations of deeply personal instincts of world making[8]. Even when relatively routine, they are not just acts of conforming with social norms, responsibilities, or expectations of others. This understanding of rights claims as inherently creative helps me make sense of enactments driven by individually held values that relate to particular social and political obligations, but which often to transcend and transform them. This is in no small part because "the identities of any political community, but particularly diasporic ones, are highly fluid, with multiple, overlapping, and dynamic affiliations and obligations[9]." Social practices and institutions, and human predispositions are important and help us understand how enactments of EU citizenship unfold. However, the first key point explored across the thesis is that social networks and institutions concurrently shape and enable political enactments only insofar as they are vehicles for recognition and articulation of vulnerabilities, identities, and injustices felt by migrant citizens. The second key point is that these acts of articulation and recognition are iterative. They are routine and extraordinary, and so represent repetition and variation at the same time.

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[8] Nigel Rapport, *Anyone: The Cosmopolitan Subject of Anthropology* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012).

[9] Giles Mohan, "Embedded cosmopolitanism and the politics of obligation: the Ghanaian diaspora and development," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 38, no. 5 (2006): 880. DOI: 10.1068/a37216 38.

# Chapter 1 | Conceptualising citizenship

The aim of my research is to describe and understand how European residents in the UK enact citizenship in both ordinary and extraordinary ways. In doing so, I seek to capture routine and imaginative practices of citizenship alike, against a body of scholarship that predominantly takes interest in the latter and at the expense of the former[10]. The study takes a particular group of people who can be deemed privileged as migrants, but who are underprivileged as citizens, and investigates them as a political subject. This is not due to any assumption of coherence of EU residents as a group, but because as a group they are endowed with a certain package of rights and so a certain citizenship status. Hence, the project conceptually frames free movement in its current legal form – that is, the Maastricht formulation, which is discussed in more detail further in this chapter – as an essential referent and conduit for migrant citizens' political activity. At the same time, however, it problematises the political underpinnings of free movement and recognises its diverse political effects, and diverse outcomes of political enactments of migrant citizens.

To realise its aim, the thesis seeks to map socio-political relations that are established when migrant citizens claim rights and investigates particular forms of migrant citizenship that are produced in this process. These forms are considered "the core of

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[10] Catherine Neveu, "Practising citizenship from the ordinary to the activist," in *Routledge Handbook of Global Citizenship Studies*, ed. Engin Isin and Peter Nyers (London and New York: Routledge, 2014): 86-95. Catherine Neveu, "Of ordinariness and citizenship processes," in *Citizenship Studies* 19, no. 2 (2015): 141-154.

political life since they entail the enactment of equality within conditions of inequality[11].” Second, to track more dispersed and thus spatially uneven political effects, the project looks into practices that allow migrant citizens to build and expand their social networks and thus open up new spaces for collective action through “the micropolitics of everyday social contact and encounter[12].” These two modes regard rights claims as collective practices of seeking equality and justice for “what makes subjectivity political is not only that it is creative, inventive and autonomous, but that it also articulates an injustice and demands or claims its redress[13].” These two objectives jointly aim to explore the connection between social belonging and claiming rights to better understand in what ways EU migrant citizens are political in Britain, and how they enact citizenship despite their incomplete citizenship status. The distinction between social belonging and rights claims helps me qualify my research aim, make it operational, and inform the development of research questions and data collection methods. It also conceptually frames citizenship through questions of recognition, rather than membership.

However, before I move on to discussing the findings of my research in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, I first discuss the concept of citizenship in this chapter and outline my methodology in the next one. This chapter, therefore, reviews relevant literature on citizenship from across several disciplines. Its first section locates citizenship in a broad and diverse body of literature collectively referred to as migration studies. It also touches on the concerns of research originality, and it problematises existing takes on migrants’ rights claims. The second section zooms in on EU citizenship specifically, and reviews literature from legal and political theory through a double reading of communitarian and cosmopolitan orientations. It shows that, for the purposes of my research, the latter offers a number of

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[11] Andrew Schaap, “Enacting the right to have rights: Jacques Rancière’s critique of Hannah Arendt,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 10, no. 1 (2011): 24.

[12] Ash Amin, “Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity,” *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 34, no. 6 (2002): 959.

[13] Engin F. Isin, *Citizens Without Frontiers* (New York, London, New Delhi and Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2012): 109.

theoretical insights, of which the most important is Jo Shaw's argument about the formal "incompleteness" of EU citizenship which casts it as a contentious – political – process. Given that cosmopolitanism has multiple framings, the third section elaborates on my understanding of it through a debate between Seyla Benhabib and Saskia Sassen, illustrating how cosmopolitan transformations produce new forms of citizenship and political inclusion more broadly through democratic iterations. The latter is a key concept which I rely on to argue that enactments of citizenship are transformative not because they represent a rupture in the configuration of citizenship, but because they reconfigure citizenship iteratively: through reproduction and rearticulation simultaneously. This section also begins to interrogate spaces and places through which such new forms of citizenship emerge. The fourth section is focussed on the theory of acts of citizenship, which informs much of my conceptual framework as it is particularly useful for tracing and making sense of transformations of citizenship. However, the section engages with acts of citizenship critically: first, by unpicking their tacit assumptions about the ontology of political action and second, by discussing their utility for researching ordinary modes of citizenship, like those related to "routine" claims of electoral rights or "mundane" claims of socioeconomic rights. The section that follows shows how I translated such a conceptual framing of citizenship into my research practice through a double reading of Judith Butler's work on performativity and precarity, and Andrew Sayer's work on vulnerability and concern. Finally, the sixth section provides and overview of the body of work on geographies of citizenship, that is the broad, diverse and vibrant – but relatively consistent – field of geographic inquiry working through the concept of citizenship not as a formally uniform set of rights, but as a spatially and socially uneven experience and/or practice of rights. It shows it as an autonomous body of work, which nonetheless has multiple overlaps with acts of citizenship due to its processual and standing-focussed (rather than status-focussed) framing[14]. The section is focussed on

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[14] Gaja Maestri and Sarah M. Hughes "Contested spaces of citizenship: camps, borders and urban encounters," *Citizenship Studies* 21, no. 6 (2017): 625–639. Lynn A. Staeheli, "Political geography: where's citizenship?" *Progress in Human Geography* 35, no. 3 (2010): 393–400.

work published since the 1990s in Britain, as that is when and where academic interest in citizenship re-emerged most forcefully in geography and other disciplines given the concept's power in describing, evaluating and explaining the links between the state, the economy, and the society[15].

Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief overview of Thomas Humphrey Marshall's seminal work on the evolution of citizenship rights to justify my methodological approach. Marshall highlighted the evolution of citizenship rights in the UK and broke them down into bundles of civic, political, and social rights. Following his analysis, I organise EU citizenship into its three main formal components derived from the Treaties and the Citizenship Directive: electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights. I then make a case for research on enactments of EU citizenship in a place – a city – through these three windows. Chapter 2, which then follows, elaborates on this research design and methodology.

## Studying migration through citizenship

Academic work on European integration and migration is closely intertwined with the events it seeks to make sense of. Since the early 1990s, rising global migration flows have received increased levels of attention in British academic, public, and policy debates[16]. The initial concern was with irregular migration and asylum claims as they started shooting up in the post-cold war era, a period marred by the emergence of new insecurities and conflicts in Eurasia and Africa. Then came anxiety about migration from within the

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[15] Sallie A. Marston, "The private goes public: citizenship and the new spaces of civil society," *Political Geography* 14, no. 2 (1995): 194-198.

[16] Bridget Anderson, *Us and Them: The Dangerous Politics of Immigration Control* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Jane Wills, Kavita Datta, Yara Evans, Joanna Herbert, Jon May, and Cathy McIlwaine, *Global Cities at Work: New Migrant Division of Labour* (London and New York: Pluto Press, 2010): 163-170.

EU as eight post-communist states became its members in May 2004 and took advantage of free movement[17]. Britain was the largest of only three states that waived transitional periods regarding free movement, and many of the new Europeans made their way there.

Much current academic literature was written as these early concerns and anxieties about migration morphed into increasingly open resentment. In this politically charged context many researchers adopted a strong ethical stance in defence of the rights of migrants. The few studies that presented a contrary argument emerged on the fringes of academia and journalism, and either heralded the inevitable demise of "the European model of multiculturalism[18]" as if there ever was one[19], or acknowledged anxieties about migration to try and find some common ground to manage it – but never through managing expectations and anxieties over it, and always through restricting mobility itself[20]. Such interventions represent a call to shore up national boundaries, introduce some sort of migration caps or at least targets, and turn away from politics acknowledging any kind of multiculturalism. In the British context, this debate additionally reveals an uneasy relationship between the realm, the nation, and citizenship – a relatively new word in the political and academic vocabulary[21].

What links the two ways of debating migration, the one most concerned with the rights of migrants and the other mainly troubled by the sheer number of them, is that they both adopt equally strong normative approaches and take the whole of British society – usually seen through the prism of labour markets, community cohesion, or identity politics – as their ultimate reference point. From such a vantage point, migrant citizens may often lack agency and instead become a variable in a grander political equation. In this reading, the

[17] Anderson, *Us and Them*, 57.

[18] Paul Scheffer, *Immigrant Nations* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2011).

[19] Tariq Modood, *Multiculturalism: A Civic Idea* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2007).

[20] David Goodhart, *The British Dream: Successes and Failures of Post-war Immigration* (London: Atlantic Books, 2013).

[21] Anderson, *Us and Them,* 20-28.

attention is firmly fixated on the receiving society, and the only question about migrants concerns ways of fitting in. The approach presented here is different, insofar as it does not consider transnational mobility in terms of migration but instead analytically frames it in the context of enacting citizenship.

For that reason, the research context for my study is set by literatures that recognise the agency of migrants and seek to identify existing and emergent spaces of political action. On a broad level those spaces are usually theorised as aligned with shared economic and political interests on various scales, from mobilisation of local migrant workers to campaigns for the national living wage[22] to enactments of EU citizenship[23]. It is important to note that not all approaches endowing migrants with some kind of political agency endorse the discourse of citizenship and rights, and researchers working in the American context are often critical of its emancipatory potential[24]. However, in the European context, there is a significant trend to investigate the complexities of citizenship and critique framings that cast it as a "move from a negatively charged exterior to inclusion and equality[25]" as such framings are part of "a narrative that enhances the stability of citizenship[26]." Instead, EU citizenship scholars claim it is better understood as an ongoing process[27] and a process of enacting rights[28]. By rejecting the narrative of moving on from one type of national citizenship to another, these readings jointly call for the study of new

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[22] Wills et al., *Global Cities at Work.*

[23] Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward, eds., *Enacting European Citizenship* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[24] Luis Fernandez and Joel Olson, "To live, love and work anywhere you please," *Contemporary Political Theory* 10, no. 3 (2011): 418.

[25] Anderson, *Us and Them,* 114.

[26] Ibidem.

[27] Etienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004).

[28] Engin F. Isin and Greg M. Nielsen, eds., *Acts of Citizenship* (London: Zed Books, 2008).

forms of citizenship that emerge in relation to transnational mobility across local, national and transnational spaces.

My research aim is to problematise and understand citizenship enactments of European residents in the UK, and to evaluate the scope of a democratic deficit generated by free movement. In literatures on migration the attention to European residents is usually focussed on migrant workers and substantiated by the fact that in the public and policy discourses they function as people who always get taken for granted[29]. In so doing, public and policy discourses usually frame European *residents* first and foremost as economic actors, and less so as social or political actors. However, there is also a wide body of academic research that interrogates or challenges this economistic take from standpoints that range from materialist to symbolic. It can be organised into four main currents, and my research problem emerges on their intersection.

First, the political economy of migration and work is often problematised through the study of public and policy discourses, often supplemented by quantitative analyses of labour and welfare data, or ethnography and interviews with migrant workers. These types of analysis show that migrant bodies sustain the pool of precarious workforce created at the intersection of labour markets and immigration controls[30], and that this pool of workforce is necessary to keep global cities going[31]. In what follows migrants emerge as important socio-political actors who, wittingly or not, help reshape spatial divisions of labour or feed into political discourses of work, welfare, productivity and citizenship – although usually they are spoken about in such literature, and their own voices remain

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[29] Wills et al., *Global Cities at Work*.

[30] Bridget Anderson, "Migration, immigration controls and the fashioning of precarious workers," *Work, Employment and Society* 24, no. 2 (2010): 300-317.

[31] Wills et al., *Global Cities at Work*.

silent or underexplored[32]. The central point raised by these literatures is that migrants are indispensable for the current form of capitalism in both a symbolic and material sense.

The second way to recast migrants as social and political actors is through a focus on everyday multiculture, conviviality sociability, and on place[33]. These accounts are primarily sociological but, to various degrees, they bring in political and spatial analysis through place as they deliberately deploy "the urban" as a device for opening up political issues such as spatial inequalities and right to the city. These issues are shown as part and parcel of "living multiculture" and, in part at least, they are animated by migrant political enactments expressed through everyday practices[34] or rights claims[35].

The third way to break up with economistic accounts of migration is through a focus on mobility, belonging, and becoming, so psychosocial and symbolic aspects of migration. Such work operates through the concepts of subjectivity, intersectionality, and wellbeing. It is often influenced by feminist scholarship, and it gives the most explicit accounts of migrant agency through mobility in academic literature[36]. That strong sense of agency is

[32] Bridget Anderson, "Precarious work, immigration, and governance," in *Migration, Precarity, and Global Governance: Challenges and Opportunities for Labour*, ed. Carl-Ulrik Schierup, Ronaldo Munck, Branka Likić-Brborić and Anders Neergaard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015): 68-82.

[33] Sarah Neal, Katy Bennett, Allan Cochrane, and Giles Mohan, "Living multiculture: understanding the new spatial and social relations of ethnicity and multiculture in England," *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 31, no. 2 (2013): 308-323. Laura Moroşanu, "Researching migrants' diverse social relationships: From ethnic to cosmopolitan sociability?" *The Sociological Review* 66, no. 1 (2018): 155–173.

[34] Suzanne M. Hall, "Migrant urbanisms: ordinary cities and everyday resistance," *Sociology* 49, no. 5 (2015): 853–869.

[35] Robin Finlay "A diasporic right to the city: the production of a Moroccan diaspora space in Granada, Spain," *Social and Cultural Geography* (2017): 1-21.

[36] Rosi Braidotti, "On becoming Europeans," in *Women Migrants from East to West: Gender, Mobility and Belonging in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Luisa Passerini, Dawn Lyon, Enrica Capussotti, and Ioanna Laliotou (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007): 23-44. Nadejda Alexandrova and Dawn Lyon, "Imaginary

found through a focus on the personal, the emotive, and the symbolic, and it is cultural, social, and political.

Finally, the fourth way of showing migrants as socio-political actors is to argue that the "practice and experience of mobility – even when restricted – is itself productive of new forms of citizenship and of being political" as Nyers and Rygiel argue in their book[37]. The argument on locomotion, or belonging beyond nation states, stems from a similar understanding of mobility as productive of particular modes of being political, although it also rejects citizenship as inherently state-centric[38]. While these approaches seek to identify new politicised modes and subjects produced by movement itself on the one hand, and by restrictions on human mobility on the other, I take a different approach and attend to new ways of acting politically created by *removing* such restrictions through EU citizenship – precarious and incomplete as it is.

Precarity can be read in two ways in this context. It is extensively used in sociology and geography to conceptually frame the struggles of low-paid or casually-employed workers[39]. However, my research aims to look into the political effects of free movement

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geographies: border-places and 'home' in the narratives of migrant women," in *Women Migrants from East to West: Gender, Mobility and Belonging in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Luisa Passerini, Dawn Lyon, Enrica Capussotti, and Ioanna Laliotou (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007): 95-110. Zana Vathi, "Introduction: the interface between return migration and psychosocial wellbeing," in *Return Migration and Psychosocial Wellbeing: Discourses, Policy-Making and Outcomes for Migrants and Their Families*, ed. Zana Vathi and Russell King (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2017): 1-18.

[37] Peter Nyers and Kim Rygiel, *Citizenship, Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012): 1.

[38] Fernandez and Olson, "To live, love and work anywhere you please."

[39] Kendra Strauss, "Labour Geography 1: Towards a Geography of Precarity?" *Progress in Human Geography* 42, no. 4 (2018): 622–30. Louise Waite, "A place and space for a critical geography of precarity?" *Geography Compass* 3, no. 1 (2009): 412–433. Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London: Bloomsbury Academic 2011). Guy Standing, *A Precariat Charter: From Denizens to Citizens* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014). Guy Standing, "From

through enactments of citizenship. This is because unlike the social, cultural and economic effects[40], political dimensions of free movement received little scholarly attention to date. It guarantees social and economic rights, but falls short of guaranteeing full political rights; my research specifically seeks to engage with this democratic deficit. This brings my understanding of precarity towards that articulated by Judith Butler in *Precarious Life*: focussed on the social vulnerability of our bodies and the discursive vulnerability of our voices, rather than the political economy in which we function[41].

The focus on migrant workers found in much of the study on EU citizenship partly stems from its historic production. Free movement was originally conceived with workers in mind as one of the four economic freedoms that underpin the single market; they include the free movement of goods, services, capital, and labour. As a fundamental principle it dates back to the Treaty of Rome of 1957, which in article 48.2 states:

> "freedom of movement shall entail the abolition of any discrimination based on nationality between workers of the Member States as regards employment, remuneration and other conditions of work and employment[42]."

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denizens to citizens: forging a precariat charter," in *Migration, Precarity, and Global Governance: Challenges and Opportunities for Labour*, ed. Carl-Ulrik Schierup, Ronaldo Munck, Branka Likić-Brborić, and Anders Neergaard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015): 83-100.

[40] Adrian Favell, *Eurostars and Eurocities: Free Movement and Mobility in an Integrating Europe* (Maiden, Oxford and Carlton: Blackwell, 2008).

[41] Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London and New York: Verso, 2004).

[42] "The Treaty of Rome 1957," European Commission, accessed 10 February 2019: https://ec. europa.eu/romania/sites/romania/files/ tratatul_de_la_roma.pdf.

The free movement of workers is further enshrined in Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) [43] and it is applied through secondary legislation and the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). Free movement of people is a right that emerged more recently on the back of the free movement of workers and was enacted by the means of EU citizenship.

As a legal status, EU citizenship was first introduced by the 1992 Maastricht Treaty. In 2004 the Citizens' Rights Directive [44] consolidated much of the existing secondary legislation and case law into a single legal framework which sets out the right to move and reside freely within the EU with full social and economic rights, as long as certain conditions are met. In addition, EU citizens can vote in local and European elections, but they are excluded from parliamentary elections. To exercise the right to free movement one has to be classified as a worker, a student, or a pensioner, be self-employed, or self-sufficient[45]. In this way, for as long as they are economically active, EU free movers evade much of the murky world of immigration controls that circumscribe social and economic rights of other migrants and weigh heavily on their ability to act politically. On the other hand, however, their status also makes acquisition of secondary national citizenship less likely: a study by Jaap Dronkers and Maarten Peter Vink[46] shows that

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[43] "Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union," Official Journal of the European Union, accessed 10 February 2019: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource. html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_2&format=PDF.

[44] "Directive 2004/58/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/ 365/EEC and 93/96/EEC," Official Journal of the European Union 2004, accessed 10 February 2019, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:229:0035:0048:en:P DF.

[45] Jo Shaw, *The Transformation of Citizenship in the European Union: Electoral Rights and the Restructuring of Political Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[46] Jaap Dronkers and Maarten Peter Vink, "Explaining access to citizenship in Europe: how citizenship policies affect naturalization rates," *European Union Politics* 13, no. 3 (2012): 390-412.

across member states migrants from outside the EU are much more likely to naturalise than free movers. This exposes EU residents to a life with restricted political rights and makes political participation the key vector of their civic exclusion. At the same time, it generates new spaces of participation. For example, the work of Umut Erel shows the practices of care, and motherhood specifically, as a mode of citizenship[47]. The notion of precarity understood as socio-political vulnerability is more attuned to such ways of practicing citizenship than precarity understood narrowly as a labour market position.

This section located my research within a diverse and interdisciplinary academic tradition that pays interest to agential and productive aspects of migration, and which seeks to identify existing and emergent spaces of political action generated through it. It highlighted four distinct approaches identified within this tradition and signalled how researching migration through European – and hence supranational – citizenship is different. The section then provided a brief overview of the principle of free movement, which generates the wider context of this study, and signalled the reasons why its current scope goes beyond the focus on the world of work. The next section elaborates on the latter aspect, and it reviews literatures investigating EU citizenship as a status that developed, but is no longer circumscribed by, the principle of free movement of workers. It shows what is at stake in debates on EU citizenship by reflecting on its institutional transformations since the early 1990s, and by reviewing normative orientations implicit in discussions on its future.

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[47] Umut Erel, "Reframing migrant mothers as citizens," in *Citizenship Studies* 5, no. 6-7 (2011): 695-709. Umut Erel, "Transnational care: changing formations of citizenship, family and generation," *Social Politics* 19, no. 1 (2012): 1-14. Umut Erel, "Kurdish migrant mothers in London enacting citizenship," *Citizenship Studies* 17, no. 8 (2013): 970-984.

## Theorising citizenship normatively

The broad empirical context of my study is set by the multilateral integration of nation states within the institutional framework of the European Union. It is conceptually informed by the tension between the two dominant normative perspectives on it, communitarian and cosmopolitan, which are discussed in this section. In concluding remarks, I argue that to understand spatiotemporal complexity of EU citizenship as a device for political participation and representation we need conceptual tools oriented towards citizenship as a spatial, social, and political process, and not just a set of socio-legal norms, obligations, and rights. This argument chimes with the call for the study of not just formal but also informal (or substantive) aspects of citizenship, which is outlined in more detail in the final section of this chapter.

The EU's institutional framework is underpinned by the four freedoms, which facilitate the circulation of capital and labour within the EU and thus generate the economic backbone of its political integration. Specifically, they include free movement of goods, services, finance, and labour, and the latter is an interesting problematique in itself. Free movement of workers had started as a policy enabling economic integration, but by the 1990s it evolved into a set of supranational citizenship rights enshrined in the European Treaties through the so-called citizenship package within the Treaty of Maastricht. In the early 2000s these rights were further codified in the Citizens' Rights Directive[48] and the current rules of free movement of people are derived from that legislation.

At the time when the exact extent of these rights was being worked out, the focus of policymakers was on economic and social rights. While a limited set of political rights was also included – the EU legislation all but guarantees freely moving citizens the right to stand and vote in local and European elections – the right to vote in national elections, which affect the lives of citizens most profoundly, were left out from multilateral treaties.

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[48] "Directive 2004/58/EC," Official Journal of the European Union.

To date, extending the franchise in national elections remains an exclusive prerogative of national governments. As Jo Shaw puts it in her seminal book on *The Transformation of Citizenship in the European Union*, there has been a debate between a cosmopolitan and a communitarian view on the voting rights associated with EU citizenship – and thus far the latter view prevails[49].

> "The general liberal and cosmopolitan principle of alien suffrage […] holds that states ought to ensure that long-term-resident non-nationals have rights of political participation in any host polity to the greatest extent possible, in accordance with respect for democracy and fundamental rights, especially the principles of equality and non-domination of minorities by majorities. On that view, residency is a sufficiently strong factor of affinity and belonging to ground a claim to political equality on the part of someone lacking the formal badge of national citizenship. On the other hand, opposition to expending electoral rights finds expression in a more state-focussed communitarian principle which holds that it would be wrong to reduce the incentives for the formal acquisition of national citizenship, because to do so might undermine the quality and character of that citizenship, by watering it down by reference to an ever wider range of foreigner' rights[50]."

As Shaw also points out, a vision of EU citizenship that is on par with national citizenship with regards to political rights, and not just social and economic rights, is not particularly new. The European Commission articulated it for the first time in 1975[51]. While it has never gotten close to implementation since then, it has never quite disappeared from the agenda of European federalists either[52]. Further, over the years Shaw has repeatedly

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[49] Shaw, *The Transformation of Citizenship in the European Union*.

[50] Ibidem, 4.

[51] Jo Shaw, "EU citizenship and political rights in an evolving European Union," *Fordham Law Review* 75, no. 5 (2007): 2549.

[52] The most recent and one of the first bottom-up examples is the Permanent European Union Citizenship Initiative which was set up by an activist Anthony Simpson and demands that the European Council "assure

argued that the current formation of EU citizenship is unstable, because it is incomplete. Writing with Antje Wiener, she observed that given "governance beyond the national state is a fact in Europe" we need to keep asking "how to characterise and understand" Europe as a polity[53]. In this context, Shaw and Wiener invoked arguments that law has the potential "to generate integrity in a society that is fragmented into separate social and political spheres[54]," originally put forward by Jürgen Habermas. Thus, Shaw's argument is that the EU's legal framework is already producing a polity, whose citizens are likely to seek expansion of their political rights.

The Maastricht design of EU citizenship became a subject of critique and debate. In the UK, Richard Bellamy was notably amongst its most vocal defenders, and his argument generally holds that the complementary status of EU citizenship "continues to offer not only the most plausible but also the most normatively attractive role for this new status[55]." Shaw, on the other hand, recognises the ongoing constitutional transformations in the EU as suggestive of a drift towards a more autonomous version of EU citizenship. After the proposed Constitutional Treaty failed to clear two national referendums in France and the Netherlands in 2005, she argued: "the EU's underlying composite constitutional framework will continue to develop incrementally, including in the sphere of citizenship[56]." Thus, she disputed the plausibility argument to suggest that – despite the referenda that stopped the attempt at institutional reforms – the rules of EU citizenship

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all EU citizens that, once attained, such status is permanent and their rights acquired." It has received just over 101 thousand signatures out of the million required for the EC to initiate a legislative proposal to be debated by the European Parliament. See "Permanent European Union Citizenship Initiative," accessed 5 January 2019 https://eci.ec. europa.eu/002/public/#/initiative.

[53] Jo Shaw and Antje Wiener, "The paradox of the 'European polity'," in *The State of the European Union: Risks, Reform, Resistance, and Revival*, ed. Maria Green Cowles and Michael Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2000): 64.

[54] Ibidem, 67.

[55] Richard Bellamy, "Evaluating Union citizenship: belonging, rights and participation within the EU," *Citizenship Studies* 12, no. 6 (2008): 597-611.

[56] Shaw, "EU citizenship and political rights in an evolving European Union," 2577.

will continue to progress, but in a dispersed and disjointed manner. Whatever the most plausible form of EU citizenship might turn out to be, the Maastricht package falls short of it. Shaw also rejected its normative allure and argued for a "thicker concept" of EU citizenship beyond the Maastricht package "to accord political rights to permanently resident non-nationals in the name of equality, democracy and universal personhood[57]." Her assertive argument, which closely aligns with humanistic formulations of cosmopolitanism[58], is thus somewhat distinct from arguments rooted in the principle of affectedness. The latter maintain that political rights of EU citizenship should operate beyond states and be guaranteed for free movers, as in order to be democratically legitimate political decisions need to be consulted with, and have the consent of, those who are affected by them[59].

Whether more or less critical of it, all of the above appraisals are the outcome of normative reasoning of what EU citizenship should be. They assess it against a particular evaluative standard, and different analytical outcomes result from different normative objectives. Those who prioritise the cosmopolitan principle of protecting minoritarian rights or the democratic principle of affectedness tend to evaluate EU citizenship in terms of its efficiency in safeguarding one or both of these principles, and critique it because it is demonstrably not going far enough in that regard. Those who prioritise the communitarian principle, where democracy is first and foremost upheld by a demos, tend to evaluate EU citizenship in terms of balancing its rights with the rights of the community generated through national citizenship. This community is the demos. It mandates and legitimises EU citizenship in the first place, and hence should be prioritised,

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[57] Anthea Connolly, Stephen Day and Jo Shaw "The contested case of EU electoral rights," in *Making European Citizens: Civic Inclusion in a Transnational Context*, ed. Richard Bellamy, Dario Castiglione and Jo Shaw (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006): 31.

[58] Rapport, *Anyone*.

[59] Chris Hilson, "EU citizenship and the principle of affectedness," in *Making European Citizens: Civic Inclusion in a Transnational Context*, ed. Richard Bellamy, Dario Castiglione and Jo Shaw (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

as without it any citizenship beyond the national one will inevitably perish. In what follows, they tend to defend EU citizenship as striking the right balance between robust protections of minority rights and the process of legitimisation of these rights, which pragmatically and normatively has to take priority.

A degree of scepticism towards collapsing human rights into citizenship does not always stem from concerns over legitimacy. It can also articulate a sense of anxiety that the "external/internal tension between human rights and citizens' rights would get lost in a global world state[60]" and so human rights would become vulnerable should the boundary between them and civic rights become overly blurred. As Alison Harvey, a law practitioner in migration, citizenship and human rights succinctly put it, "human rights – everyone has. Citizenship rights – everyone has not[61]." However, this position is closer to the cosmopolitan rather than the communitarian orientation. Instead of essentialising the nation state as a source of legitimacy, it underscores the role of "the equilibrium that may be reached between the universalising process of the particular and the particularisation of the universal[62]" expressed through the tension between human and citizenship rights. This argument is most often rooted in Hannah Arendt's political theory and combines suspicion of world government with support for world federalism[63].

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[60] Samantha Besson, "Human rights and democracy in a global context: decoupling and recoupling," *Ethics and Global Politics* 4, no. 1 (2011): 39.

[61] Alison Harvey, General Secretary of the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association, during a conference Citizenship and Law conference at the University of Bristol, 14th July 2017. Research notes.

[62] Besson, "Human rights and democracy in a global context," 38.

[63] Hannah Arendt, *The Origin of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1966). See also: Roland Axtmann, "Globality, plurality and freedom: the Arendtian perspective," *Review of International Studies* 32, no. 1 (2006): 93-117. Shin Chiba, "Hannah Arendt, the nation state, and federalism – beyond the sovereign state system?" *The Journal of Social Science* 57 (2006): 5-36. Douglas Klusmeyer, "Hannah Arendt's case for federalism," *Publius* 40, no. 1 (2010): 31–58.

The communitarian argument was recently reiterated by Bellamy and Joseph Lace, who critically noted that case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) is advancing "the transnational and supranational commitment to a nationally insensitive citizenship regime[64]." By that, they mean that the court's case law is extending EU citizenship through rulings which, most of the time, tend to favour the interests of claimants who invoke the rights of EU citizenship against the interests of member states, which seek to reassert their authority in areas such as residence and welfare rights, and so on. To Bellamy and Lace, the problem is both with means and aims of such transformations of citizenship. Because it is advanced through case law and not through legislation, which automatically brings up a greater level of deliberation and scrutiny, they warn the CJEU's activism carries a substantial risk of judicialisation and, ultimately, delegitimisation of EU citizenship. However, this first argument is problematic in so far as the CJEU can only interpret law in cases where the interpretation of existing legislation is not clear already – so it refines the hazy boundaries of European belonging, but it is not allowed to remake them. In this sense, the CJEU simply fulfils its legitimate mandate by interpreting the "incomplete" – as Shaw put it – legislation in a way that prioritises civic rights. Their second argument is that, legitimacy aside, there is also the problem of sovereignty because the expansion of EU citizenship rights amplifies the risk of a clash between national and transnational citizenship regimes. However, their diagnosis is somewhat lopsided, as it appears the only way to avoid clashes between the national and the supranational citizenship regimes would be to roll back the latter, and never the former – irrespective of specifics of cases probed by the CJEU.

While the styles of evaluating EU citizenship in the spirit of Shaw on the one hand and Bellamy on the other outline the contours of EU citizenship as a legal status very well, and are illustrative of the fundamental debate between cosmopolitan and communitarian perspectives on it, they both largely rely on normative reasoning to conceptualise

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[64] Richard Bellamy and Joseph Lacey "Balancing the rights and duties of European and national citizens: a demoicratic approach," *Journal of European Public Policy* 25, no. 10 (2018): 1408.

citizenship rights. For this reason, they have a blind spot when engaging with EU citizenship as enacted by citizens. Further, they are territorially limited and rely on national and supranational scales of analysis, which are appropriate to theorise regimes of citizenship – which are national or supranational – but not enactments of citizenship, which are individual and dispersed, and hence place-based. In what follows, they lead to a similar type of closure to the predicament of EU citizenship. The communitarian perspective found in Bellamy's work presupposes the primacy of the national as the main source of political legitimacy, and thus misses out on transformations of citizenship which unfold on sub-national scales. The cosmopolitan perspective found in Shaw's work proposes expanding communitarian style of citizenship from member states to the whole of the EU, which effectively is a process of upscaling national citizenship and enmeshing it into a transnational institutional framework, with a very similar result of overlooking the fact that multiple civic transformations unfold on subnational, and not supranational scales. These transformations are well evidenced by such diverse perspectives as literatures on the right to the city[65] and global cities[66], as well as those approaching the city as a site of policing and dissent – that is, a site where there is a high intensity of power relations which in turn make it pivotal for civic transformations[67].

In their paper critiquing the judicialisation of EU citizenship, Bellamy and Lace sought to circumnavigate this territorial trap through Reiner Bauböck's concept of stakeholder citizenship. This concept frames citizenship as membership status and assumes that individuals have instrumental and intrinsic reasons to seek such membership; instrumental, as it protects fundamental rights, and intrinsic, because it brings respect of self and others. It also assumes that citizens within any given polity share elementary interest in this polity's autonomy and welfare. Following on from those two assumptions,

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[65] Finlay, "A diasporic right to the city."

[66] Saskia Sassen, "Towards post-national citizenship," in *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 2002).

[67] Jonathan Darling, "Acts, ambiguities, and the labour of contesting citizenship," *Citizenship Studies* 21, no. 6 (2017): 727-736.

the stakeholder citizenship principle demands that "those and only those individuals have a claim to membership whose individual autonomy and wellbeing is linked to the collective self-government and flourishing of a particular polity[68]." To function, Bauböck adds, stakeholder citizenship requires a world of bounded polities so it can function through mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion.

Stakeholder citizenship presupposes a world of multiple and overlapping bounded polities. In this sense, it is more inclusive than national citizenship, which comes with restrictions on acquiring citizenship other than through birth and may also come with restrictions on holding multiple citizenships. It has clear affinities with the principle of affectedness, but rearticulates it through the notions of *individual* autonomy and wellbeing, and – crucially – *collective* self-government. The latter implies a trade-off between individual and collective rights, which echoes the debate between cosmopolitans and communitarians, discussed above.

This openness to collective rights enables Bellamy and Lacey to marry the concept of stakeholder citizenship with that of demoicracy, which denotes a multiplicity of stakeholder communities, and was recently proposed by Kalypso Nicolaïdis to capture the complexity of EU governance. Nicolaïdis argues:

"European demoicracy is a Union of peoples, understood both as states and as citizens, who govern together but not as one. It represents a third way against two alternatives which both equate democracy with a single demos, whether national or European. As a demoicracy-in-the-making, the EU is neither a Union of democratic states, as 'sovereignists' or 'intergovernmentalists' would have it, nor a Union-as-a-democratic state to be, as 'federalists' would have it. A Union-as-demoicracy should remain an open-ended process of transformation which seeks

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[68] Rainer Bauböck, "Morphing the Demos into the right shape: normative principles for enfranchising resident aliens and expatriate citizens," *Democratization* 22, no. 5 (2015): 825.

to accommodate the tensions inherent in the pursuit of radical mutual opening between separate peoples[69]."

Here, Nicolaïdis argues in favour of a demoicratic approach that is oriented towards EU democracy and citizenship as a transformative process, which unfolds through the tension between "sovereignism" and "federalism," which broadly map on communitarian and cosmopolitan perspectives. Bellamy and Lacey, on the other hand, argue that a demoicratic approach shows the primacy of the former. They claim it "provides a strong case for holding fast to the normative content that […] animates the Treaty rendering of EU citizenship as merely complementary to national citizenship[70]." Jo Shaw, who also engages with the concept of demoicracy, is more in line with Nicolaïdis' framing for she recognises it as a call to rethink the spaces of democracy and citizenship, rather than merely their normative hierarchies. Using the example of Scotland – a country enmeshed not in one, but two unions – she theorises multiple levels of democratic action and consent, and argues in favour of new ways of decision-making that would "reflect equal concern for the varied interests and claims of the multiple demoi in and of the United Kingdom[71]." Bauböck, similarly, recognises citizenship is increasingly multi-layered[72] but that does not lead him to a deeper reflection on its subnational transformations either through regional or place-based politics.

The proposition of multiple citizenships and demoi responds to one of the key limitations of liberal citizenship. It is a device operating through mechanisms of inclusion to endow

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[69] Kalypso Nicolaïdis, "European demoicracy and its crisis," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 51, no. 2 (2013): 353.

[70] Bellamy and Lacey, "Balancing the rights and duties of European and national citizens," 1404.

[71] Jo Shaw, "The quintessentially democratic act? Democracy, political community and citizenship in and after the UK's EU referendum of June 2016," *Journal of European Integration* 39, no. 5 (2017): 571.

[72] Reiner Bauböck, "Political membership and democratic boundaries," in *The Oxford Handbook of Citizenship*, ed. Ayelet Shachar, Rainer Bauböck, Irene Bloemraad, and Maarten Vink (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 60-82.

rights and exclusion to delineate polities, and therefore its emancipatory promise can never be universally realised. As Iris Marion Young observed three decades ago, for exactly that reason the universal extension of formal citizenship rights in liberal democracies has not led to universal freedom and equality. Instead, the great citizenship struggles of the twentieth century – and particularly those that emerged in its second half – highlighted the importance of specificity, unevenness, and difference in democracies. Young therefore argues that "the inclusion and participation of everyone in public discussion and decision making requires mechanisms for group representation" and that "the inclusion and participation of everyone in social and political institutions […] sometimes requires the articulation of special rights that attend to group difference in order to undermine oppression and disadvantage[73]." Instead of universal citizenship, she posits the idea of differentiated citizenship, where not a universal *extension* of rights but their universal *realisation* would be the benchmark of democratic inclusion, and where equity is the political goal instead of equality.

Young's insistence on the *particularity* rather than *universality* of citizenship rights within polities is worth holding on to, especially in the context of EU citizenship debates, where it offers a way out of the normative deadlock evident in the rift between cosmopolitan and communitarian perspectives. A conceptual cleavage of this kind is not a problem in itself. It is, however, problematic as the main force animating a broader debate because it obscures two fields that deserve far greater attention than so far received. Firstly, as already pointed out, both these normative perspectives lack reflection on the operations of citizenship on the subnational level, and on the way in which such operations may translate into supranational transformations of citizenship. Secondly, they most often reduce political participation to voting, whereas Young clearly points to the importance of social movements and organising practices to transformations of citizenship as universal realisation – rather than extension – of rights.

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[73] Iris Marion Young, "Polity and group difference: A critique of the ideal of universal citizenship," *Ethics* 99, no. 2 (1989): 251.

Scholars who explore normative formulations of EU citizenship hardly engage with political participation that operates beyond voting rights, and above or below the national scale. When they do, this engagement is somewhat instrumental. Cosmopolitans argue that activist, sub, and supranational modes of political participation demonstrate the instability of the Maastricht package of citizenship rights. Communitarians, on the other hand, point to the modes of political participation that EU citizens are entitled to before they become nationals to neutralise arguments about political inequality inherent in the Maastricht package. These modes of participation include the rights derived from the Citizens' Rights Directive and national legislation of their countries of origin, and specifically the right to: "(a) vote in local and EP[74] elections, (b) due consideration by the authorities in making national legislation, (c) contest political decisions and (d) vote in the national elections of their country of origin[75]." But this does little to engage with the cosmopolitan argument of EU citizenship as unfinished business, given that rights claims on the back of free movement are not restricted to these means of participation, and it has distinct spatiotemporal dynamics. Aside voting rights, EU citizens are also free to unionise, organise, or campaign, and these rights are enacted through social networks and infrastructures that have uneven geographies: trade unions, faith groups, community associations, and others. While such geographies remain unacknowledged in normative perspectives discussed here, the cosmopolitan approach is more conceptually attuned to them. This is because (a) it refuses to privilege the national as a scale of political action in principle, (b) it is primarily concerned with personal autonomy rather than group legitimacy, and (c) it regularly glances towards subnational scales to substantiate this outlook.

To understand subnational modes of participation in their spatiotemporal complexity we need analytical tools oriented towards spatial and political processes rather than socio-

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[74] European Parliament.

[75] Bellamy and Lacey, "Balancing the rights and duties of European and national citizens," 1418.

legal norms. But before I review these tools in the fourth section, the spatiality of the normative claim to cosmopolitan forms of citizenship is unpacked in the section that follows to examine the notion of "subnational" it advances. As the above discussion has shown, cosmopolitan spaces emerging from the normative debate on EU citizenship are either nebulous and undertheorised, or they are assumed to simply operate above or below national territories and remain underexplored. In this way, normative debates on EU citizenship remain detached from its empirical practices, other than legislative and judicial enactments. The next section, therefore, reviews an argument presented by Seyla Benhabib, and Saskia Sassen's response to it, to reflect on spaces through which cosmopolitan citizenship operates, and spaces that it generates. While it is true there exists a field of cosmopolitan politics which extends above national boundaries – this is the field where the European Parliament and the Court of Justice operate, for example – the next section makes the case for considering spaces extending beyond and below national territories when investigating cosmopolitanism. Further, as it will be shown, cosmopolitan politics as an everyday practice emerges from within national territories.

## Unpacking cosmopolitanism

"Democracies require borders [76] ," boldly states Seyla Benhabib in *Another Cosmopolitanism*, a book which is central to many arguments made in this thesis. Her rendering of cosmopolitanism – for it is a concept and a principle which comes in many formulations and gives rise to divergent politics[77] – is specifically oriented towards broadening the scope of democratic inclusion. Benhabib's starting and finishing point is the question of the rights of immigrant residents who, to borrow Joe Painter and Chris Philo's expression, are often seen as "them here," that is, "the people resident within the

[76] Seyla Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006): 33.

[77] Katharyne Mitchell, "Geographies of identity: the intimate cosmopolitan," *Progress in Human Geography* 31, no. 5 (2007). Rapport, *Anyone*.

territorial limits who are not properly regarded as being 'like us'[78]." Or, stronger still, those who constitute the constitutive outside from the inside, a population which comprises mainly – but not exclusively – immigrants and has to be reproduced to remind *us* who *we* are in the first place[79].

This section, therefore, tries to glean above but also, importantly, below the national to show how the cosmopolitan approach, and the work of Benhabib in particular, helps me conceptually frame the ongoing transformations of EU citizenship as democratic iterations which are unevenly distributed in space. This process unfolds as legal frameworks are resignified through jurisgenerative processes when the boundaries of democracies get performatively remade through migrant participation in political practices and processes, and through more or less creative rights claims. It also shows, however, that both supranational and subnational spaces are undertheorised in this approach, and that their unevenness in particular is open to empirical questioning. It shows the theory of cosmopolitan rights does not map easily onto empirical practices of EU citizenship due to issues of complexity and scale. This discussion highlights that the geography of the supranational and the subnational alike is undertheorised in the cosmopolitan approach. The section therefore concludes that further conceptual tools are needed to grasp the operations of EU citizenship and their spatial effects. The three sections that follow after this one argue that this problem can be addressed through the concepts of enactment, vulnerability, and place.

Benhabib's opening remark on indispensability of borders to democracy is central to the wider argument she makes, inasmuch as it allows her to sketch out cosmopolitanism as a series of territorialised mediations between the national and the global, between

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[78] Joe Painter and Chris Philo, "Spaces of citizenship: an introduction," *Political Geography* 14, no. 2 (1995): 112.

[79] Anderson, "Migration, immigration controls and the fashioning of precarious workers." Anderson, *Us and Them*. Anderson, "Precarious work, immigration, and governance."

sovereignty and hospitality, and between the rights of citizens and, as she earlier put it, "the rights of others[80]". Her insistence on the key role of borders follows from a fundamental belief that in order to exist democracy needs a demos, that is, "a democratically enfranchised totality of all citizens[81]." This is not a nod to communitarian perspectives, however, but an attempt to realign Immanuel Kant's argument on cosmopolitan federalism and the core republican principle asserting that democracy is an expression of the will of a sovereign people – rather than just people – in whose name political power is being exercised. The logic of sovereignty implies that non-citizens have to be excluded from the demos, as only then can autonomous decisions be made in the name of members, irrespective of the will of non-members. And only once the scope of democratic inclusion is delineated can members welcome non-members in an act of hospitality.

This unambiguous understanding of democracy, sovereignty and hospitality partly results from the dialectic method Benhabib employs in her analysis. The end result is a complex and overarching narrative of tensions, contradictions, and paradoxes, where ideas fall neatly into place offering "a specific type of closure[82]." While this theorisation has its limitations, of which more later, it is remarkable in at least three aspects. Reflecting on Benhabib's take on cosmopolitanism, which for the first time she outlined in *The Rights of Others*, Sassen highlights two of those fundamental contributions. The first one is that Benhabib broadens the scope of philosophical reflection by drawing our attention to immigration, and by theorising the role of non-citizens as politically active subjects in modern democracies. Second, her theorising of democratic iterations, which is much indebted to Jacques Derrida's ideas, provides a framework through which we can better understand political change as a process of mediation and continued transformation,

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[80] Benhabib, Seyla (2004) *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents and Citizens*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

[81] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 68.

[82] Saskia Sassen, "Response [to Benhabib]," *European Journal of Political Theory* 6, no. 4 (2007): 434.

where each act of democracy is inevitably constitutive of it. This is so because "every repetition is a form of variation. Every iteration transforms meaning, adds to it, enriches it in ever-so-subtle ways[83]". Democratic iterations are seen here as empirical rather than normative processes, which can be evaluated against normative criteria emerging from discourse theory[84]. This shortlist can be expanded to include a third element, namely the notion of jurisgenerative process as a way of mediating between cosmopolitan principles and sovereign democracies. This process occurs when the law is resignified and reinterpreted by the people, and therefore it is an instance in which the law's subject also becomes its author. Sassen leaves this aspect out in her *Response*, possibly because while Benhabib signalled it in her first book on cosmopolitanism[85] she only fully fleshed it out in her later work[86], and still treated this notion as ancillary to, and as a direct result of, the key process of democratic iterations. Nonetheless, studying jurisgenerative processes may help us grasp how democratic iterations take place through personal acts or engagements with statutory institutions – and this is why this concept deserves attention.

All three aspects directly relate to the double paradox of democratic legitimacy that Benhabib identifies in the opening phrase. On the one hand, she highlights the unavoidable tension between universalising, cosmopolitan, and liberal values and the sovereign decisions of the citizenry on the other. She urges us to accept a republican principle that "democracies cannot choose the boundaries of their own membership democratically[87]." Her observation that the will of democratic majorities is always and already circumscribed by abstract principles, both moral and legal, suggests that democratic freedom and liberty are imagined here as relational principles. They are not absolute values in themselves, but rather are contained and upheld by particular moral,

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[83] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 47.

[84] Seyla Benhabib, "Democratic exclusions and democratic iterations: dilemmas of 'just membership' and prospects of cosmopolitan federalism," *European Journal of Political Theory* 6, no. 4 (2007): 445–462.

[85] Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others*, 176-181.

[86] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 45-74.

[87] Ibidem, 35.

ethical, social, and legal frameworks. The second tension concerning the way membership is legitimised only reinforces that view. One can be a member of a democratic community of any sort, argues Benhabib, only if there are non-members too – and "those, whose rights to inclusion or exclusion from the demos are being decided on will not themselves be the ones to decide on these rules[88]". When discussing this paradox, Benhabib chiefly draws on Kant's concern that universal membership would result in despotism and universal monarchy, but this view seems to have as much to do with democracy itself as it does with a particular take on subject-formation in general, which takes us back to the tension between self and other as a constitutive element of citizenship.

Benhabib's work triggered a number of responses, and some were collected in a special issue of the *European Journal of Political Theory*. In one, Rainer Bauböck seeks to neutralise the tension between rights and sovereignty by differentiating between the universal "principle of rights" and particular "schedules of rights," and by proposing that the principle of self-determination be replaced with the principle of self-government. The latter, he argues, needs not include unilateral rights to delineate any polity's boundaries, territorial or otherwise[89]. Other responses, instead of normative critique, debate Benhabib from an empirical standpoint, and Sassen's *Response* is an example of that approach.

Sassen attempts to deflate the contradiction between sovereign and cosmopolitan rights or, as she calls it, "dilute the foundational tension" between the national and the global. She does so because in her view "such binary analytics keep us from adequately understanding the foundational transformation afoot today, one that is partial but consequential[90]." So instead of a foundational dichotomy of "the national and the global as mutually exclusive[91]" she suggests a modified version of Benhabib's argument, which

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[88] Ibidem, 64.

[89] Rainer Bauböck, "The rights of others and the boundaries of democracy," *European Journal of Political Theory* 6, no. 4 (2007): 398–405.

[90] Sassen, "Response," 435.

[91] Ibidem, 434.

is organised by the tripartite assemblage of territory, authority, and rights, with the aim to combine the national and the global instead of setting them against one another. Further, Sassen disagrees that we can draw a clear distinction between the two and asserts that global transformations are in fact "taking place inside the national to a far larger extent than is usually recognised[92]." Like Benhabib she is thus sceptical of the notions of world citizenship, but she cites slightly different reasons for it. Sassen acknowledges citizenship has already become partially denationalised, and EU citizenship serves here as the most explicit example of that. But she also argues that post-national norms and institutions are still predicated upon "specialized denationalization inside the national[93]" and hence, in the legal and political sense, deteritorialisation is still mandated by territorialised authority as well as other forces which are enmeshed in territorial contexts. So, instead of an antagonistic relationship between the national and the global, Sassen is keen to show us how the two can work hand in hand to produce new forms of citizenship as modes of rights claims and political belonging. And when she briefly engages with the normative perspective, she again shows us cosmopolitan rights as emerging from within the national. She argues that all states have to share moral responsibility for foreign citizens, as they are invariably affected by the global economy and politics mandated by these states. In this sense, citizenship is always national and global at the same time, even if at present it is predominantly upheld by national and subnational institutions, while supranational institutional frameworks only begun to develop in the late 20th century with the emergence of EU citizenship. This is particularly so given the latter, as Jo Shaw was shown to argue, is still work in progress.

Benhabib's position and Sassen's response to it add a temporal dimension to the normative discussion presented in the previous section, which culminates in Shaw's assertion that EU citizenship is incomplete. They both suggest citizenship can never actually be complete and that it is always contingent, not just because of its relational

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[92] Ibidem, 437.

[93] Ibidem, 440.

qualities but also because of its political vulnerability. If it is mediated through a complex field where territories, authorities, and rights intersect, then it is a temporal and precarious process of making claims and seeking recognition. Sassen in particular emphasises that national citizenship emerged in particular spatiotemporal conditions, and in a similar way some form of post-national citizenship may develop at some point too; other possibilities are also abound. Therefore, she argues that the future of citizenship in general remains open, and this openness makes it is a site of intense political engagements and struggles[94]. New subjectivities emerge and old ones are redeployed in this process, transforming existing and forming new assemblages. Citizenship is deeply political because it is a work in progress, but – as Benhabib shows – this process operates not so much through revolutionary transformations, as through transformative repetition, as democratic iterations unfold[95].

As Benhabib exposes the iterative dialectics of democracy and transformative repetition of citizenship, Sassen shifts the focus away from foundational tensions and towards processes and assemblages to engage with "the national and the global as constructed conditions[96]," which come to the surface in the course of claiming rights and enacting identities. Democracies require borders of some kind but, more importantly, they create and redraft them too, and so as new borders are made old borders disappear. This is why, despite the aforementioned differences with Benhabib, Sassen values her framing of migrants as rights-bearing subjects and welcomes the idea of democratic iterations as one way of capturing how political change takes place through making claims.

Benhabib's work on cosmopolitanism can help us theorise the rights of migrant citizens in Europe today, the problematique of EU citizenship, and the politics of it. But the link

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[94] Ibidem, 439. See also Jacques Rancière, "Ten theses on politics," *Theory and Event* 5, no. 3 (2001): 1-16.

[95] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 147-180.

[96] Sassen, "Response," 439.

between her theorisation of cosmopolitan rights and empirical practices of the millions of people who claim and enact them is not straightforward. This is for two main reasons, which essentially relate to complexity and scale. While Sassen's critical input attempts to circumnavigate both these predicaments, it does not fully address them.

The issue of *complexity* comes to the surface if we attempt to define what and whom exactly we mean when talking about Europe, citizenship and migrants. Benhabib signals this when discussing disaggregation of citizenship within the EU into its constitutive components: collective identity, political membership, and socioeconomic rights, thus clearly stating its characteristic is not singular. In general, however, all these aspects of EU citizenship presumably add up to a greater whole, and the boundaries between them are relatively clear. To Benhabib, the EU is moving towards cosmopolitanism on the inside while acting like an old-fashioned Westphalian state on the outside, and she does not feel compelled to analyse this to any greater degree[97]. However, in many respects, the boundary between the inside and outside of the EU is multifaceted, dispersed, and in some cases impossible to trace altogether – including in the legal sense, where this hazy socio-legal space is exactly the territory occupied by CJEU when it asserts jurisgenerative powers on behalf of claimants. The boundaries of EU demos in terms of collective identity are equally contested and resignified by the people. We could consider the example of the protesters who flew EU flags in Kiev, Ukraine, in 2014 to defy their own government, and contrast it with the almost universal absence of the same flags in the UK, except as a negative symbol in much of the anti-EU campaigning which was relatively widespread in the same year. What does that tell us about the collective identity of belonging in the EU, and in particular the boundary between the inside and the outside, when people who seemingly hold it most dear are those deprived of its political membership and socioeconomic rights?

[97] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 45-47.

Imagining the EU as a coherent territorial and legal unit is also highly problematic given that, as Engin Isin and Michael Saward point out[98], there is a myriad of European institutions with different reach and scope, and they all to some extent make up the Union. They also legitimise various aspects of what may be called European citizenship, which is at once broader and narrower than the EU citizenship. The Council of Europe and its European Court of Human Rights, whose membership far exceeds that of the EU and geographically extends far into the Caucasus, Anatolia, and Siberia, make claim to Europeanness which is unrelated to the EU. Many issues pertaining to international security, human rights and democratic freedoms, including election monitoring, are coordinated by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe which reaches out even further than the ECHR and has members or partners on all continents except Antarctica. As far as socioeconomic rights go the picture is similarly convoluted. The EU itself is complemented by the European Economic Area (EEA) which includes all EU member states as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and by the single market that covers the EEA countries and also includes Switzerland, which is not an EEA member. Switzerland does, however, form the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) together with the other three non-EU single market states.

Significant divisions also exist within the EU. The Schengen area where there are no passport controls excludes some of EU member states, including Ireland and the United Kingdom, as well as Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania, but it does include all EFTA countries. The eurozone, where the single currency circulates, also does not include many parts of the EU while, as the ongoing financial crisis in Greece exemplifies, there is a clear and direct link between having the euro – or not – and everyday economic rights and woes of citizens. Finally, the EU has a complex network of governance, perhaps most

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[98] Engin F. Isin, and Michael Saward, "Questions of European citizenship," in *Enacting European Citizenship*, edited by Engin Isin and Michael Saward (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 6.

powerfully signified by the policymaking duopoly of the European Commission and European Parliament, but which also includes a number of other forums.

This led to claims that such institutional – and territorial – complexity means the EU is unlike any nation state, which is in itself beneficial for European democracy as it ensures multiplicity of voices in juridical, political, and socioeconomic debates. Such an argument was recently rehearsed by Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift[99], and it complements an established theoretical orientation which has emerged alongside the Maastricht citizenship itself, and which has held that the diversity of modes of political action available through the nascent EU citizenship opens up opportunities for making claims and therefore may broaden the scope of democratic inclusion[100]. However, it also acknowledges uneven distribution and availability of such new modes of political action, and questions to what extent the EU's diversity genuinely obliterates boundaries and provides new openings, and to what extent it merely reproduces existing boundaries and generates new closures[101].

Further, it is also important to differentiate between the EU and its citizenship, and broader political and juridical regimes that interact with it. Only once we distinguish between institutional diversity and multiple forms of political rights claiming and belonging can we engage with the key question which is about the possibility of European democracy without a clearly defined demos, something that Benhabib states is not possible. Isin and Saward[102] contradict such a view and argue that EU citizenship is fundamentally different from any national forms of it due to the aforementioned territorial

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[99] Amin, Ash and Nigel Thrift, *Arts of the Political: New Openings for the Left* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013): 135-156. See also: Isin and Saward "Questions of European citizenship," 11-13.

[100] Elizabeth Meehan, "Citizenship and the European Community," *Political Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (1993): 172-186.

[101] Eleonore Kofman, "Citizenship for some but not for others: spaces of citizenship in contemporary Europe." *Political Geography* 14, no. 2 (1995): 121-137.

[102] Ibidem.

and institutional complexity, and therefore European democracy does not need a singular and sovereign citizenry. Saward in particular is sceptical of the idea that multiple republican and sovereign demoi are a necessary basis for cosmopolitan, EU citizenship[103]. He argues that Europe as an abstract idea significantly differs from the ideological foundations of any nation state and, more importantly still, "Europe as an institutional assemblage [is] irreducible to the EU[104]." The difference between the EU and European nation states is qualitative rather than quantitative on this view and hence while European democracies may well require some sort of boundaries, the European democracy does not.

This position is vulnerable to critique from the same standpoint that Sassen occupies when she responds to Benhabib, namely that the tension between the national and the supranational relies on overly refined imagination of the national and overly hazy imagination of the supranational. In fact, both conditions are not only equally contingent but, crucially, they are also produced from within – that is, they are generated at sub-national scales – and they are not simply territorial and legal, but also social and symbolic.

This brings me to the second predicament of researching cosmopolitan rights and practices, that is of *scale* at which they unfold. Of course, cosmopolitan practices operate above national borders, but where do they take place? After all, as Doreen Massey once put it, "nothing much happens, bar angels dancing, on the head of a pin[105]." And what about territory? Even if physical borders are not a necessary precondition for democratic relations – although boundaries of one sort or another possibly are – then perhaps they are still indispensable for the relations of hospitality that underpin cosmopolitanism?

[103] Michael Saward, "Enacting citizenship and democracy in Europe," in *Enacting European Citizenship*, edited by Engin Isin and Michael Saward (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 220-237.

[104] Ibidem, 220.

[105] Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (Houndmills and London: Macmillan, 1984): 52.

Given that "the right of hospitality" in the Kantian tradition "delimits civic space by regulating relations among members, strangers and bounded communities[106]," then we might assume that creating borders is indeed a prerequisite for any relationship of welcome. While Kant "sought to overcome some of the limits imposed by the division of the earth's surface by national boundaries" he did so "in a way which bolstered the importance of sovereign states by acknowledging them as the pre-eminent unit through which practices of hosting and visiting were to be organized[107]." The notion of unconditional and conditional hospitality, derived from Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida, seems particularly important here. The unconditional represents an opening, an encounter that produces rather than fills in particular pre-existing spatiotemporal categories, and therefore is reciprocal and shared. This relationship is also a pre-political manifestation of an ethical imperative. The conditional, on the other hand, refers to dealing with incomprehension inherent in any such encounter, when we try to come to terms with who we welcome and why. At that moment hospitality becomes political and boundaries become visible. So in this reading too "hospitality is a virtue that depends upon retaining a semblance of both sovereignty and autonomy, not their negation[108]". When an arrival, encounter, or contact takes place – and they all are intrinsically temporal categories[109] – is when the unforeseen happens, and unconditional welcome is a moment in time where hospitality is mutually iterated. This in turn reconstitutes political belonging and redrafts the boundaries that underwrite the cosmopolitan world. As in Benhabib and Sassen, despite all the aforesaid differences, such temporal encounters are intensely political and carry a promise of new, democratic forms of citizenship and political belonging, and inclusion more broadly.

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[106] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 22.

[107] Dikeç, Mustafa, Nigel Clark and Clive Barnett, "Extending hospitality: giving space, taking time," in *Extending Hospitality: Giving Space, Taking Time*, ed. Mustafa Dikeç, Nigel Clark and Clive Barnett, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009): 5.

[108] Ibidem, p. 9.

[109] Clive Barnett, "Ways of relating: hospitality and the acknowledgement of otherness," *Progress in Human Geography* 29, no. 1 (2005): 5-21.

Debates around Europe and the EU's political, juridical and territorial complexities show that cosmopolitanism and citizenship are profoundly spatial categories, but how do they map onto one another? So far I have briefly discussed supranational citizenship, cosmopolitanism, and democracy in relation to states, borders, and institutions, but how do they relate to inherently uneven subnational scales, and to the more intimate world of embodied and everyday practices and relations? It is relatively easy to point to numerous legal acts mandating EU citizenship and trace their origins, but where can we witness this supranational citizenship being enacted?

The question of scale is relevant here as it is not possible to simply map citizenship as an institutional regime onto ordinary acts. Firstly, Sassen's work on the assemblage of territory, authority and rights problematises attempts to slide up and down the scale of citizenship from the embodied, then the local and the national, to the supranational. Instead, she argues each of these categories is enmeshed in the others[110]. When theorising "mundane practices of statization" of everyday life, Joe Painter[111] shows how this may be so by theorising the mechanism that enables the state to trickle down, and the mundane to trickle up. He observes that "the state is not a structurally coherent object or even a rational abstraction[112]," but instead it is practiced in multiple sites. Such practices can be understood through the concepts of prosaics, which focuses on the everyday in a way that prioritises heterogeneity and openness of such practices of statization over discrete spheres – including public and private, or civic and economic spheres, and so on – and scales of action. In short, the prosaics of stateness "highlights the intrinsic heterogeneity and openness of social life[113]" and its polyphonic and dialogic construction because:

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[110] Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006). Sassen, "Response."

[111] Joe Painter, "Prosaic geographies of stateness." *Political Geography* 25, no. 7 (2006): 752-774.

[112] Ibidem, p. 771.

[113] Ibidem, p. 760.

"The utterances, writings and pronouncements of state officials and institutions not only enter an already dialogized discourse, but they are themselves characterized by heteroglossia. This can be seen easily in the diverse genres and registers of state discourse, consisting as it does of everything from the most solemn legal documents to policy papers, advertisements, political tirades, official labelling regimes for consumer goods, highway signage, public information services, tax demands, public service announcements, school prospectuses and so on[114]."

I held on to this conceptual framing in the empirical part of this project and, at times, it was explicitly mirrored in the narratives of research participants – up to a point when a community organiser and psychologist working with migrants in the statutory care sector said: "of course my work is political, I enact the Mental Health Act on a daily basis[115]." Such an understanding of the state, where spheres and scales of activity are enmeshed in one another – relational – resonates with broader calls for "flat ontologies" in geographic enquiry, which seek to recognise a world of intersecting and overlapping sites of action, instead of a world of horizontal scalability and stability[116]. In practical terms, it also shows that cosmopolitan citizenship might not necessarily be located "above" national citizenship, and it does not necessarily remain in an antagonistic relationship with the "underlying" order of nation states – it also might work through it.

Through Benhabib's work on cosmopolitanism, this section has introduced the concept of democratic iterations as helpful to capture and explain the ongoing transformations of EU citizenship. As the second section showed, its boundaries are constantly being remade, which communitarians approach with caution and cosmopolitans welcome with hope. This section unveiled my conceptual framing of the mechanics of this process

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[114] Ibidem, p. 761.

[115] Interview with Sebastian Maciejewski, 27 April 2016.

[116] Sallie A. Marston, John Paul Jones III, and Keith Woodward, "Human geography without scale," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30, no. 4 (2005): 416-432.

drawing on Benhabib's concepts of democratic iterations and jurisgenerative processes that remake democratic boundaries. However, it also identified geographic blank spots in this framing, and highlighted difficulties in mapping cosmopolitan rights onto empirical and emplaced practices of EU citizenship. The two sections that follow, therefore, introduce two more conceptual tools of enactment and place.

## Enacting citizenship

The discussion presented thus far explored two interrelated issues. The second section of this chapter reviewed an ongoing academic debate on EU citizenship as a legal and political concept. This debate is animated by a tension between two normative orientations. The first one underscores communitarian dimensions of citizenship and takes demos – or multiple demoi – as a unit of analysis. The second one highlights cosmopolitan credentials of EU citizenship and is suspicious of pegging citizenship to any collective subject of rights in particular. It makes the cosmopolitan orientation more useful when exploring rights claims of EU residents, facilitated through EU citizenship. This is so because, firstly, the cosmopolitan orientation resists the closure around the subject of rights, which is inherent in communitarian perspectives as they always and already conceptualise political rights through national frames. Secondly, it puts reshaping boundaries of democratic inclusion through citizenly acts at the heart of enquiry, and hence it is more attuned to emergent modes of making claims and seeking recognition, and to EU citizenship as a process producing supranational space from within states, and through place-based politics specifically.

The third section turned to political and social theory and explored these spatial underpinnings of the cosmopolitan perspective, with particular attention to the role of boundaries, territories, and scales emerging from the double reading of Benhabib and Sassen. Towards the end of that section, the trope of hospitality was also briefly explored to expose spatiotemporal implications of the cosmopolitan perspective. As this discussion suggested, we can glean cosmopolitan transformations of citizenship from processes happening within nation states, and need to attend to not just the spatial, but also temporal

dimensions of cosmopolitan transformations of citizenship. However, I stopped short of developing conceptual tools that would allow me to attend to the specificity, and thus describe and evaluate the unevenness, of these spatiotemporal processes.

This section continues the review of theoretical perspectives on citizenship, and on cosmopolitan and transnational modes of citizenship more specifically, through a critical engagement with acts of citizenship as a conceptual framework that became influential in citizenship studies over the past decade. But first, it reflects on Clive Barnett's critique of the ontologization of politics[117] to substantiate the predominance of accounts of politics and political action articulated in "weak" ontological registers[118] in the remainder of this thesis, and to deflate some ontologically "strong" claims inherent in the original framing of acts of citizenship. It shows that such "weak" accounts are often articulated through the concept of enactment, and explicitly draw on Judith Butler's work on performativity. Then, the section moves on to review acts of citizenship, the conceptual framework emerging from the work of Engin Isin in political theory, which was recently deployed to investigate the EU and European citizenship as a vehicle for claiming rights and political belonging[119]. It reviews the key tenets of this framework and concludes with the work of Catherine Neveu, who rearticulates acts of citizenship in the "feeble" register of the ordinary. In doing so, the section elaborates on my understanding of enactment and temporalities implicit in it.

When investigating enactments of EU citizenship by migrants, it is worth to pay attention to the ontological register in which the analytical process unfolds. Stephen K. White distinguishes between "weak" and "strong" ontologies and states the former are less certain of their claims about the world and, instead, accept that all claims are contestable.

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[117] Clive Barnett, *The Priority of Injustice: Locating Democracy in Critical Theory* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2017).

[118] Stephen K. White, *Sustaining Affirmation: The Strengths of Weak Ontology in Political Theory* (Princeton and Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[119] See studies collected in Isin and Saward, *Enacting European Citizenship*.

However, weak ontologies also accept that such claims are necessary for a reasoned debate, and thus for ethical and political life[120]. Strong ontologies, on the other hand, "carry an underlying assumption of certainty that guides the whole problem of moving from the ontological level to the moral-political[121]." Clive Barnett builds on that argument when articulating his critique of the ontologization of politics[122]. He associates it with agonistic accounts of "the political," which prioritise radical social divisions and theorize conflict as an organising principle of political life. In his view this account is tainted by "a failure to think through the conditions of politics as an ordinary form of action once belief in a privileged agent of universalization (the proletariat) has become untenable[123]." This has significant consequences for the study of political action, given that "almost by definition, observable political practices are always likely to fall short of what is required to qualify as a proper politics in the refined and rather precious sense associated with ontologies of the political[124].

This serious limitation of agonistic accounts of politics is the reason to look into the alternative theorisations of political life offered by the broad scholarship of critical theory and in particular by deliberative democratic thought, sometimes supplemented by references to the tradition of philosophical pragmatism. Such accounts of political action are articulated in weaker ontological registers and call for attention to pluralistic, worldly, and ordinary modes of acting politically and of claiming rights. This may more easily connect a theoretical account of cosmopolitan politics with emergent modes of political action in its diversity, and include ordinary concerns such as housing, health, wellbeing, childcare, or welfare, but also routine political practices such as participation in consultations and voting. This is because such ontologically "weak" accounts are not

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[120] White, *Sustaining Affirmation*, 6-8.

[121] Ibidem, p. 7.

[122] Barnett, *The Priority of Injustice*.

[123] Clive Barnett, "Situating the geographies of injustice in democratic theory," *Geoforum* 43, no. 4 (2012): 677–686.

[124] Barnett, *The Priority of Injustice*, 108.

constrained by the preoccupation with structural oppressions and injustices that exist within the global political economy [125] and instead pay attention to enacted and experienced conditions. These framings are also helpful when fleshing out ethical dimensions of people's matters of concern, many of which are intimately political[126]. They help me understand politics as a way of being together in the world, rather than an encounter inevitably marred by tension and conflict.

Framing political action through ontologically "weak" frameworks opens up possibilities for researching new modes of rights claims and, being driven by the attention to migrant citizen's concerns, from political, through social and economic, to residency issues, it carries a specific ethical commitment. It also has a particular epistemological dimension, as truth is treated here neither as something that needs to be found nor as something that can be traded for opinions altogether[127]. Researchers who provide such accounts of politics often draw on the tradition of philosophical pragmatism to substantiate their claims. Pragmatist truth is neither absolute nor relativist, and it is usually considered a derivative product of the processes of collective problem solving. Scholars working in the pragmatist tradition turn to the ordinary problems of everyday life to find a way in for empirical exploration of what kinds of things matter to people politically, what kinds of concerns are shared, how concerns become shared, and how inclusive political judgements can be made[128]. There is now a body of geographic work on the practices of

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[125] Clive Barnett and Murray Low, "Geography and democracy: an introduction," in *Spaces of Democracy: Geographical Perspectives on Citizenship, Participation and Representation*, ed. Clive Barnett and Murray Low (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2004): 1-22.

[126] Andrew Sayer, *Why Things Matter to People: Social Science, Values and Ethical Life* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 248-249.

[127] John S. Dryzek, "Pragmatism and democracy: in search for deliberative publics," *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 18, no. 1 (2004): 72-74. Liam Harney, Jenny McCurry, James Scott, and Jane Wills, "Developing 'process pragmatism' to underpin engaged research in human geography," *Progress in Human Geography* 40, no. 3 (2016): 1-18.

[128] Harney et al., "Developing 'process pragmatism' to underpin engaged research in human geography," 4.

problem-oriented political participation, emerging spaces of democracy, and minority politics more broadly that takes such accounts of political action as a starting point. This style of enquiry acknowledges the impact of political economic processes on shaping people's lives but, crucially, it does not stop there and embarks on a search for modes of politics that creatively engage with matters of concern and with everyday injustices[129]. In so doing, it prioritises political action, which is located in demands for social justice, to explore the possibilities of political change that these demands might bring.

Framings of political action oriented towards relationality and enactment, and articulated in weak ontological registers, can be found in much of the recent geographical work on democracy. For example, Barnett and Murray Low reflect on contemporary liberal thought to argue for democracy to be understood

> "in relational terms, as a means through which autonomous actors engage with, act for, influence, and remain accountable to other actors, a process carried on through institutional arrangements that embed particular norms of conduct[130]."

Barnett and Low stress the importance of political processes such as participation, representation, and accountability, and in so doing they seek to rehabilitate liberal democratic thought to depart from explanatory accounts of politics – those which seek to explain what political power is and who holds it – and draw our attention to the process in which politics plays out, and ways in which political power is exercised. The fundamental quality of democracy is thus located in relations between identities, interests, institutions, and values, and these can be found at various scales. In this reading, political action is understood as an enactment of a social relation and democracy "is a political

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[129] See for example Clive Barnett and Gary Bridge, "Geographies of radical democracy: agonistic pragmatism and the formation of affected interests," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103, no. 4 (2013): 1022-1040. Jane Wills, "The geography of community and political organization in London today," *Political Geography* 31, no. 2 (2012): 114-126.

[130] Barnett and Low, "Geography and democracy," 14.

form that enables action that is being decisive without being certain, and is therefore open to contestation and revision [131]." This understanding of democratic processes as proceeding from a decision, through contestation, to revision, is not dissimilar to the tension between iteration and variation as the force animating transformations of democratic norms of inclusion – democratic iterations – outlined by Benhabib and discussed in the previous section. It also hints at the fact that citizenship too is decisive but uncertain – precarious and incomplete – and therefore iterative.

A similar approach is found in Michael Saward's work on a reflexive and procedural perspective on democracy. It depicts political action as context-specific, open-ended, and productive of new modes of political engagement which emerge in the process of enacting the meanings of democratic principles [132]. This argument is also framed in weaker ontological registers, and Saward calls his approach anti-foundationalist because while it relies on the notion of democratic principles, the meaning of these principles only becomes clear in the process of their application. Specifically, such meanings are enacted through democratic institutions and devices, which include various voting and consultative exercises, judicial processes, public hearings and so on. While not just any kind of meaning can be enacted in that way, and as a result there are limits to reasonable application of democratic principles, these limits are also subject to negotiation in specific contexts. This notion of the actual meaning of democratic principles conjures up the aforementioned pragmatist account of truth, as specific meanings of such principles are seen as derivative of the process of their application. Further, the reflexive aspect of the relationship between principle and action means that principles too can be seen as time and place specific, and subject to negotiation. Therefore, Saward argues, "democratic principles are primarily things that we do, rather than things or statuses that are conferred[133]." His understanding of democratic principles is influenced by Judith Butler's

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[131] Ibidem, p. 16.

[132] Michael Saward, "Enacting democracy," *Political Studies* 51, no. 1 (2003): 161-179.

[133] Ibidem, p. 164.

work on gender and identity. There, Butler famously rejects the notion of any pre-existing human capacity and any identity aside from that which is enacted – or performed, in her own vocabulary – because "the 'doer' is variably constructed in and through the deed[134]." Any form of democracy is, to Saward, first and foremost an enactment.

Saward's argument overlaps with an academic orientation that has reconceptualised citizenship as an act. It is mainly associated with Engin F. Isin who developed the theory of acts of citizenship writing with Patricia K. Wood[135], Greg M. Nielsen[136], Saward[137], and others. Just like Saward's democratic principles, citizenship is recognised by Isin as something that is done – practiced – and as a process rather than a status. This shifts the attention from the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion towards the dynamics of making claims, and the dynamics of recognition. Enactments of citizenship take place within particular social contexts and involve establishing relations between constitutive groups and constituted political, judicial and administrative institutions, which can enable or constrain collective rights claims. In this process those who do not have the full rights of political membership can nonetheless "constitute themselves as citizens[138]."

This approach to citizenship stems from Isin's earlier work that framed citizenship in terms of otherness, or *alterity*, rather than the more conventional but rigid logic of inclusion and exclusion. Drawing on the work of Emmanuel Levinas, Isin argued that instead of treating citizens and non-citizens as discrete groups,

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[134] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990): 142.

[135] Engin F. Isin and Patricia K. Wood, *Citizenship and Identity* (London, Thousand Oakes and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999).

[136] Isin and Nielsen, *Acts of Citizenship*.

[137] Isin and Saward, *Enacting European Citizenship*.

[138] Rutvica Andrijasevic, "Acts of citizenship as methodology," in *Enacting European Citizenship*, edited by Engin Isin and Michael Saward (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 49.

"the logics of alterity assume overlapping, fluid, contingent, dynamic, and reversible boundaries and positions, where agents engage in solidaristic strategies such as recognition and affiliation, agonistic strategies such as domination and authorisation, or alienating strategies such as disbarment across various positions *within* social space[139]."

In this way, non-citizens are capable of certain types of action that result in their recognition as citizens, and Isin goes on to outline the kinds of spatial relations that can link citizens and non-citizens – strangers, outsiders, aliens – in ways that are mutually constitutive. The space through which these relations emerge, in his view, is not a passive background but becomes a strategic property by which groups and political entities constitute themselves, and thus it is inseparable from the process of group formation. And within that spatial configuration, Isin argues, cities deserve our special attention because they can be seen as assemblages due to the sheer number and density of groups that make claims to, and in, the urban space. Thus, this space becomes instrumental in constituting group identities. In other words, "the city is the battleground through which groups define their identities, stake their claims, wage their battles, and articulate citizenship rights and obligations[140]."

Acts of citizenship are attentive to transnational aspects of claiming rights. In *Citizens Without Frontiers* Isin shows that it is not only the elite, expert professionals who are cosmopolitan and travel across national boundaries but other, non-professional identities such as particular ethnic or labour groups can be, and increasingly are, mobilised for transnational acts of citizenship too. At the same time he stresses that these acts, or rights claims, rely on multiple jurisdictions that are ultimately legitimised by states, thus

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[139] Engin F. Isin, *Being Political: Genealogies of Citizenship* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002): 30.

[140] Ibidem, p. 50.

highlighting the importance of institutional frameworks for enacting rights[141]. Isin's and Michael Saward's edited collection on Europe[142] provides more such examples, where various configurations of ethnicity[143], age[144], sexual identity[145], and the practice of sex work[146] are used for political mobilisation and they show how the assemblage of European institutions, either mandated by the EU or the Council of Europe, enable such rights claims.

A lot more can be said about the diverse ways in which acts of citizenship scholars conceptualise group formation, political action, and the social field, but for the research presented in this thesis the most relevant concern is with the privileged status of the figure of the "activist citizen[147]" through which Isin prioritises political action that disrupts established norms and principles, and draws attention to the most extraordinary, theatrical practices of citizenship. In doing so, he articulates a particular understanding of citizenship that he claims is "creative." To some extent case studies drawing on activist citizenship – struggles of sex workers for recognition by the institutions of the European

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[141] Isin, *Citizens Without Frontiers*.

[142] Isin and Saward, *Enacting European Citizenship*.

[143] Anaïs Faure Atger, "European citizenship revealed: sites, actors and Roma access to justice in the EU," in *Enacting European Citizenship*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 178-194. Claudia Aradau, Jef Huysmans, P.G. Macioti and Vicki Squire, "Mobility interrogating free movement: Roma acts of European citizenship," in *Enacting European Citizenship*, ed. by Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 132-154.

[144] Bahar Rumelili and Fuat Keyman, "Enacting European citizenship beyond the EU: Turkish citizens and their European political practices," in *Enacting European Citizenship*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 66-83.

[145] Kristīne Krūmaa and Ivars Indāns, "Negotiating otherness: *Mozaika* and sexual citizenship," in *Enacting European Citizenship*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 84-110.

[146] Andrijasevic, "Acts of citizenship as methodology."

[147] Engin F. Isin, "Citizenship in flux: the figure of the activist citizen," *Subjectivity* 29, no. 1. (2009): 367–388.

Union[148], or of the people of Kurdistan to have their rights protected by the EU where they have no right of political membership[149] – merely serve to underscore the importance of enactments, instead of membership, as a criterion of democratic inclusion. They also disrupt suggestions that any particular pre-existing requirements have to be in place for citizenship to be practiced.

However, and somewhat problematically, Isin casts the figure of activist citizen against "active citizens who act out already written scripts[150]" by taking part in routine social actions such as voting and engagement with ordinary practices of political participation and representation. This is at odds with the work on spaces of democracy discussed earlier, which acknowledges the role of activism but which also highlights the importance of mundane forms of political participation, such as voting, in setting the ordinary rhythms of democratic practice and, more prosaically, constituting the bodies that ultimately adjudicate rights claims of activist citizens. These rhythms stem from "a commitment to deal with irreconcilable difference and unstable identifications in a peaceable fashion by temporizing conflicts[151]" and, on a practical level, they also mandate many of the institutions that acts of citizenship iteratively relate to, such as national and transnational judicial bodies.

There is a strand of work within the acts of citizenship framework that explores more ordinary and routine modes of enacting citizenship. Catherine Neveu critiques the three distinct representations of citizenship found in the literature: active, activist, and ordinary[152], and argues they all point to "an essential tension of citizenship processes: that

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[148] Andrijasevic, "Acts of citizenship as methodology.".

[149] Rumelili and Keyman, "Enacting European citizenship beyond the EU."

[150] Engin F. Isin, "Theorising acts of citizenship," in *Acts of Citizenship*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Greg M. Nielsen (London: Zed Books, 2008): 38.

[151] Barnett and Low, "Geography and democracy:" 16.

[152] Catherine Neveu, "Practising citizenship from the ordinary to the activist." Catherine Neveu, "Of ordinariness and citizenship processes."

they can, at the same time or successively, discipline or emancipate, enforce norms or open new possibilities for their questioning and transformation[153]."

Active citizenship is portrayed in various ways, but it almost always includes an emphasis on engagements with routine political procedures, such as voting, as its distinct feature. Acts of citizenship retain the notion of politically engaged citizens, but are much more attentive to a creatively rebellious aspect of this engagement. They also open up citizenship to some ordinary practices, for example by analysing political acts in mundane situations such as making political statements on public transport. However, Neveu argues that they are insufficiently attuned to more subtle and routine practices, which she calls the "feeble signals" of citizenship. To her, this is because ordinary is often

"thought of either as these moments when 'nothing happens' in political terms; that is 'nothing' according to a very restrictive definition of politicization that defines it as manifesting interest in the formal political sphere (parties, elections, and public debates), or as 'routines' that reproduce the usual legal and social framework[154]."

She critiques this notion of depoliticised ordinariness and draws on her research of a neighbourhood forum and a young people's festival to make a case for working through the ordinary to understand the pluralistic nature of mundane and routine actions and experiences of citizenship, where understated and diverse politics come to life. In this way, acts of citizenship are seen as more closely related to specific circumstances, concerns, times, and places in which the ordinary unfolds. This argument also deflates the ontologically "strong" account of political action found in acts of citizenship due to their focus on revolutionary disruption, rather than iterative transformation, as the essence of citizenship and democracy. But how can such "feeble signals" of citizenship be known,

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[153] Neveu, "Practising citizenship from the ordinary to the activist," 87.

[154] Ibidem, p. 88

and what is the basis for researching them as political enactments, if they are understated, ordinary, and often conceived as non-political in the first place?

The answer is not easily found in the original framing of acts of citizenship, which claim enactments are political if they go against the grain of "routine social actions that are already instituted" and "introduce a rupture in the given by being creative, unauthorised and unconventional[155]." In this way the notion of a rupture, a break with received norms and institutionalised relations, conceptually demarcates the merely social and the properly political in acts of citizenship. At the same time, as some authors that operationalise this conceptual framework for empirical work point out, the boundary between rupture and reproduction is never entirely clear[156] and, to complicate things further, reproduction can be strangely transformative at times.

The notion of a rupture in Isin's rendering of acts of citizenship follows from the work of Butler, who defines a political enactment as "the moment in which a subject – a person, a collective – asserts a right or entitlement to a liveable life when no such prior authorization exists, when no clearly enabling convention is in place[157]." But for Butler this moment when rights are asserted is to do with reworking the category of those allowed to assert the right – rearticulating or re-enacting it – rather than any particular characteristic of such actions. A political enactment emerges through the doing, and it cannot be known in advance whether an otherwise ordinary act can become a transformative political enactment.

A question remains, however, how empirical window on transformative rights claims can be identified. This brings me to notions of vulnerability and precarity. As I argue below,

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[155] Engin F. Isin, "Claiming European citizenship" in *Enacting European Citizenship*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 24.

[156] Leah Bassel and Catherine Lloyd, "Rupture or reproduction? 'New' citizenship in France," *French Politics* 9, no. 1 (2011): 21-49.

[157] Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York and London, Routledge): 224.

they help us identify moments and places when and where understated and feeble enactments of citizenship, of the kind discussed by Neveu, might emerge.

In his 2011 book *Why Things Matter to People? Social Science, Values and Ethical Life* Andrew Sayer theorises human relation to the world as one of concern. He argues that such relation is never either rational or emotive, but is best described as evaluative. His broader point is that people "reason with emotions," that is, they evaluate things in ways that are both rational and emotional at the same time. The fundamental question that guides his investigation is why things matter to people and how things come to matter, or how concerns emerge in the social field. To answer it, Sayer elaborates on his assertion that "concepts of human agency emphasize the capacity to do things" whereas in fact "our vulnerability is as important as our capacities[158]." This approach conjures up the way Judith Butler theorises vulnerability in *Precarious Life*, where she states that "each of us is constituted politically in part by virtue of the social vulnerability of our bodies – as a site of desire and physical vulnerability, as a site of a publicity at once assertive and exposed[159]." However, for Butler, the idea of vulnerability predominantly illuminates how individual agency is constructed and constrained by discursive practices – that is "the statements which provide a language for talking about something[160]" – and how social conditions and processes manifest through individual bodies. Sayer, on the other hand, chiefly aims to show how vulnerability brings up questions of dignity, autonomy, and respect – in short, how it brings up the question of ethics, wellbeing, and morality into rational equations of social science.

There is nonetheless a degree of convergence between the two scholars: they both align in destabilising the notion of agency as merely a capacity to do things. Instead, they

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[158] Andrew Sayer, *Why Things Matter to People: Social Science, Values and Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 5.

[159] Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London and New York: Verso, 2004): 20.

[160] Allen, "A question of language," 23.

reconfigure agency as a capacity *to be affected* by things as well as a capacity *to act*. Given that affectedness plays out in different registers and gives impulses to diverse modes of action, it is not reducible to wider societal structures or conditions and has to be interrogated on the level of an individual person, as Sayer has it, or an individual body, to draw on Butler's vocabulary. Such reconfiguring of agency as a capacity *to be affected* by things as well as a capacity *to act* is also helpful when resolving the tension between vulnerability – the term Sayer uses – and precarity – which is interchangeably deployed by Butler alongside vulnerability.

When investigating "a place and space for a critical geography of precarity" Louise Waite teases out the overlaps and differences between the two terms and concludes that to most thinkers "the socio-political framing and conceptual depth of the term precarity encapsulates both a condition and a point of mobilisation in response to that condition, whereas risk and vulnerability generally refer to just conditions.[161]" To Sayer, however, the condition of vulnerability is not just sufficient to generate a rallying point, but it is an readily existing point for action. With vulnerability comes concern about one's place in the world and one's relations with others, he argues. Such action is ethical as much as it is political, and it is as much emotive and instinctive as it is rational and strategic. Butler's account of precarity is, on the other hand, predominantly political. She claims precarity "designates the politically induced condition in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence and death[162]." Here, it seems, lies the key difference: vulnerability can and is a source of mobilisation in itself, but the concept of precarity illuminates that this mobilisation is political as it is underpinned by structural inequality. The key implication for my research from this reading is that vulnerabilities, both embodied and social, precipitate action just as much as capabilities do. Thinking through precarity shifts our

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[161] Louise Waite, "A place and space for a critical geography of precarity?", 421.

[162] Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London and New York: Verso, 2009): 25.

attention from individual towards collective vulnerabilities, and towards inequalities that generate it. It thus opens up the inquiry to explicitly political questions.

This section begun with the critique of the "ontologization of politics" to substantiate my preference for exploring rights claims in a "weak" ontological register. It then presented acts of citizenship, that is the conceptual framework emerging from Isin's work that is rooted in political theory but now spans multiple disciplines including geography. This work was recently deployed to investigate the EU and European citizenship as a vehicle for claiming rights[163]. The section then queried some of the ontologically "strong" claims associated with acts of citizenship to ask what makes social practices – political. It then presented the work on "feeble signals" of citizenship as one way of thinking beyond enactments as either a political rupture or depoliticised repetition. Instead, it drew attention to the social condition of vulnerability and the political condition of precarity to show where enactments of citizenship might originate from – namely action against inequality that may draw on either disruptive or instituted means of political participation. In doing so, the section elaborated on my understanding of enactment, as well on the types on enactments that I deem political. There remains a question, however, about their geography. After all, as Philo observed, just like any socio-political relations, vulnerability too has an uneven geography[164]. To explore this unevenness conceptually, the next and final section attends to geography of citizenship.

## Rethinking citizenship geographically

Butler and Sayer's work is fundamental for the argument presented in this thesis, as their concepts of precarity and vulnerability show how political action is generated in the social

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[163] See studies collected in Isin and Saward, *Enacting European Citizenship*.

[164] Chris Philo, "The geographies that wound," *Population, Space and Place* 11 (2005): 441–454.

field. In this sense, it helps trace how the democratic deficit resulting from the exclusion of voting rights from free movement, alongside uneven application of its socioeconomic rights[165], and the threat to residence rights posed by the looming Brexit – all opened up spaces for political participation and mobilisation. This suggests that spaces of exclusion opened up by free movement also generate place-based struggles for inclusion from within member states, and that enactments of citizenship in general are best understood as struggles for equality and inclusion. Such an argument aligns well with cosmopolitan perspectives, discussed in the second and third section, which maintain that the current design of EU citizenship is inherently unstable and that the process of remaking boundaries of inclusion is iterative. The fact that vulnerability has an uneven geography, as argued by Philo[166] and observed in much work on precarity and vulnerability in geography[167], further adds significance to the question about geography of citizenship processes that respond to it.

In order to make sense of this action, my research relies on the theory of acts of citizenship. However, as outlined in the third section, acts of citizenship are more concerned with certain modes of such enactments than others, and their focus on the performative often evacuates spatiotemporal context from enactments[168]. To show a possible way out of that problem, the section ended with a discussion of Neveu's work on "feeble signals[169]" of citizenship, which widens the somewhat narrow range of practices and modes of making claims. Neveu's analysis is focussed on ostensibly depoliticised, ordinary enactments which are usually overlooked out by the more conventional framings of acts of citizenship. This exposes the paradox inherent in acts of citizenship as a framework, where an enactment has to be "creative," and yet it also has

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[165] Charlotte O'Brien, *Unity in Adversity: EU Citizenship, Social Justice and the Cautionary Tale of the UK* (Oxford and Portland: Harts Publishing, 2017).

[166] Philo, "The geographies that wound."

[167] Waite, "A place and space for a critical geography of precarity?"

[168] Staeheli, "Political geography: where's citizenship?"

[169] Neveu, "Practising citizenship from the ordinary to the activist."

to comply with predetermined and narrow criteria of rebellious creativity to be deemed properly political. Neveu's ethnographic work calls out this paradox and offers a way out through attention to ordinary modes of enacting citizenship. It also serves as a reminder that enactments are spatiotemporality embedded.

Acts of citizenship provide a conceptual framework for this research, and analytical tools to explore EU citizenship as a performative process of political transformation, rather than a normative category. However, to attend to the specificity and unevenness of citizenship as a process, this section brings in geographic perspectives on it. The second section has shown that normative approaches alone fail to capture the experiential aspects of citizenship. This is because while some of them gesture towards supranational and subnational spaces in which citizenship operates, they do not explore them. Acts of citizenship, discussed in the fourth section, bring in more specificity insofar as they ask questions about performatively generated spaces of citizenship. However, they sidestep questions about emplaced contexts from which these enactments emerge and upon which they are predicated.

By contrast, geographies of citizenship have a broader outlook. They traditionally involve "examination of the processes by which universes of moral obligation and responsibility are established within states" and investigate "moral geographies of inclusion and exclusion that define and circumscribe citizens and others[170]." They also point to the situated specificity of citizenship and explore its emplaced and historical contexts[171]. Finally, they reveal how multiple intersections of state power, legal frameworks, economic relations, and social networks and infrastructures, are made visible through

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[170] Gearóid Ó Tuathail, "Political geography II: (counter)revolutionary times," *Progress in Human Geography* 20, no. 3(1996): 410.

[171] Sallie A. Marston and Katharyne Mitchell, "Citizens and the state: citizenship formations in space and time," in *Spaces of Democracy: Geographical Perspectives on Citizenship, Participation and Representation*, ed. Clive Barnett and Murray Low (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2004): 93-112.

operations of citizenship. As it will be shown in this section, they often do so through their parallel focus on formal and informal or substantive aspects of citizenship. The former is usually defined as the normative or legal facet of citizenship, which is relatively uniform, while the latter is defined as its practiced and experiential facet, which is inherently uneven.

This section – the final part of this chapter – therefore reviews selected geographic insights on citizenship. It then elaborates on two concepts, of place and presence, to review their use in geographic writing on citizenship, and to explain how they are used in this thesis to identify the three windows onto EU citizenship, presented in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Gaja Maestri and Sarah Hughes trace back contemporary explorations of citizenship to the 1995 special issue of *Political Geography*[172], which picked up on the tension inherent in citizenship as a device for political inclusion operating through exclusion. In their editorial, Joe Painter and Chris Philo described this process as the "denial of citizenship to many non-conforming 'others'[173]" – and migrants residing within nation states fall squarely into this category. Further, Painter and Philo's editorial articulated the distinction between formal and informal dimensions of citizenship[174] to bring up the contrast between "the formal uniformity of citizen rights and obligations with socio-spatial differentiation in the experience of citizenship[175]." This distinction, where "the formal uniformity" broadly maps onto citizenship as a normative concept, influenced much of subsequent work on citizenship where geographers traced unevenness of "the experience of citizenship" to explore political processes. It is partly a reflection of how

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[172] Maestri and Hughes, "Contested spaces of citizenship," 625–639.

[173] Painter and Philo, "Spaces of citizenship," 114.

[174] Ibidem.

[175] Hilda E. Kurtz, and Katherine B. Hankins, "Guest editorial: geographies of citizenship," *Space and Polity* 9, no. 1 (2005): 1.

ostensibly uniform processes are theorised in geography: their formal homogeneity is often deconstructed through a focus on their "highly complex social differentiation[176]."

However, even the notion of formal uniformity of rights is somewhat problematic when they are mandated by overlapping citizenship regimes. The discussion in the first two sections of this chapter has shown this is the case with EU citizenship, which inevitably clashes with national citizenship regimes, and this opens up space for CJEU to resignify its meaning and for citizens themselves to claim rights. What is more, British citizenship is complex and uneven as a legal category with a myriad of statuses that include citizens, nationals, and subjects, and differentiate between territorial and overseas statuses that are a living legacy of the country's colonial past[177]. This problem is already apparent in the same, 1995 issue of *Political Geography*. Eleonore Kofman's paper[178] on the nascent EU citizenship gives a sense of problems to come when it critiques the strong focus of the Maastricht citizenship on the sphere of employment – for it evolved from a device facilitating free movement of labour, rather than people, within the single market. It also questions if the emergent EU citizenship offers any new spaces for democratic inclusion and extension of rights, or merely generates new boundaries to exclude undesirable others.

Thirty years on, these questions are still valid. Firstly, they overlap with concerns over "market citizenship[179]" of the EU, as Charlotte O'Brien recently called the Maastricht package. Secondly, and more generally, these questions relate to the tension between the extension of residence rights, and establishing of boundaries during in this process, which is inherent in citizenship which is "for some but not for others[180]" by definition.

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[176] Doreen Massey, "A global sense of place," *Marxism Today*, June (1991): 26.

[177] Anderson, *Us and Them*, 29-47.

[178] Kofman, "Citizenship for some but not for others," 121-137.

[179] O'Brien, *Unity in Adversity*.

[180] Kofman, "Citizenship for some but not for others."

Another formulation of citizenship in geography developed around that time by Lynn Staeheli, and in the context of globalisation, retains the notion of formal citizenship as "the legal category that nation-states define[181]." It also retains the notion of formal unity of rights, but it introduces the problem of overlapping regimes of rights because "the increased importance of human rights discourses, international norms and the rise of supranational organizations have narrowed the range of the configuration of the formal aspects of citizenship within nations-states[182]." Against this backdrop of uniform but complex formal citizenship, Staeheli pitches substantive citizenship which denotes "the ability to act as a citizen and to be respected as one[183]." She elaborates that both material and ideological conditions feed into substantive citizenship, which manifests in personal autonomy and ability to formulate, articulate, and act on political ideas. Thus, she brings in the collective and relative aspects of citizenship and merges them with notions of personal autonomy. In addition to the distinction between the formal and substantive citizenship, Staeheli thinks through scales and subjects. She argues that, while formal citizenship is largely located on the national scale, substantive citizenship has been mostly delegated to international and local scales. Importantly, she also points out that citizenship processes are not only about "the inclusion of individuals in a polity; they are also about the standing of social groups within it[184]," thus underscoring unevenness of citizenship rights and ongoing struggles for recognition from within states. These struggles reveal the distinction between the *extension* and *realisation* of rights, which Young was shown to theorise as a socio-spatial as well as a normative question[185]. In methodological terms, this implies that even in a single locality there will likely be a diversity of experiences of citizenship that can be investigated. These experiences will be conditions not just by one's citizenship status vis-à-vis a polity, but also their standing within it – their social status.

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[181] Lynn A. Staeheli, "Globalization and the scales of citizenship," *Geography Research Forum* 19 (1999): 60-77.

[182] Ibidem, 67.

[183] Ibidem, 64.

[184] Ibidem, 65.

[185] Young, "Polity and group difference."

In her 2010 report for *Progress in Human Geography*, Staeheli rehearses a similar argument and states that the fundamental geographical questions are less to do with normative designs of citizenship and more to do with the *effects* of citizenship in specific spatiotemporal contexts. For that reason, she calls on researchers to scrutinise "a broader range of settings, agents and institutions[186]" in order to unmask political processes at taking place through citizenship which – resembling Jo Shaw's position discussed earlier – she calls "always a fragmented status[187]." She also engages with acts of citizenship and in this context observes that:

"individuals – seem to have been lost in the approach to citizenship I have tried to develop, in which the relationships, practices, and acts that construct, regulate, and contest citizenship are at least as important as the status assigned to individuals. In this way, citizenship is always in formation, is never static, settled, or complete, and identities or subjectivities as citizen are similarly unstable[188]."

Staeheli is concerned that acts of citizenship, despite their insight into how citizenship is formed, disrupted and reformed, lose sight of the individual – the subject of rights – because of their focus on enactment. As long as the latter is conceptualised through the lens of *performativity* rather than *a performance*, it inevitably privileges the doing over the doer[189]. When designing this research, I similarly struggled with the sense that while the action-oriented accounts of citizenship are immensely useful to researching it, taking the doer out of the deed undermines the whole project of knowing citizenship – for what purpose does citizenship serve, if not to enable right claims of people whose rights are at risk of being violated?

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[186] Staeheli, "Where's citizenship?" 396.

[187] Ibidem, 397.

[188] Ibidem, p. 398-399.

[189] Nicky Gregson and Gillian Rose, "Taking Butler elsewhere: performativities, spatialities and subjectivities," *Environment and Planning D* 18 (2000): 433.

The above accounts of citizenship bear multiple similarities to Sallie A. Marston and Katharyne Mitchell's work on the citizenship formation perspective in geography. Theirs is "an approach to citizenship that recognises it not as a stable and evolving conceptual category, but as a non-static, non-linear social, political, cultural, economic and legal construction[190]." In line with Neveu's argument that citizenship can "discipline or emancipate[191]", Marston and Mitchell's chapter too "recognises citizenship as a process that is both enabling and constraining[192]." This process works through the ordinary and through politicisation of the personal and the intimate.

One of examples Marston and Mitchell draw on, the emancipation of urban middle-class women in Victorian Britain, highlights the importance of identities of these women as mothers and as housewives for the formation of political action. While enacting citizenship through womanhood and motherhood is also a significant trope in work associated with acts of citizenship, for example by Umut Erel[193], Marston and Mitchell explicitly frame this action through the city as a site where transformative political practice took place. They explain it through the relative density of social networks and abundance of social infrastructures – in this case, women's clubs – which enabled political mobilisation. They show how, through their clubs and associations, women pursued self-assumed rights and responsibilities to build a relationship with local and national state institutions. This "enabled them to operate as citizens without actually being ones[194]." And while the women in this movement could definitely be deemed activists

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[190] Staeheli, "Where's citizenship?"

[191] Neveu, "Practising citizenship from the ordinary to the activist," 87.

[192] Marston and Mitchell, "Citizens and the state."

[193] Umut Erel, "Reframing migrant mothers as citizens," in *Citizenship Studies* 5, no. 6-7 (2011): 695-709. Umut Erel, "Transnational care: changing formations of citizenship, family and generation," *Social Politics* 19, no. 1 (2012): 1-14. Umut Erel, "Kurdish migrant mothers in London enacting citizenship," *Citizenship Studies* 17, no. 8 (2013): 970-984.

[194] Ibidem, p. 104.

according to Isin's definition of enacting unwritten scripts, the point of their activism was to achieve voting rights. Aside from their transformative aspiration to routine political participation, this example also illustrates the role of cities with their dense social networks, and of infrastructures of associational life, as vehicles through which this aspiration was developed.

Marston and Mitchell conclude that new citizenship formations reflect the social, economic and political context from which they emerge. They further observe that new scales for citizenship formations open up with increased importance of local and transnational connections and networks. They stress, however, that such connections and networks do not predetermine new citizenship formations. Rather, the argument here is that place matters for producing them and that changes to political economy – which operate through, and transform, social and spatial relations in places – play a crucial role in the emergence of citizenship formations.

A similar account was recently developed by Jonathan Darling, who more emphatically stressed the role of cities which "work within the interstices of the state[195]" to produce new forms of citizenship in the context of migration under the late capitalism. He calls this process the politics of presence given it is underpinned by "claims made through the interweaving of rights to both mobility and political participation within the city[196]." This politics of presence is based on an assumption that the right to political participation is and should be tied to place of residence rather than place of birth. His account is inspired by North American border studies, where Luis Fernandez and Joel Olson proposed the concept of locomotion to capture political claims to transborder mobility rights expressed by undocumented people in cities. Drawing on their ethnographic work in Arizona they argued that "undocumented people are fighting for the right to *come and go* more than

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[195] Darling, "Forced migration and the city," 192.

[196] Darling, "Forced migration and the city," 189.

they are for the right to *come and stay*[197]" and thus rejected the notion of citizenship based on belonging. Instead, they insist on rights of political participation and representation derived from presence – wherever that might be. In contrast, Darling retains the notion of citizenship but argues the politics of presence adds another layer to it and problematises relationship between citizenship, the city, and the state[198].

Darling's argument underscores one pivotal aspect of migrant politics: presence, but it underplays another: absence. And yet, absence is clearly acknowledged as a force animating political action in transnational approaches. Katharyne Mitchell describes transnationalism as a concept capturing the transformation of relations, subjectivities and narratives driven by global capitalist development. It draws attention to the multiplicity of overlapping nation-state frameworks and processes at sub-national scales. In what follows, as Mitchell argues, it "encourages new ways of envisioning the nation, the state and the hyphenated properties and relations of the nation-state[199]." It also shifts focus to emergent scales of social and political belonging, such as multi-local "social fields[200]" or, as Alison Blunt puts it, the "relationships between places migrated from and to[201]."

Kevin Dunn similarly defines transnationality as the relational condition of being "simultaneously mobile and emplaced[202]" to underscore the constitutive role of place of origin and residence for the emergence of transnational fields. And when transnational politics is enacted, mobility (often construed as absence from the place of birth) and place

[197] Fernandez and Olson, "To live, love and work anywhere you please," 415.

[198] Darling, "Forced migration and the city," 192.

[199] Katharyne Mitchell, "Cultural geographies of transnationality," in *Handbook of Cultural Geography*, edited by Kay Anderson, Mona Domosh, Steve Pile, and Nigel Thrift (London: Sage, 2003): 74–87.

[200] Ibidem.

[201] Alison Blunt, "Cultural geographies of migration: mobility, transnationality and diaspora," *Progress in Human Geography* 31, no. 5 (2007): 684–694..

[202] Kevin Dunn, "Embodied transnationalism: bodies in transnational spaces." *Population, Space and Place* 16, no. 1 (2010): 5.

(often construed as presence in the place of residence) are complemented by local, national and transnational institutions, infrastructures, and networks. As Eva Østergaard-Nielsen argues, transnational political practices of migrants:

"are shaped through a multilevel process of institutional channeling constituted by the converging or differing interests of political authorities in not only the country of origin but also the country of settlement, global human rights norms and regimes, as well as the network of other nonstate actors with which migrants' transnational political networks often are intertwined[203]."

For Darling, the politics of presence "reflects a demand for both *participation* and *mobility* that may be enhanced *through* the negotiations of urban life[204]". But rather than privilege urban scales of action and analysis at the expense of national ones, he observes this emergent politics is not inherently urban. Following John Allen's work on topologies of power[205] he argues the politics of presence may simply manifest more forcefully in cities "as sites of 'intensive' relations of power which enfold state authority and challenge topographical distinctions between 'inside' and 'outside'[206]". Ultimately, he views the city as a site where new modes of politics unfold through social networks in relation to state discourses and practices, rather than a site where those who are politically excluded on national scale can somehow participate and have a voice. While this notion is somewhat deficient insofar as it underplays the absence, and the role of migrants' origins and absence for their political persuasions, it is valuable for my research as a methodological insight. It clearly points to places where migrant citizenship can be traced

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[203] Eva Østergaard-Nielsen, "The politics of migrants' transnational political practices," *International Migration Review* 37, no. 3 (2003): 760.

[204] Darling, "Forced migration and the city."

[205] John Allen, "Powerful city networks: more than connections, less than domination and control," Urban Studies 47, no. 13 (2010): 2895–2911. Also see John Allen (2016) *Topologies of Power: Beyond Territory and Networks*. Routledge: Abingdon and New York.

[206] Darling, "Forced migration and the city," 192.

and researched: cities with rich traditions of activism, protest, and participation, and high density of social networks.

To conceptually frame research on EU citizenship through place, I drew on a wealth of geographic insights. To Doreen Massey, space is "constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny[207]" and place is understood not through difference, but through specificity of connections linking it with places and processes beyond it[208]. David Harvey critiques such a framing in his discussion of open and closed places, and claims it fails to account for an absolute aspect of space[209]. His thinking about space – which, following Henri Lefebvre, he first outlined in 1973 in his *Social Justice and the City* – relies on a tripartite division of space into absolute, relative, and relational aspects[210]. In the first, absolute aspect, space is a fixed framework which exists prior and to any objects or processes that inhibit it – and so place exists irrespective of its connections to elsewhere. In the second aspect, "space is relative in a double sense: that there are multiple geometries from which to choose and that the spatial frame depends crucially upon what it is that is being relativized and by whom". Finally, the essence of the third, relational view of space is that processes and relations do not take place in space but produce it. Relational space can be understood as a metaphor or an image, but it escapes any attempts to measure or quantify it from an independent standpoint – because such a standpoint is unlikely to exist[211].

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[207] Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London, Thousand Oakes and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005): 9.

[208] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 1994).

[209] David Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom* (New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2009): 188-201.

[210] Harvey, David (2006) *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development*. London: Verso, p. 121.

[211] Ibidem, p. 121-125.

Harvey argues it is important "to keep the three concepts in dialectical tension with each other and to constantly think through the interplay among them[212]". However, he seems to also agree that some political questions – such as those of political subjectivity – can only be answered from the relational standpoint and that "the coexistence of 'multiple spatialities' in places undermines any simple, unitary sense of place[213]". His critique of Massey's relational sense of place largely relies on his reading of Margaret Kohn, who argues transformative politics emerges from "the social, symbolic and experiential" aspects of spaces being connected through social struggles in place[214]. But in Harvey's view these struggles can only have one ultimate object, the "neoliberal capitalism" and so any other kinds of oppression, or even any alternative framings of it, gets side-lined.

Massey, on the other hand, argues such an elevated view of place-based processes is inherently ethnocentric and skims over differences, not just those that can be attributed to social and cultural factors, but also political and economic ones[215]. As a result, migrant citizenship risks either being reduced to an abstract revolutionary subject or to a residual category that is a derivative by-product of wider political and economic processes. She also sidesteps Harvey's arguments on tripartite division of space by showing that place is never singular anyway, in either its absolute, relative, or relational dimension. This is because there never is "a seamless, coherent identity, a single sense of place which everyone shares" – and if "people have multiple identities then the same point can be made in relation to places[216]." In this way, place emerges as the perfect research site to investigate socio-spatial differentiation of citizenship.

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[212] Ibidem, p. 126.

[213] Harvey, David (2009) *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*. New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, p. 190.

[214] Cited in Ibidem, p. 194.

[215] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 1994): 146-156.

[216] Doreen Massey, "A global sense of place," 28.

Missing out on spatial unevenness of citizenship processes due to the focus on their formal uniformity can be countered by focussing on "particular grounds" of political processes, as Cindi Katz frames it. This serves to identify "a situated, but at the same time scale-jumping and geography-crossing, political response" that political struggles generate[217]. In what resembles Massey's arguments about place, Katz proposes a method of "countertopography", or a critical topography, which "necessarily situates places in their broader context and in relation to other areas or geographic scales, offering a means of understanding structure and process". Such an approach "is driven by the notion that producing a critical topography makes it possible to excavate the layers of process that produce particular places and to see their intersections with material social practices at other scales of analysis[218]".

But how to produce a critical topography of enactments through place? How to identify windows onto EU citizenship robustly? My approach here, which concludes the chapter, is to break up EU citizenship into its key constitutive rights. Chapter 2, in turn, links these rights with specific empirical openings for data collection.

Writing in 1949, Thomas Humphrey Marshall outlined the history of citizenship in Britain and associated its birth with the emergence of civil rights, such as access to justice, in 17th and 18th century. The next stage in the evolution of citizenship was the emergence of political rights of participation and representation in 18th and 19th century. Finally, the growth of public elementary schooling in the late nineteenth century marked the rise of social rights to universal education, healthcare and welfare assistance. At this point, Marshall claimed, the key tension between citizenship and social class emerged. This was because the newly emerged rights of social citizenship sought to constrain capitalism by alleviating class inequalities and promoting measures that would mitigate the excess

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[217] Cindi Katz, "On the grounds of globalization: A topography for feminist political engagement," *Signs* 26, no. 4 (2001): 1216.
[218] Ibidem, 1228.

human cost of capitalist development – the harm and suffering of waged labour and their families. In this sense, "in the twentieth century, citizenship and the capitalist class system have been at war[219]." Marshall saw this war as a proof of "the modern drive towards social equality" and in his view the social rights of citizenship were "the latest phase of an evolution of citizenship which has been in continuous progress for some 250 years[220]."

Marshal also observed this neat tripartite taxonomy of civil, political, and social citizenship was distorted by a fourth category, namely that of industrial citizenship, although he only mentioned it in passing. Described as a mode of exercising political rights by workers and as a device for asserting collective claims to individual entitlements and thus increase the bargaining power, trade unionism did not quite fit in with the other three categories. For that reason Marshall considered the position of trade unions to be "anomalous" rather than a mode of claiming socioeconomic rights, and asserted that unions "created a secondary system of industrial citizenship that is parallel with and supplementary to the system of political citizenship[221]." He called it an anomaly because of his preoccupation with citizenship as a device driving the reconfiguration of social class in Britain. In the case of trade unions, it was clearly the opposite and the most notable aspect of trade unionism was that "freedom of contract […] was exercised not *individually* but *collectively[222]*". In other words, this process of labour organising along the lines delineated by social class resulted in reconfiguration of citizenship.

Indeed, many scholars later observed that Marshall's main concern was the "impact of citizenship on social class, rather than the impact of social classes on the extension of

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[219] Thomas H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class, Forty Years On*, ed. Thomas H. Marshall and Tom Bottomore (London and Concord: Pluto Press, 1992): 18.

[220] Ibidem, 7.

[221] Ibidem, 26.

[222] Wolfgang Streeck, "Industrial citizenship under regime competition: the case of the European works councils," *Journal of European Public Policy* 4, no. 4 (1997): 643.

citizenship[223]." Marshall has been also widely critiqued for remaining awkwardly silent on women and minority issues, as well as the nation state in general – even though citizenship was shown as instrumental to its development [224]. His linear and fundamentally progressive reading of citizenship was also shown to be problematic, because it neglects the possibility of dismantling citizenship rights once acquired, and ignores how citizenship is rearticulated in public discourses as a means of social and economic inclusion and exclusion[225]. However, his idea to break down citizenship by different bundles of rights is helpful for identifying empirical windows onto it.

In a similar manner to citizenship in the UK, EU citizenship also evolved through some key developments. As it was shown at the start of this chapter, it begun as free movement of labour when workers were endowed with equal socioeconomic rights across member states. It was then complemented by the development of electoral and residence rights as the Maastricht package expanded the right of free movement to all citizens, for as long as they exercise Treaty rights. Finally, in the UK context, the EU referendum threatened residence rights as the country begun the process of Brexit.

My research design outlined in the next chapter, therefore, was organised around those three sets, or bundles of rights: electoral in relation to local and external elections[226], as European elections were not scheduled at the time this research was carried out; socioeconomic in relation to migrants rights claims to equal treatment in the workplace and in the community; and finally residence rights in relation to their right to stay being threatened by Brexit.

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[223] Tom Bottomore, *Citizenship and Social Class, Forty Years On*, ed. by Thomas H. Marshall and Tom Bottomore (London and Concord: Pluto Press, 1992): 55.

[224] Sallie A. Marston, "Who are 'the People'? Gender, citizenship, and the making of the American Nation," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 8, no. 4 (1990): 449–58. Also see Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?* 34.

[225] Anderson, *Us and Them*.

[226] Bellamy and Lacey, "Balancing the rights and duties of European and national citizens," 1418.

## Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed literature on migration and citizenship from several disciplines including geography and sociology, legal and political studies, political and social theory, and the interdisciplinary field of migration and citizenship studies. It discussed the accounts of citizenship in these literatures to problematise existing takes on the process through which migrants claim rights. It also outlined the historical and geographical dynamics of EU citizenship specifically to emphasise arguments about its incomplete, fragmented, and uneven – and thus political – construction. The chapter also evaluated spatial assumptions and implications of the cosmopolitan perspective on citizenship, and introduced the notion of democratic iterations to conceptualise civic transformations that are afoot today. Then, it introduced the perspective of acts of citizenship, which informs much of the conceptual framework presented in this thesis. However, it also critically scrutinised tacit assumptions about the ontology of political action inherent in acts of citizenship, and discussed its utility for researching ordinary modes of citizenship. The latter were conceptualised as action precipitated by personal concerns stemming from the universal condition of precarity and vulnerability, which can be discursive or social, and they were linked with geographic literatures on citizenship to situate this study within the discipline. Finally, the chapter proposed breaking up the rights associated with free movement into the bundles of electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights which will provide windows onto enactments of EU citizenship in the thesis. Thus, the study examines the following research question:

- How do EU migrants enact citizenship in the UK?

This question breaks down into the following three sub-questions, which relate to the three windows onto EU citizenship as enactments, or as rights claims:

- How do European residents claim their external and local electoral rights?
- How do European residents claim their social and economic rights?

- How do European residents claim their residence rights during Brexit?

In the following chapter, which focuses on *Doing research* – that is, questions of research design, methodology, and ethics – I outline the course of my empirical work, and show that while we can only understand transformations of citizenship through enactments, or *deeds* to use Butler's vocabulary, we can only learn about them by paying close attention to both routine and rebellious actions of citizens-doers.

# Chapter 2 | Researching citizenship

The previous chapter reviewed literature on citizenship to set out the conceptual framework of this study. This chapter complements it by presenting its methodology, before my research findings are outlined and evaluated in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. This chapter, therefore, provides a reflexive account of the context of this study, and it elaborates on the issues of research design and the choice of Bristol as a research site. In doing do, it further justifies the selection of the three windows onto EU citizenship signalled in Chapter 1, that is electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights. The chapter then summarises the process of data collection and analysis, and concludes with a discussion of consent and anonymity in the context of place-based research. I argue that it is worth going beyond institutionalised modes of informed consent and participant anonymity procedures, and conduct research reflecting on the notions of trust and confidentiality instead.

The central aim of the exposition of research methods presented in this chapter is therefore to show how the analytical framework was applied in the social field. For that reason, comments on reflexivity as part of research methodology, and on positionality in particular, form an important part of this chapter. They are understood first and foremost as means to ensure reliability of social research. This means that, firstly, others can assess the consistency of the research process presented here and, secondly, they can broadly repeat it to further validate or problematise the findings. However, there is a limit to such repetition as the social field never stays still, and it is not possible to replicate ethnographic research at all as too much of it depends on individual relations developed in the process of data collection. Qualitative research findings are validated not through repetition but through critique of the research procedure. This chapter therefore presents the research procedure in detail and shows how observation opportunities and interview participants were identified, what kind of questions were asked, and which broader themes they covered.

Aside from its methodological function, this chapter also serves as a narrative device. It helps link up literatures, theories and concepts reviewed in the previous chapter and the diverse practices of citizenship discussed in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. It also explains how I got to the drawing board – as my work experience preceding this research project fed substantially into its design – and then from the drawing board to community meetings, public rallies, polling stations, and individual interviews that generated data presented and discussed in the empirically-informed chapters. This description aims to bind together the previous chapter – which reviews knowledge derived from existing literatures on precarious citizenship of European migrants and anchors it within the broader work on citizenship in geography and beyond – with the substantive chapters that follow.

Narrative analysis, and biographical perspective[227] specifically, is frequently deployed on these pages but the chapters themselves are organised around the broader tropes of enactments of citizenship *along*, *across* and *beyond* national frames, which were broadly aligned with the practices of *voting*, *organising* and *campaigning* studied with reference to electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights. This way of presenting the material allows me to elaborate on the three different modes of political action off the back of EU citizenship. However, it also disrupts the continuity of the empirical narrative. Hence, before I order my data thematically in the remainder of the thesis, this chapter first describes the progress of my empirical work in a diachronic – sequential – manner.

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[227] Stephanie Taylor, "Narrative as construction and discursive resource," in *Narrative – State of the Art*, ed. Michael Bamberg (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007): 113–122. Roswitha Breckner, "Case-oriented comparative approaches: the biographical perspective as opportunity and challenge in migration research," in *Concepts and Methods in Migration Research: Conference Reader*, ed. Karin Schittenhelm, accessed 2 April 2018, https://www.soz.univie. ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/inst_soziologie/Personen/Institutsmitglieder/Breckner/Breckner_Concepts_and_Methods_in_Migration_Research.pdf.

This chapter therefore shows how my theoretical frames were operationalised for empirical work, and how my initial empirical findings helped recalibrate these frames. The secondary aim is to show how the research unfolded and describe it as a course of events, or a narrative, before these events are reorganised into themes that underpin my key arguments.

This is achieved across five main sections, with the fourth section divided into two sub-sections. The first section, *Researching reflexively*, provides a reflexive account of my research and the personal and social context from which it emerged, and so it serves as a statement about my positionality as a researcher. The second section, *Designing research*, comments on the issues of research design. It reviews studies similar to mine to scope designs and methods they used, and makes a case for place-based case-study research. The third section, *Enacting research*, provides an overview of the process of data collection, which started in May 2015 and concluded in November 2017. It reconstructs this process in a chronological and in a thematic order and, for greater clarity, presents empirical material across four tables. These tables show when and how each record was collected, and they link each record with analytical themes to show how each data point informed the discussion in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Then follows the fourth section on *Researching ethically*, which reflects on my approach to research ethics. It includes two sub-sections: one that predominantly deals with my understanding of informed consent in research, and the second elaborates on the concerns of research anonymity. It argues for a case-by-case approach to anonymity that has not the procedure itself, but the ultimate aim of protecting research participants from harm at heart. While informed consent is a fundamental and non-negotiable aspect of ethical conduct in the vast majority of research scenarios, I argue that obtaining consent for research participation in ethnography is a complex negotiation. I show it is often a function of trust – based on the assumptions about the researcher and their role – rather than a simple transaction where consent is obtained, and information provided and anonymised. Finally, in the section on *Analysing thematically, narratively, and dialogically*, I outline the principles and processes that guided my data analysis and selection of findings, which was an attempt to distil key narratives and tropes from the multiplicity of experiences that I heard about, witnessed, and recorded.

## Researching reflexively

If the dialectical relation between theoretical and practical work – or of enacting theory and of theorising action – is a central aspect of the research processes, then methodology is a tool that helps the researcher mediate between them. In addition, methodology is also the field where the study gets positioned with reference to description, discourse and explanation – even if it is only to negate the possibility of explanation[228] – and the researcher's own positionality and reflexivity. The latter is a backstop against skimming over the surface of the research matter, and is best understood an ongoing process of problematising the research problem and methods themselves. Reflexivity in this sense helps ensure that research findings are more than a derivative of the research practice[229], while feedback loops between the theoretical and methodological frames during data collection and analysis make it easier to retain consistency of the project as further problems are inevitably generated during the research process.

Reflexivity is a practice, but it can also be seen as a model of social science "that embraces not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge[230]." Such a practice differs from positive models that gaze at things and processes from a distance generated through research methods. This essential epistemological difference underscores the role of positionality in reflexive research, which invites a reflection on the fundamental relationship between the object of the study and the key research resource – the researcher

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[228] John David Dewsbury, Paul Harrison, Mitch Rose, and John Wylie, "Enacting geographies," *Geoforum* 33, no. 4 (2002): 437-440.

[229] Máiréad Dunne, John Pryor, and Paul Yates, *Becoming a Researcher: A Companion to the Research Process* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005): 87.

[230] Michael Burawoy, "The extended case method," *Sociological Theory* 16, no. 1 (1998): 5.

themself[231]. This section, therefore, elaborates on the fundamental aspect research design: my own positionality.

My research takes the expansion of the common market and the extension of the free movement to workers from the eight countries admitted at the 2004 enlargement of the EU as the starting point. This event was notable for two reasons. First it was this process that, through the influx of high numbers of new migrant workers, produced new spatial divisions of labour in Britain. Second, it also reconfigured the political landscape through the influx of migrant citizens, even if the latter received much less scholarly attention. For both reasons, the 2004 EU enlargement is a suitable entry point for theoretical reflection on migration and citizenship. However, I was invested in that process in another way as well; I was part of this large migration, having arrived to Bristol in 2006. Just like many of the migrant citizens who took part in my research, initially I came just for a few months. Thinking back to questions that I presented to most of my research participants – the line of inquiry usually started with their background and reasons for moving to the UK – I am not sure whether I could answer them particularly well. I would not have migrated to Bristol if the opening up of the UK's borders for the eight accession countries did not coincide with particular events in my life. I was about to graduate and coming to Britain at that time, usually for a few months, was the kind of gap year that you could afford if you happened to be born in Poland in the 1980s. That said, I also remember a desire to "to see the world[232]," just like Ioanna Laliotou's research participants, and to live in the world. So it is possible I would have left Poland in any case.

Today, as an academic, I would call that desire to see the world a manifestation of visceral cosmopolitanism, which is a cultural but also a political orientation. This is because it has

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[231] Jo Reger, "Emotions, objectivity and voice: an analysis of a 'failed' participant observation," *Women's Studies International Forum* 24, no. 5 (2001): 605-616.

[232] Ioanna Laliotou, "'I want to see the world:' mobility and subjectivity in the European context," in *Women Migrants from East to West: Gender, Mobility and Belonging in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Luisa Passerini, Dawn Lyon, Enrica Capussotti and Ioanna Laliotou (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007): 45-67.

a "normalisation of difference[233]" at its core, and it is an expression of desire to live beyond cultural and national boundaries. Back in 2006 I was considering remote destinations but in the end decided Britain was different enough, and the fact it also suddenly became easy enough to move to must have played a part. As Marek Okólski and John Salt argue in their account of post-2004 migration from Poland to the UK, I was one of the "right people in the right place under right circumstances[234]". That reflection was something I kept in mind later when analysing the interviews: that the answers may not tell me much about what the participants' motivations were at the time, but they will tell me a lot about how they now see themselves, and their former selves.

A few years after my arrival I graduated with another degree and, around that time, I also started working in the third sector and run projects for migrants. Initially I worked with those from Central and Eastern Europe, but the scope of this work quickly expanded to include the most marginalised migrant groups. Much of it was with the Roma, who were arriving from Romania in relatively high numbers, and with women from the Horn of Africa, who were often secondary migrants and EU or EEA passport holders[235]. This work alerted me to multiple socio-spatial processes that comprise EU citizenship in practice, and to diverse ways of claiming its rights.

Many of the migrant citizens I worked with were marginalised and their lives seemed precarious, but they also had a feeble political voice. It was usually articulated, and

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[233] Mica Nava, *Visceral Cosmopolitanism: Gender, Culture and the Normalisation of Difference*, (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007).

[234] Marek Okólski and John Salt, "Polish emigration to the UK after 2004: Why did so many come?" *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 3, no. 2 (2014): 32.

[235] These are mainly Somali and Sudanese nationals who successfully applied for asylum and, subsequently, citizenship in the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. For an account of this migration, based on the case of Somali-Dutch nationals, see: Ilse van Liempt, "'And then one day they *all* moved to Leicester:' the relocation of Somalis from the Netherlands to the UK explained," *Population, Space and Place* 17, no. 3 (2011): 254-266.

sometimes amplified, through community organising which I was part of. I began to suspect this lived experience somehow transforms EU citizenship, and wanted to know more about these transformations. This brought me to Exeter, where a scholarship in geographies of democracy opened up, and that is how I arrived at the drawing board of my doctorate. I commenced research design by trying to link up practical knowledge derived from my work, and theoretical knowledge that I was about to explore.

Despite it coming out of community development work and my strong interest in socioeconomic rights, from the start my research had a strong focus on formal mechanisms of democratic participation and representation – that is on voting and elections. I was always a regular voter and the first election in which I cast a vote was in authoritarian Poland in 1985, when I was only four. I went to the polling station with my father, who was a military officer and so he had to turn out to vote to stay in the service. I did not understand the election, but my dad tried to make it interesting for me. Once inside the voting booth he handed me over the pen dangling off a piece of string. I struggled with it, because the string was too short for my four-year old self, but somehow I managed to cross a box on a sheet of paper. I was not sure which one to cross but my dad told me it did not matter anyway. I took the pen, marked a cross, and was also allowed to put the ballot in the box, the latter being a common sight in Polish polling stations. And thus, I played my negligible part in helping the regime to hang on to power for another term. But then came 1989 when the mood was different as, for the first time, we not only had an election where 35% of the seats were contested in a free ballot, but there was also a campaign that preceded the vote. My parents went to the polling station excitedly and my dad forewarned me that I would not be allowed to vote this time around – because this time around it mattered.

I voted in all elections since I turned 18 but this changed a few years after I had moved to Bristol, although I initially kept voting. An overseas polling station was set up in the

city for each of Poland's presidential and parliamentary elections after 2004[236]. For some time, I even lived opposite the Polish ex-servicemen club set up by world war two veterans, which often hosted the polling station. This proximity was bizarre, as I had never lived quite as close to a Polish polling station as I did in Bristol, and seeing a queue of voters prompted me to queue up myself. But increasingly I felt that Polish matters were not for me to decide as I did not live there anymore and was no longer affected by decisions taken over there, though my friends and relatives were. Local community halls where I started voting in local elections also felt more relatable than the dreamy and manly space of the Polish club, with its walls full of portraits of war and church heroes, and the 1974 football team. Inevitably, reflection on space and spatiality became an integral part of my thinking about politics and citizenship.

I started this chapter with a reflexive account of my research to show how close I felt to processes I sought to evaluate. At first I was part of the single largest wave of EU migration, then I worked with others who were part of it in the community development setting to defend socioeconomic rights of migrants, and finally I decided to map out and make sense of diverse politics enacted through it. In this sense my positionality directly fed into the design of this study, but not so much because of my *identity* as because of my *trajectory* as a migrant and free mover. The spatial perspective is often overplayed in migration research at the expense of the temporal perspective, as indicated in the next section. When designing my research, I sought to engage both.

## Designing research

The previous section elaborated on my position in relation to the research presented here to comment on the implications of my positionality to research design and methodology.

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[236] Interview with polling station presiding officer Krzysztof Lus and consul Sergiusz Wolski, who jointly oversaw presidential elections in Bristol, 24 May 2015.

This section, on the other hand, positions my study with reference to similar studies found in literature, and it traces research designs and methods they relied on. It shows that the world of work often served as an empirical entry point into the lives of EU migrant citizens. This focus was driven by an overrepresentation of new arrivals from Central and Eastern Europe in more affordable neighbourhoods and lower paid sectors of the economy[237] at a particular point in time[238]. In this way spatio-temporal distribution patterns translated into methodological pathways of researching EU migration into the UK. This section advocates a different approach, based on researching citizenship processes unfolding in place – which is itself conceptualised as a process. It outlines and justifies an intensive research design that seeks to investigate modes of citizenship through residence rather than work, and so through place-based research. It then proceeds to justify my choice of Bristol as the research site.

Researching EU migration through work is a common approach for several reasons, and the market-based design of EU citizenship[239] partly justifies the lens of labour mobility rather than free movement. Authors preoccupied with outlining an overarching narrative of the links between labour market restructuring processes and the regulation of labour mobility[240], or the continuum between freedom and unfreedom and the role precarity plays in it[241] either tend to primarily operate on the scale of a state, or switch between national and global perspectives. Their methods combine public and policy discourse

[237] Linda McDowell, Adina Batnitzky and Sarah Dyer "Global flows and local labour markets: precarious employment and migrant workers in the UK." In: *Gendered Lives*, ed. Jacqueline Scott, Shirley Dex and Anke C. Plagnol, (London: Edward Arnold 2012): 123-151.

[238] Marek Okólski and John Salt, "Polish emigration to the UK after 2004."

[239] O'Brien, *Unity in Adversity*.

[240] Standing, Guy (1999) *Global Labour Flexibility: Seeking Distributive Justice*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Anderson, *Us and Them.* Standing, *The Precariat.* Standing, "From denizens to citizens," 83-100.

[241] Hannah Lewis, Peter Dwyer, Stuart Hodkinson and Louise Waite "Hyper-precarious lives: migrants, work and forced labour in the Global North," *Progress in Human Geography* 39, no 5 (2014): 580-600.

analysis to generate qualitative data with an exploration of quantitative data sources such as the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Home Office for Britain, as well as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) when relying on international and comparative perspectives. This strand of literature on migration is not blind to the predicament of a hierarchical concept of scale[242] and questions the indirect relationship between everyday struggles of workers in Britain and the imaginations of national labour markets. It acknowledges that "the national does have relevance, because that is how people are governed, but it is far more complex than the idea of 'the national labour market' depicts[243]," and that it is a hard task to translate clearly visible unfairness into a sense of labour identity and solidarity between workers in different places[244].

Authors who seek to track down situated lives of migrant citizens, on the other hand, do their research within more contained sites and often use a case study approach to theorise transnational migration and labour markets. In their paper exploring labour geographies of London in the aftermath of the 2004 EU enlargement that was followed by a large influx of migrant workers, Jon May and co-authors observe that existing quantitative data sources, such as the LFS and the Census of Population, are inadequate for capturing transient realities of migrant workers' lives in an urban environment[245]. Such quantitative data is a suitable tool for extensive research that seeks to grasp the magnitude of population change and the spatial distribution of populations and socioeconomic processes, but it tells us little about the lived experience of migration. So instead, their paper and the subsequent book by Jane Wills *et al.*[246] build on Saskia Sassen's concept

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[242] Marston et al., "Human geography without scale," 416–432.

[243] Anderson, *Us and Them*, 76.

[244] Standing, "From denizens to citizens," pp. 83-100.

[245] Jon May, Jane Wills, Kavita Datta, Yara Evans, Joanna Herbert and Cathy McIlwaine, "Keeping London working: global cities, the British state, and London's new migrant division of labour," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 32, no. 2 (2007): 151-167.

[246] Wills et al., Global Cities at Work.

of global cities on the one hand, and Doreen Massey's relational politics of place on the other, to study a particular case – that is, new divisions of labour in London – using primarily qualitative methods. They draw on observation as well as structured and semi-structured interviews to address multiple blind spots of extensive research and quantitative analyses, and address the impact of migration on spatial divisions of labour in a global city where "the dynamics and processes that get territorialised are global[247]".

Other studies also show that qualitative approaches are effective in linking political economy and labour geography with "the microscale politics of work[248]" in the context of migration. Their focus might be on a particular employer[249], an industry, trade, or business sector[250], a specific labour segment in a particular city[251], or a specific type of economic activity[252]. These discrete research sites provide entry points for case studies, and case selection is based on the ability to showcase the often hidden and unglamorous aspects of the new spatial division of labour emerging in the context of migration. Such inquiry focussed on specific places and/or particular practices allows authors to work up the scale of social and economic organisation and generalise their findings on the back of information-oriented (as opposed to randomly-selected) and paradigmatic case studies[253] which pick up on selected effects of contemporary labour and migration processes. They do so to unpack the relationship between labour mobility, urban processes, and global

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[247] Saskia Sassen, "The global city: introducing the concept," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 11, no. 2 (2005): 27.

[248] Linda McDowell, Adina Batnitzky, and Sarah Dyer, "Division, segmentation, and interpellation: the embodied labors of migrant workers in a Greater London hotel," *Economic Geography* 83, no. 1 (2007): 21.

[249] Ibidem.

[250] McDowell et al., "Global flows and local labour markets," 123-151.

[251] Wills et al., *Global Cities at Work*.

[252] Kavita Datta, "Risky migrants? Low paid migrant workers coping with financial exclusion in London," *European Urban and Regional Studies* 16, no. 4 (2009): 331–344.

[253] For a discussion of extreme, variation, critical and paradigmatic case selection see Bent Flyvbjerg, "Five misunderstandings about case-study research," *Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 2 (2006): 219-245.

capitalism. In all above examples qualitative case studies include analyses of quantitative data from the relevant local authorities, the LFS, and other quantitative sources – some of which are problematic[254] – and often they also involve an element of policy evaluation. In this way, these research designs combine inductive and deductive approaches to link the lived experience of migrant work with broader changes to local, regional, national and global economies.

What these two strands of migration and labour research have in common is that they to some extent rely on both extensive and intensive approaches. According to Andrew Sayer, extensive research design aims to discover "some of the common properties and general patterns of the population as a whole," while intensive designs are deployed to show how "some casual process works out in a particular case or limited number of cases[255]." In research on migrant workers, extensive designs are relied upon to select case studies that then serve to generate data.

In addition, geographical research in particular frequently draws on Massey's relational politics of place, and casts place as a relational category that is always enmeshed in the network of global connections[256]. However, selecting a particular employer or a segment of the urban labour market as a case study often tells us more about the role a particular sector performs in the wider economy than about migrants themselves. It also silences non-economic relations – cultural, social, symbolic – that are also emplaced. Hence, while

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[254] For example, the Workers Registration Scheme run by the Home Office that is often used to support the claim that EU8 migrant citizens are significantly over-represented in low-paid sectors of the economy was only run between 2004 and 2011. It is estimated to have captured data about roughly 50 percent of EU8 migrants and only covered their first year in Britain, so it provides no insight into medium- and long-term social mobility.

[255] Sayer, *Method in Social Science*, 255.

[256] Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London, Thousand Oakes and New Delhi: Sage, 2005). Doreen Massey, "A counterhegemonic relationality of place," in *Mobile Urbanism: Cities and Policymaking in the Global Age*, ed. Eugene McCann and Kevin War (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011): 1-14.

such an approach provides a clear account of migrants' spatial mobility – people arrive and often get caught up in low-paid, precarious work, experience discrimination, and so on – it seldom accounts for their social mobility in place, or attends to migrants who are not recently arrived. In contrast, ethnographic and biographical approaches can open windows not just onto the spatial (and often etic, in the sense of being determined by the researcher) perspectives but also temporal (and often emic, in the sense of being narrated by research participants) perspectives on migrant life and its politics[257].

My own approach was to learn from labour-oriented literatures but, to go beyond work as the empirical entry point, I chose to develop an intensive research design to trace political activism and rights claims of EU migrant citizens in a place. I sought to capture modes of citizenship be they related to the world of work or not, and be they progressive or reactionary. To do so, I configured place in an open way: not as always and already "stasis and reaction[258]," as Harvey was shown to argue in the final section of the previous chapter, but as a site of social and spatial differentiation.

In this, I followed Massey's concept of place framed through four key tenets. First and foremost, I understand place as a process tied together through a myriad of social interactions, which remain in flux. Secondly, place is not simply an enclosure – though it can be delineated analytically for a variety of purposes, any such boundaries are ephemeral and contingent. Rather, it is constituted through its links to the outside, not the borders separating it from it. Thirdly, place is not singular or harmonious but, rather, it is a field where difference and conflict exist *within* and may drive its politics. And finally, places are specific and this specificity "is continually reproduced" but not "from some long, internalised history[259]." Instead, uneven global development can be productively

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257 Stephanie Taylor, "Narrative as construction and discursive resource." Roswitha Breckner, "Case-oriented comparative approaches: the biographical perspective as opportunity and challenge in migration research."

258 Doreen Massey, "A global sense of place," 26.

259 Ibidem, 29.

thought of as the process that generates specific spatial effects in specific places[260]. Such a concept of place is therefore open to the outside, diverse on the inside, and is best described as an ongoing process of socio-spatial differentiation that produces unique effects – and hence is more than just a mirror of global socio-spatial processes. It is well suited to conducting ethnographic research, because "contemporary ethnography does not simply transcend the local, but rather it shows how place is composed of processes that link a multitude of locales around the globe[261]".

This place-based research design aimed to capture the social and spatial differentiation of EU citizenship and its constituent electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights. Through that, the research aims generate insights on citizenship processes in general. Such a design enables me to research migrants as residents and citizens, and thus political – rather than merely social or economic – actors. It also enables me to investigate a cross-section of different modes of politics enacted through citizenship. Following geographic insights on the roles of cities for the development of migrant politics in general and citizenship formation in particular – as discussed in the fifth section of the previous chapter – I selected a city as the research site where empirical entry points could be identified for ethnographic research, including participant observation as well as individual and group interviews.

As a method, ethnography is at its most powerful when its constituent parts do the work in conjunction and speak to one another. This is so because the fundamental purpose of ethnographic methods "is to understand parts of the world as they are experienced and understood in the everyday lives of people who actually *live them out*[262]." To understand

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[260] Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labour*.

[261] Gregory Feldman, "If ethnography is more than participant-observation, then relations are more than connections: the case for nonlocal ethnography in a world of apparatuses." *Anthropological Theory* 11, no. 4 (2011): 376.

[262] Mike Crang and Ian Cook, *Doing Ethnographies*, (Norwich: Geobooks, 1995): 5. Accessed 7 May 2018, http://dro.dur.ac.uk/202/1/202.pdf?DDD14+dgg0arb+dgg0mac+dul0jk.

how people live things out, it is often inevitable for the researcher to live things out a little for themselves. Ethnographic research is meant to be done in the first person, and the process of data collection becomes an immersive experience. This has profound methodological effects for not just how we do ethnographies, with all the associated issues of reflexivity and positionality, but also how we write them. The work does not easily break down into "the conventional *read*-then-*do*-then-*write* sequence[263]" that is typical for those styles of empirical work that put less emphasis on the researcher's direct participation as the key to unlocking social worlds. But aside from the depth of the ethnographer's involvement with the object of the study, and their role as a research tool, there is also a practical consideration. Ethnographies require long-term engagement, and thus the choice of the research site is important for the project's ultimate success or failure.

The suitable city – research site had to meet several criterions. First, I sought a place that had a history of political activism and engagement and thus could likely be fertile ground for enactments of EU citizenship. Second, I sought a city hosting a wide variety of European migrant citizens to capture diverse enactments of EU citizenship. By that, I meant both demographic variety with representation from multiple nationality groups, and socioeconomic variety that could likely attract different socioeconomic groups of migrant citizens: workers active in manual, service, and knowledge occupations but also students and artists, and so on. And third, I sought a place with a vibrant third sector, engaged city council, and with local elections coming up in 2016 which I initially thought would play a significant role in the study – though in the end it is tangential and informs a minor part of Chapter 3 given the city's political parties did not significantly reach out to EU migrant citizens, and research on overseas voting generated much richer data. Finally, I sought a place that I could reach and thus research easily – a place where I could "live things out." In this sense, the first three criterions were substantive and the fourth was logistical.

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[263] Ibidem, p. 4.

My approach to selecting the city-site was therefore to identify a place that would meet the first three criteria and also be as close as possible to either Bristol or Exeter to enable possibly uninterrupted research engagement over the course of the study. The first test was therefore to establish if Bristol could satisfy the three substantive criteria – and it did.

First, Bristol is not only characterised by vibrant and captivating political life, which includes party politics, political activism, protest, and unrest, but it also has painful and politicised legacies of slave and colonial trade, which are intertwined with its contemporary racial divisions. This city is also interestingly positioned in relation to questions of localism and transnationalism given its strong links to overseas on the one hand – from the West Indies, to East Europe, to South Asia – and its strong desire for devolution and an aspiration to international leadership on the other. In 2012 Bristol was the only one of England's eight core cities to decisively vote in a referendum to create the role of an elected mayor, while all other cities rejected such a proposal at the time. To some extent, this may have been a result of dissatisfaction with governance by a fragmented council led by as many as seven mayors in the decade that led up to the vote. Still, the subsequent election of Independent Mayor George Ferguson and his distinct style of governance, centred on the city's economic modernisation and international standing, had a strong impact on the visibility of leadership and aspirations of Bristol's residents – although it also left many of the city's elected councillors disenfranchised[264].

The city's difficult race relations have long reflected its violent colonial legacy, which perhaps most strongly manifested itself during St. Paul's riots in 1981[265]. In 2015, a report

[264] David Sweeting and Robin Hambleton, "Mayoral Governance in Bristol: An Initial Assessment of Impacts," *Policy Bristol Report* 2/2015, accessed 22 March 2015 from http://www.bris.ac.uk/media-library/sites/policybristol/documents/mayoralgovernance.pdf.

[265] Mario Diani, "Cities in the world: local civil society and global issues in Britain," in *Transnational Protest and Global Activism*, edited by Donatella Della Porta and Sidney Tarrow (New York and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004).

commissioned by the Runnymede Trust showed Bristol was the seventh worst out of the 348 districts of England and Wales on the Index of Multiple Inequality by ethnicity, and it was also the worst scoring core city on the Index[266]. Bristol continued to underperform on equality measures at the time this research took place[267] and was torn by two high-profile decolonisation controversies. One was over the concert hall named after the slave trader and wealthy benefactor Edward Colston, and the other concerned a university building named after Henry Overton Wills III, Bristol's tobacco tycoon who benefitted from slave labour in the supply chain of his firm Impartial Tobacco. However, at the same time the city elected Marvin Rees, the Labour candidate of mixed English and Jamaican descent, as its second mayor. Thus, Rees became Europe's first directly elected mayor of African heritage[268], and his tenure was marked by multiple initiatives related to the city's colonial past and discriminatory present. Before becoming mayor, Rees was a senior public health manager and played an active part in struggles for health equality by race and migrant minorities, as mentioned in Chapter 4 on Organising. He was also quick to reassure and welcome EU migrant citizens in the city following the vote to lave in the EU referendum, as it will be shown in Chapter 5 on Organising. In these ways, the colonial past and discriminatory present in Bristol not only intersect but they also remake the city as a site of intense political struggles that generate its distinct politics.

For that reason, Bristol is often featured as a research site for projects investigating urban politics. Recently, and in contrast to Manchester, Bristol was selected as a "rebel city[269]"

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[266] Nissa Finney and Kitty Lymperopoulou, *Ethnic Differences in Education, Employment, Health and Housing in Districts of England and Wales, 2001−2011* (London: Runnymede, 2015).

[267] Runnymede, *Bristol: A City Divided? Ethnic Minority Disadvantage in Education and Employment* (2017), https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/CoDE%20Briefing%20Bristol%20v2.pdf, accessed 4 January 2020.

[268] Simon Woolley, "Marvin Rees's triumph as mayor defies Bristol's racist past," *The Guardian*, 8 May 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/may/08/marvin-rees-bristol-mayor-racist-past, accessed 4 January 2020.

[269] See David Harvey, *Rebel Cities* (London: Verso, 2012).

for a study of environmental activism and resistance-oriented politics[270]. High level of activism in Bristol are here attributed to several factors. The city's self-perpetuating dynamic plays a part: new activists are attracted to the city and learn activism through it, because of its existing reputation and role as an activist city. There are several permanent organising hubs too, from squats to community centres, and the compactness of the inner city increases density of activist networks. This means there are multiple social and spatial intersections between them[271] as well as between activists and authorities. These specific features of Bristol as a place seem perfectly suited to facilitate the activity of social movements, understood as "networks of informal interaction between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organisations, engaged in a political and/or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity[272]."

The notion of intersecting layers of histories, hubs, and networks of activism as something that underpins political action in Bristol is followed up in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. For example, the chapter on Voting shows how the presence of informal Polish community networks enabled electoral participation of migrant citizens because activists helped authorities organise external polling stations. The chapter on Organising contains several examples how such intersecting histories, hubs, and networks – which act in synergy or adversity – animate enactments of citizenship. An adversarial example includes a Polish grassroot mental health support service emerging as an independent project in response to unwillingness to engage with the questions of mental help by the Polish Catholic mission, and willingness to engage by a mainstream mental health charity organisation. And finally, the chapter on Campaigning shows multiple intersections between (initially) French community organising and consular service, and local electoral and environmental activism, for the emergence of a campaign to defend EU rights of residence.

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[270] Joost De Moor and Yaz Brien, "Why some cities are 'rebel cities' – interview with Yaz Brien about Bristol's resistance scene," *Open Democracy* (2018) https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/why-some-cities-are-rebel-cities-interview-with-yaz-brien-about-bristol-s-r/, accessed on 12 March 2019.

[271] Ibidem.

[272] Mario Diani, "The concept of social movement," *The Sociological Review* 40, no. 1 (1992): 3.

In the context of the Cities of Sanctuary movement, Vojislava Filipcevic Cordes considers Bristol as a rebel city because of the work of its resistance networks do in tandem with elected authorities. It draws on the example of Mayor Rees proposing a translocal refugee support fund jointly through the Global Parliament of Mayors and the Sanctuary movement. She calls that act an example of "translocal urban citizenship that provides representation to cities beyond their nation states[273]." But while the introduction of the post of an elected mayor may have strengthen the city's activist credentials, they have a longer history. When writing about Bristol's "reputation for new social movement activity and a strong community and voluntary sector[274]" Derrick Purdue, Mario Diani and Isobel Lindsay attributed this partly to competition between the city's public and private sectors, and different public authorities. They emphasised the role of social networks, collective identities, and conflictual relations for emergent and sustained activism, and concluded that Bristol was characterised by highly diverse praxis with liberal, entrepreneurial, and anarchist approaches to activism[275]. This makes the city an excellent location to investigate intertwined modes of enacting EU citizenship.

My three substantive criteria for the selection of the research site were: firstly a strong record of political activism, secondly a high level of ethnic and social diversity, and thirdly a vibrant third sector and engaged city council with elections scheduled to take place in 2016. The discussion above shows Bristol met the first criterion and was likely to meet the second and the third. I will elaborate on these in turn.

As for the second criterion, Bristol is ethnically diverse. It counts multiple and sizeable groups of Europeans amongst its citizens too. The 2011 Census data indicate the city's

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[273] Vojislava Filipcevic Cordes, "City sovereignty: urban resistance and rebel cities reconsidered," *Urban Science* 1, no. 3 (2017): 6.

[274] Derrick Purdue, Mario Diani and Isobel Lindsay, "Civic networks in Bristol and Glasgow," *Community Development Journal* 39, no 3 (2004): 277.

[275] Ibidem, 286.

Black and Minority Ethnic population doubled between 2001 and 2011. The largest growth since 2001 – of 11,826 residents – was noted in White Other groups which include EU migrant citizens, and particularly in East Europeans[276]. Of the 428,234 people resident in Bristol at the time of the 2011 Census 9,166 (or 2.1%, against the national average of 1.6% for England and Wales) were born in the countries that joined the EU before 2001, and 10,520 (or 2.5% against the national average of 2%) were born in countries that joined after 2001[277]. Polish was reported as the main European language other than English spoken in the city, followed by French and Spanish. The third most-spoken language in the city overall, behind English and Polish, was Somali – spoken by migrants from the Horn of Africa but also onward African migrants who took citizenship of various EU countries before exercising their rights of free movement and settling in England and Wales[278]. The city saw another sizeable entry of new Polish and other East European migrants in the years after the 2011 Census[279]. Finally, initial online and direct inquiries confirmed multiple social networks and voluntary associations existed in the city and could be productively engaged for researching enactments of EU citizenship. This included an informal network of Polish and East European community workers in the city, as well as formal infrastructures of associational life, such as Polish, Hungarian, French, and German integrative Saturday schools, Polish and French honorary consulates, or overseas polling stations for Polish and Romanian external voters.

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[276] Bristol City Council, *Key Statistics About Bristol From The 2011 Census* (2011), https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/34008/2011%20Census%20Key%20Statistics%20about%20Bristol%20LA%20areaUpdate.pdf/0b99e5ff-6e5b-4219-8177-35a5bfbed738.

[277] Bristol City Council, *2011 Census: Key Statistics About Equalities Communities in Bristol* (2012): https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/34008/2011%20Census%20Key%20Statistics%20About%20Equalities%20Communities.pdf/2c59eeae-b5fa-431d-87b8-f629c241dff6.

[278] van Liempt, "'And then one day they *all* moved to Leicester:'

[279] Bristol City Council, *The Population of Bristol October 2015 – Research Briefing* (Bristol: Bristol City Council, 2015).

Bristol is not only attractive as a research site because of its ethno-demographic fabric, but also its socioeconomic dynamic and longstanding reputation as a prosperous city-region[280]. This economic vibrancy translates into pockets of prosperity and generates employment opportunities in its growing knowledge economy, especially aeronautic, financial, and technology sectors, as well as services. Associated with this is Bristol's reputation for cultural innovation and alternative lifestyles: from food and healthy living to festivals and night life[281]. And yet, despite the gross value added (GDA) indicator puts it among top-performing British cities in terms of wealth creation[282], Bristol also has 26.44% of children living in poverty. This ratio rises to a staggering 47.90% in Lawrence Hill[283], one of the country's poorest, and the city's most diverse wards with significant population of Eastern European migrants, mainly Polish. It became one of my research locations for the work on Voting and is described in further detail in Chapter 3. These contrasts mean that, politically, the city historically switched between the Tory and Labour parties[284] although its politics became increasingly liberal-left since the 2000s and it became firmly Labour, with a strong Green party presence, since mid-2010s.

In the recent years the city raised its profile significantly and embarked on an ambitious economic development programme, with major infrastructure and regeneration projects in the central Temple Meads enterprise quarter, including transport links, business facilities, high-end housing, and an entertainment arena. Bristol was also awarded the 2015 European Green Capital status while Mayor Ferguson's high-profile overseas visits

[280] Martin Boddy at el., "Competitiveness and cohesion in a prosperous city-region: the case of Bristol." In *City Matters: Competitiveness, Cohesion and Urban Governance*, edited by Martin Boddy and Michael Parkinson. (Policy Press: Bristol, 2004): 51-70.

[281] Diani, "Cities in the world," 46-47.

[282] House of Lords, *Enabling Economic Leadership for Cities. House of Lords Library Note* (London: House of Lords, 2014).

[283] As of 2015, see http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/why-end-child-poverty/poverty-in-your-area, accessed on 15th October 2015. Also see and Bristol City Council, *The Population of Bristol October 2015*.

[284] Diani, "Cities in the world," 46.

in the early 2010s saw him declared Britain's most well-travelled mayor outside London by the BBC.[285] The mayor and, for the first time in the city's history, all council seat were up for re-election in May 2016, and EU migrant workers have franchise to vote. In addition, between 2015 and 2016 two Polish external elections were due to be held in the city, first for the country's president and then parliament.

In addition to the ease of logistical access, these three characteristics – political vibrancy, ethnic diversity, and socioeconomic dynamics – made Bristol a suitable research site and promised potential for an interesting case study. A case may refer to a theoretical construct or an empirical unit, and the latter can be a clearly delineated place or period[286]. In this way, place becomes an empirical entry point for theoretically informed analysis. The advantage of a place-based case study method is the depth of insight it offers, and the principal measure of its theoretical utility is whether it is a good exemplar, or a reference point, for other studies of the kind[287]. A case in this sense is an analytical construct: because it can help advance theory and because new theories can be studied with reference to empirical cases[288]. As evidenced above, the case study of political practices of EU migrant citizens in Bristol was showing a wealth of empirical opportunities to generate qualitative data spanning multiple ethnic, social, and political contexts.

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[285] See http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-24909480, accessed on 15th October 2015.

[286] Charles C. Ragin, "Cases of 'what is a case?'" In *What is A Case? Exploring the Foundation of Social Inquiry*, edited by Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 1-18.

[287] Flyvbjerg, Bent. "Five misunderstandings about case-study research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 2 (2006): 219-245.

[288] John Walton, "Making the theoretical case." In *What is A Case? Exploring the Foundation of Social Inquiry*, edited by Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 121-138.

The selection of the research site was meant to enable a critical case study, one that generates data allowing for logical deductions and generalisations – although what kind of a case the researcher ends up with is often not known until the research is done[289]. For the reasons outlined above, which were mainly to do with the *density* and *activity* of its migrant social networks, the vibrancy of its political life, as well as its electoral cycle, Bristol was *likely* to generate a critical case. However, as Bent Flyvbjerg argues, even if a research project designed to yield a critical case does not generate one, it is likely to generate another type of case which can be usefully studied[290].

Bristol was a place where I would have a head start in some ways, as I knew many of the prospective participants and had already worked with some of them. But my work benefitted little from this kind of access: as it turned out in the end, activists whom I had not known were as keen to talk to me as old friends, and as the fieldwork unfolded, many of those I initially intended to interview dropped out from the study as it has followed the three key vectors of political activism: voting, organising and campaigning. In terms of my ethnographic work, then, access meant the ability to return to the research site and to do research iteratively. In short, while the research site had to meet the three basic criteria, it also had to facilitate a go-with-the-flow style of empirical work, instead of a carefully planned in-and-out schedule. Such openness of an intensive research designs makes it responsive to the changing characteristic of the social field and, in case of the research presented here, it allowed me to follow political processes triggered by the EU referendum in June 2016, which was not yet called as the original research design was being developed.

With this in mind, I set on an intensive design for my research that would be *iterative*, that is broad and adaptable enough to explore some of the blind spots in the recent work on migration, labour, citizenship, and political change. These blind spots extend over

[289] Flyvbjerg, "Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research," 219-245.

[290] Ibidem, 231.

political effects of migrant citizenship, which is part of the transformation from denizens to citizens that is pivotal but underexplored in Guy Standing's work[291]. It also covers social effects of these practices and accounts for the fact that migrant EU citizens are not only workers. When they are, they generally start on the lower ranks of the economic ladder but often prove upwardly mobile, and also build support networks to escape socioeconomic wretchedness. These latter acts of support may be the function of vulnerability, but my aim is to refrain from drawing on such self-reliance to either romanticise or dismiss it, but instead to recognise these practices as acts of citizenship. Addressing this blind spot can bring me closer to understanding the subtle, agential dynamic of EU migrant citizenship, which would go beyond the binary of choice and necessity, and allow me to understand migrant political life of in its grounded contexts.

## Enacting research

As shown in the previous section, my research was designed as an intensive study tracing emergent social networks and political processes taking place in Bristol to speak back to the literatures on migration and citizenship. This section shows how it unfolded. It outlines the main strands of data collection oriented towards electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights. It also shows how my research methodology evolved in response to social and political events on the one hand, and my growing understanding of the research field on the other. Further in the section, I trace its temporal trajectory by briefly describing datasets generated through each of the empirical windows onto EU citizenship and highlighting chapters of this thesis where this work is presented and analysed. Then the section elaborates on, and lists, in-depth and on-the-spot interviews carried out in the course of the fieldwork, while its final part elaborates on observational research and presents the overall timeline of the empirical part of this research.

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[291] Standing, "From denizens to citizens," 83-100.

In line with the conceptual framework and its focus on electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights presented in the final section of Chapter 1, research methodology was initially structured through case studies of community organising, labour organising, as well as local and transnational voting. These case studies aimed to generate insight into main types of political practices enacted by EU migrant citizens in Bristol between 2015 and 2016. Over time, the tropes emerging through my research on community organising overlapped with those from labour organising, and mostly articulated socioeconomic, rather than residence rights claims. Hence, data generated through the two research strands on organising was analysed as one case investigating socioeconomic rights claims. It shows how industrial and community relations are intertwined in the lives of migrants and provide a fertile ground for political action. At the same time campaigning emerged as an important mode of civic participation to defend residence rights in the aftermath of the EU referendum in June 2016. In response to unfolding events, I incorporated a case study of campaigning into the data collection process.

To navigate the transient socio-political field, I relied on mapping techniques to generate charts diagramming case studies, their composite elements, and research methods (interviews, observation) used for data collection. A map of the study is attached in Appendix E on page 305 for illustrative purposes.

While organising and campaigning are commonly described as examples of acting politically in literatures drawing on acts of citizenship, voting practices fall outside Isin's original definition of acts of citizenship. This is because Isin draws a clear distinction between active and activist modes of citizenship[292], and argues that engagement in electoral forms of politics is the domain of the former. Enactments of active citizenship, his argument goes, are not political enough to be read as acts of citizenship as they are not sufficiently transformative. Activist citizenship, in this view, has to be "creative." It

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[292] Isin, "Citizenship in flux," 367–388.

unfolds in contrast with "active citizens who act out already written scripts[293]" and voting is singled out as one example of the latter.

While I draw much inspiration from Isin's theory, this aspect is one of the areas that I identified as problematic because of its implications for engaging with citizenship theoretically and empirically. First, as mentioned in Chapter 1, the argument on activist citizenship hinges on a particular understanding of the political, and thus is blind to those enactments of citizenship that do not comply with this ontologised account. Further, it misses out on a fundamental point, which I draw from Seyla Benhabib, that democracy in general and enactments in particular are *iterative* and that "every repetition is a form of variation. Every iteration transforms meaning, adds to it, enriches it in ever-so-subtle ways[294]." Second, it also has empirical implications insofar as it determines that electoral politics is always and already about enacting scripts, and casts it as predictable and stable straitjacket and not a political opening. This view was impossible to square with my preliminary research into voting practices of migrant EU citizens from Poland.

To illustrate the latter point, in Chapter 3 I show how Polish community activists started setting up overseas polling stations in Bristol for each national election, following the 2004 EU enlargement. This account shows that voting is not always equal to enacting a script, and demonstrates how community activists engaged with the embassy and organised themselves to create space for enacting transnational politics in the city, all the while making the city more Polish. I read their reaffirmation of national belonging as a social and cultural process, which is linked to negotiations of identity in the context of migration. However, this reaffirmation of national belonging is enacted from abroad and thus it reshapes the boundaries of belonging, which I identify as a political process: a process of staking the claim to the right to vote despite residing outside the territory directly affected by that vote. Participant observation of overseas voting in Bristol in that

[293] Isin and Nielsen, *Acts of citizenship*, 38.

[294] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 47.

chapter shows that those who turned out were reconstructing their own sense of identity, belonging, and agency through the vote - which is an act of citizenship.

Importantly, there are particular politics at play in overseas voting and in the case studied it has a clear reactionary angle. The inclusion of this mode of enacting citizenship in the analysis broadens the styles of politics traced through this research, and it shows that both progressive and reactionary modes of political participation can and do emerge in the context of migration and EU free movement specifically. Another significant reference that I use to empirically problematise the "enacting scripts" aspect of activist citizenship crops up in Chapter 5, where I show the inherent – and carefully scripted – theatricality of political campaigns run by migrant EU citizens. Voting is an institutionalised practice, but so is labour or community organising work and even political campaigning which, in the case described, swiftly evolved from spontaneous action against injustice to a carefully planned campaign organised around media and lobbying activities that drew on established channels to gain public attention and political influence.

Thus, my method was to research cosmopolitan but territorialised enactments in place. The empirical research was focussed on three key entry points:

- overseas and local polling stations;
- meetings of, and interviews with, community and labour organisers;
- meetings of, and interviews with, campaigners from the3million.

These entry points are outlined in consecutive order in Table 1 alongside research methods, analytical themes, and thesis chapters that correspond with each of them.

I started data collection from participant observation and two on-the-spot interviews during overseas voting in Polish presidential elections in May 2015, hosted by the Polish church in Cotham, followed by a second observation during parliamentary elections in October 2015, which took place at the Polish ex-combatants club in Clifton, and a third observation during local elections in May 2016. These elections allowed for two consecutive observations, given Poland had both presidential and parliamentary votes

scheduled to take place in 2015. They also generated considerable interest historically and attracted thousands of Polish voters from Bristol and the South West of England in the past. Finally, they presented an opportunity to conduct interviews in Polish, therefore ensuring participation of EU migrant citizens who are not necessarily fluent in English.

Data generated through this case study between May 2015 and May 2016 comprised participant observation notes and on-the-spot interview recordings, and it fed into the analytical theme on voting, which is the focus of Chapter 3.

The second case study was associated with EU migrant citizens active within community organisations, voluntary groups, and trade unions. This aspect also initially focussed on Polish nationals, given a vibrant network of third sector activists and professionals of Polish origin was identified at an early stage of the research. The strength and density of Polish networks in the city in not surprising: the 2011 Census data indicate Polish nationals comprise about two-thirds of Eastern Europeans, both in the city and nationally, who arrived following the 2004 EU enlargement. Polish-born residents are the largest minority in Bristol in terms of country of origin and of language, and Polish-born mothers are catching up with Somali-born in terms of new births. Additionally, the city saw a stable inflow of new Polish arrivals in the last decade[295]. The network maintained an email list and held quarterly meetings, each attended by about a dozen participants. I was invited to attend these meetings between December 2015 and September 2017, and identified research participants through it – some of whom I had known through my previous work. I also attended events frequented by city activists such as the closing ceremony of Bristol the European Green Capital, or mayoral and police commissioner election hustings dedicated to ethnic and race equality. In the course of the research, two trade unionists from Italy were also identified and interviewed for the project.

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[295] Bristol City Council (2015) *The Population of Bristol: October 2015*. Bristol: Bristol City Council.

I engaged in an ethnography of Polish activism to explore relations along and across their national frames in a manner which Giles Mohan terms "a constructivist methodology." He used that term to describe a practice of working with members of a diaspora "to identify and map their diasporic networks[296]" which are both local and transnational. A similar approach was used in a larger project by Mohan, Alan Cochrane, Sarah Neal and Katy Bennett to investigate "living multiculture" through participant observation and in-depth and focus-group interviews with a wide range of actors in Milton Keynes[297]. Much of the research on diasporas highlights the elite-based and self-selecting model of migrant networks and institutions, and the risk of replicating that profile through ill-chosen research methods. This is because "activism within these groups is a way of expressing and cementing status, which means that their standpoint on diasporic relationships must be taken as partial and particular[298]". This links with the issue of gatekeepers in research more broadly[299], that is the risk that researchers, reliant on brokers of access, unwittingly generate partial accounts of diasporic relations. My strategy to sidestep this risk was to not rely on a single broker but diversified networks that included Polish diaspora as well as other EU migrant citizens involved in labour and community organising in Bristol.

Data generated through this case study between December 2015 and May 2017 comprised in-depth interview recordings, with some interviews supported by participant observation notes from the meetings of the network of Polish community activists and professionals. The results fed into the analytical theme on organising, which is the focus of Chapter 4.

The third and final case study was added in response to emergent campaigning as the EU referendum was announced following the general election in May 2015. This presented a

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[296] Mohan, "Embedded cosmopolitanism and the politics of obligation."

[297] Neal et al., "Living multiculture."

[298] Ibidem, 873.

[299] Tina Miller and Linda Bell, "Consenting to what? Issues of access, gate-keeping and 'informed' consent," in *Ethics in Qualitative Research*, ed. Tina Miller, Maxine Birch, Melanie Mauthner and Julie Jessop (Sage: Los Angeles, London and New Delhi, 2012): 54-69.

unique opportunity to trace mobilisation of EU migrant citizens before and after the vote, and provided another link between active and activist styles of citizenship. The referendum campaign was relatively short. I started participant observation during events and rallies in Bristol expecting they would attract a representation of EU migrant citizens in May 2016. My focus was on events organised locally by a national campaign called Another Europe is Possible given it explicitly campaigned in favour of freedom of movement, while the main Stronger In campaign sought to sidestep the issue. I conducted participant observation during organisation meetings and campaign events organised by Another Europe is Possible in the run up to the EU referendum. After the referendum, I attended a series of rallies and meetings from which the3million campaign emerged to protect the rights of EU migrant citizens during and after Brexit. This encounter was crucial, given the3million's explicit claims to EU citizenship. I became a founder-member of the group and attended over 20 organisational meetings as well as campaign and lobbying events organised by it. Finally, I also interviewed its key members.

Data generated through this case study between May 2016 and November 2017 comprised participant observation notes and in-depth interview recordings, and it fed into the analytical theme on campaigning, which is the focus of Chapter 5.

The above case studies are outlined in Table 1 on the next page with their corresponding research methods, analytical themes, and thesis chapters.

| Case study | Method | Theme | Chapter |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overseas and local voting by Polish migrant citizens | Participant observation during external (n=2) and local (n=1) elections | Voting | 3 |
| | On-the-spot interviews during external (n=15) and local (n=8) elections | | |
| Polish and other EU migrant citizens active in community work, voluntary associations, and trade unions | In-depth semi-structured interviews focussed on labour (n=8) and community (n=11) activism as modes of claiming rights | Organising | 4 |
| | Participant observation during Polish activists' meetings (n=6), city activists' gatherings and hustings (n=3) and a trade union community event (n=1) | | |
| Pro-EU campaigns before the EU referendum, and campaigns to protect EU the rights of migrant citizens following the referendum | In-depth semi-structured interviews with activists from the3million campaign (n=7) | Campaigning | 5 |
| | On-the-spot interviews to gauge reactions of British citizens, as well as Polish and other EU migrant citizens, to the EU referendum and its result (n=20). | | |
| | Participant observation during Another Europe is Possible organisational meetings (n=3) and campaign events (n=3) | | |
| | Participant observation during the3million organisational meetings (n=23) the mass lobby of parliament (n=2) meeting with an MP (n=1) and a select committee hearing (n=1) | | |

Table 1: Empirical entry-points and corresponding research methods, analytical themes, and thesis chapters.

Research methodology, as outlined in this chapter, is approached as a critical practice of selecting case studies and reflection on the researcher's standpoint in exploring them. Research methods refer more specifically to the practice of organising data collection in a way that is conductive to an ongoing analytical reflection allowing for recalibrating this

standpoint if needed on the one hand, and an assessment of the level of data saturation on the other.

Semi-structured interviews and qualitative research methods in general are useful for understanding how political networks mobilise. However, an open-ended character of these methods also makes it hard to specify the number of interviews and observations in advance. Instead, ongoing analytical work is required during data collection to identify the point of data saturation[300]. This work may also problematise the case studied given, as Charles C. Ragin puts it, "researchers probably will not know what their cases are until the research, including the task of writing up the results, is virtually completed[301]." He therefore advocates "working through the relation of ideas to evidence[302]." This makes for a strong argument for starting the analysis and drafting initial conclusions relatively early in the research process[303].

An open, intensive, and iterative design of this research translated into a slow-paced research practice. Ethnographic work begun in May 2015 with participant observation and interviews which fed into Chapter 3 on Voting, and it concluded in September 2017 with participant observation which fed into Chapter 5 on Campaigning. I conducted my first in-depth interview on 18th January 2016 with Rosanna Radlinska-Tyma, a community activist involved with the Integrative Saturday School for Polish-speaking

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[300] Howard S. Becker, "How many qualitative interviews is enough?" In How many qualitative interviews is enough? Expert voices and early career reflections on sampling and cases in qualitative research, ed. Howard S. Baker, Sarah Elsie, and Rosalind Edwards. National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper (2012), accessed 1 October 2015, eprints. ncrm.ac.uk/2273/4/how_many_interviews.pdf

[301] Charles C. Ragin, "Cases of 'what is a case?'" In *What is A Case? Exploring the Foundation of Social Inquiry*, ed. Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 10.

[302] Ibidem.

[303] Becker, "How many qualitative interviews is enough," 15.

children in Bristol. My final in-depth interview was conducted on 6th November 2017, so almost two years after the first one. A list of in-depth interviews is shown in Table 2.

| | First name | Surname / organisation | Pseudonym | Activism 1 | Activism 2 | Interview date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Rosanna | Radlinska-Tyma | N/A | Community | | 18 Jan 2016 |
| 2 | MD | ISSB | MARIA | Community | | 20 Feb 2016 |
| 3 | Mirela | Olejnik | N/A | Community | | 20 Feb 2016 |
| 4 | Tony | Dyer | N/A | Community | Politics | 4 Apr 2016 |
| 5 | Sebastian | Maciejewski | N/A | Community | | 27 Apr 2016 |
| 6 | OM | GP | ANIA | Community | | 13 May 2016 |
| 7 | AB | WLHC | ULA | Community | | 4 Jul 2016 |
| 8 | Nigel | Costley | N/A | Labour | | 7 Aug 2016 |
| 9 | SS | USDAW | MARCIN | Labour | | 10 Aug 2016 |
| 10 | AZ | GMB | BASIA | Labour | | 20 Aug 2016 |
| 11 | KS | NSZZ-S | JUREK | Labour | | 26 Oct 2016 |
| 12 | Katia | Widlak | N/A | EU Citizenship | Labour | 21 Feb 2017 |
| 13 | Christophe | Gaspard | N/A | EU Citizenship | | 24 Feb 2017 |
| 14 | Nicolas | Hatton | N/A | EU Citizenship | | 24 Feb 2017 |
| 15 | Aberto | D'Elia | N/A | Labour | | 8 Mar 2017 |
| 16 | MKM | BCC | LENA | Community | | 29 Mar 2017 |
| 17 | AA | GMB | IZA | Labour | Community | 12 Apr 2017 |
| 18 | PS | IWW | CAMILA | Labour | Community | 26 May 2017 |
| 19 | Anne-Laure | Donskoy | N/A | EU Citizenship | | 29 May 2017 |
| 20 | AE | CAB | HANNA | Community | | 31 May 2017 |
| 21 | Monique | Hawkins | N/A | EU Citizenship | | 6 Nov 2017 |
| 22 | Maike | Bohn | N/A | EU Citizenship | | 10 Nov 2017 |

Table 2: The list of in-depth interviews and their participants by date.

I also conducted on-the-spot interviews[304] during events where participation was casual and embedded in the everyday to capture "raw emotions[305]" that people experience in social settings. This work was centred around polling stations during overseas and local elections, and during the EU referendum, as well as Polish shops at the time of local elections and the EU referendum. These interviews are listed in Table 3 overleaf.

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[304] Robyn Longhurst, "Semi-structured interviews and focus groups," in *Key Methods in Geography*, ed. Nicholas Clifford, Meghan Cope, Thomas Gillespie, and Shaun French (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi and Singapore: Sage, 2016): 124.

[305] Nichola Wood, Michelle Duffy, and Susan J. Smith, "The art of doing (geographies of) music," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 5 (2007): 879.

| | Pseudonym | Event | File | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Krzysztof | Overseas elections | Research notes | 24 May 2015 |
| 2 | Konsul | Overseas elections | Research notes | 24 May 2015 |
| 3 | Paulina | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 1&2 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 4 | Hubert | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 1&2 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 5 | Katarzyna | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 3&4 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 6 | Staszek | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 3&4 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 7 | Paweł | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 5 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 8 | Mariusz | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 6-8 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 9 | Janusz | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 6-8 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 10 | Asia | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 6-8 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 11 | Wiktor | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 9&10 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 12 | Robert | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 9&10 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 13 | Łukasz | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 11 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 14 | Tomasz | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 12&13 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 15 | Magda | Overseas elections | Polish elections 25Oct2015 INT 12&13 | 25 Oct 2015 |
| 16 | Dawid | Local elections | Local elect 5May2016 INT 1 Pol | 5 May 2016 |
| 17 | Luca | Local elections | Local elect 5May2016 INT 2 Hun | 5 May 2016 |
| 18 | Ala | Local elections | Local elect 5May2016 INT 3 Pol | 5 May 2016 |
| 19 | Basia | Local elections | Local elect 5May2016 INT 4 Pol | 5 May 2016 |
| 20 | Dariusz | Local elections | Research notes | 5 May 2016 |
| 21 | Helena | Local elections | Research notes | 5 May 2016 |
| 22 | Grzesiek | Local elections | Research notes | 5 May 2016 |
| 23 | Agata | Local elections | Research notes | 5 May 2016 |
| 24 | Janice | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 1 Brit | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 25 | Amy | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 2 Brit | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 26 | Michael | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 3 Brit | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 27 | Ben | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 4 Brit | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 28 | Edyta | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 5 Pol | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 29 | Maciej | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 6 Pol | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 30 | Marta | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 7 Pol | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 31 | Rafal | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 8 Pol Cont | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 32 | Jurek | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 9 Pol | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 33 | Roman | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 10 Pol | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 34 | Abdi | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 11 Som | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 35 | Muhammad | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 12 Ned/Som | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 36 | Aisha | EU referendum | EUref 23Jun2016 INT 13 MENA | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 37 | Fatou | EU referendum | Euref 23Jun2016 INT 14 Sen | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 38 | John | EU referendum | Euref 23Jun2016 INT 15 Brit | 23 Jun 2016 |
| 39 | Edyta | EU referendum response | EUref 24Jun2016 INT 1 Pol | 24 Jun 2016 |
| 40 | Nikodem | EU referendum response | EUref 24Jun2016 INT 2 Pol | 24 Jun 2016 |
| 41 | Marcin | EU referendum response | EUref 24Jun2016 INT 3 Pol | 24 Jun 2016 |
| 42 | Kasia | EU referendum response | EUref 24Jun2016 INT 4 Pol | 24 Jun 2016 |
| 43 | Grzegorz | EU referendum response | EUref 24Jun2016 INT 5 Pol Cont | 24 Jun 2016 |

Table 3: The list of on-the-spot interviews and their participants by date.

While on-the-spot interviews have been mainly used in geographies of arts and music to understand "bodily rhythms[306]" of performance on the one hand and the emotive and

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[306] Michelle Duffy, Gordon Waitt, Andrew Gorman-Murray, and Chris Gibson, "Bodily rhythms: corporeal capacities to engage with festival spaces." *Emotion, Space and Society* 4, no. 1 (2011): 17-24.

relatively unprocessed response to artistic performance on the other, in my work they proved effective in soliciting emotional accounts of what voting meant to those who perform it, and what the EU referendum meant to those who are affected by it but did not have the right to participate in it. This method proved effective for capturing emotions experienced at events and spontaneous responses to them, while in-depth interviews were used to give more articulate and reflexive accounts[307].

The extended timeframe of data collection for this research was partly dictated by the socio-political context in which it took place. As I show more fully later in this section, in response to the referendum on the UK's membership in the EU, held on 23rd June 2016, and the activism of (some of the) EU migrant citizens that ensued, I incorporated a case study of enacting citizenship through campaigning and allowed one year to observe and document how this mode of civic participation develops. Given its explicit reference to EU citizenship as a fundamental right, it was of immediate relevance to this research.

My fieldwork started with participant observation and two on-the-spot interviews, which I documented through research notes, and which took place during the Polish presidential election in Bristol on 24th May 2015. I conducted an additional observation and 13 more on-the-spot interviews during the parliamentary election on 25th October 2015. These data, supplemented by participant observation during local elections on 5th May 2016, provides the empirical substance for the discussion presented in Chapter 3.

Overseas elections were a more convenient entry point than local elections given all of their participants were migrant citizens. For local election, I arranged with the organisers of a husting on ethnic and race equality to help me approach EU migrant citizens that took part in it through the event's booking list. I also arranged with a person living in a block of flats, were informal gatherings of residents from Central and Eastern Europe were hosted, to allow me participate in their meetings where city politics and local

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[307] Wood et al., "The art of doing (geographies of) music," 879.

elections were discussed. At the same time, however, the dataset on voting was already saturated – I stopped getting new insights in the process – and a new theme opened up with the whirlwind of the referendum on EU membership. Between May and June that year I conducted participant observation during campaign meetings and events of Another Europe is Possible, a campaign that strongly stressed its democratic and open border credentials. On one occasion they were attended by EU migrant citizens – two Spaniards – but they did not join the campaign. I also conducted observation and on-the-spot interviews near polling stations and Polish shops on the voting day and the morning after. Finally, within days of the vote an unprecedented mobilisation of EU migrant citizens became visible in the city. Following two events – a rally of over 2,000 people at College Green opposite the City Hall on 28th June, and a meeting organised by Nicolas Hatton, the French honorary consul in Bristol, at the Bradbury Hall in Henleaze on 10th July and attended by around 200 people – I revised my plan to follow up on local elections participation to seek what other possible themes could be explored through a case study of campaigning. This is broadening of the research focus, which sought to accommodate emergent forms of political action is reflected in the data collection timeline in Table 4.

| Year | Month | Voting | | Organising | | Campaigning | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Observation | Interviews | Observation | Interviews | Observation | Interviews |
| 2015 | May | Elections | On-the-spot | | | | |
| | Jun | | | | | | |
| | Jul | | | | | | |
| | Aug | | | | | | |
| | Sep | | | | | | |
| | Oct | Elections | On-the-spot | | | | |
| | Nov | | | | | | |
| | Dec | | | Polish network | | | |
| 2016 | Jan | | | | In-depth | | |
| | Feb | | | Green & Unions events | In-depth | | |
| | Mar | | | | | | |
| | Apr | Hustings | | Hustings | In-depth | Another Europe events | |
| | May | Elections | On-the-spot | Polish network | In-depth | Another Europe events | |
| | Jun | | | | | citizens' rights events | On-the-spot |
| | Jul | | | Polish network | In-depth | citizens' rights events | |
| | Aug | | | | In-depth | | |
| | Sep | | | Polish network | | the3million meetings | |
| | Oct | | | | In-depth | the3million events | |
| | Nov | | | | | the3million meetings | |
| | Dec | | | | | the3million meetings | |
| 2017 | Jan | | | | | the3million meetings | |
| | Feb | | | | | the3million mass lobby | In-depth |
| | Mar | | | Polish network | In-depth | the3million meetings | |
| | Apr | | | | In-depth | the3million meetings | |
| | May | | | Polish network | In-depth | the3million meetings | In-depth |
| | Jun | | | | | the3million meetings | |
| | Jul | | | | | the3million meetings | |
| | Aug | | | | | | |
| | Sep | | | | | the3million mass lobby | |
| | Oct | | | | | | |
| | Nov | | | | | | In-depth |

Table 4: Empirical research timeline shown by year, month, theme and method.

The last event to generate data that informs my analysis was a mass lobby of parliament organised as part of a day of action by British in Europe and the3million campaigns on 13th September 2017. This is one of three events that took place in London but were organised from Bristol, and hence are included in my analysis. The other two are a session of the House of Commons Committee for Exiting the EU on 18 January 2017, where the3million activists gave evidence, and the first mass lobby of parliament that was organised by the3million, Unison and New Europeans on 20th February of the same year. While they took place out of Bristol, these events were planned in Bristol, and provide good reference point to discuss the reach of citizenship practices. Following the mass lobby in September 2017, I concluded participant observation and finished the process of data collection with two final in-depth interviews in November 2017.


## Researching ethically

During the prolonged research process, I attended multiple events, rallies and meetings where events of relevance to my research problems took place, and I recorded events unfolding in front of me. These records became part of an expanding dataset that I sieved through to reflect on my practice and to understand how this data relates to the research question, both in terms of problematisation and explanation. At the same time, I worked to identify people whose knowledge could contextualise and enhance participant observation through in-depth interviews. Ethical consideration was an important part of this practice, and it revolved around two key themes: how to ensure research participants can make an informed decision on whether they want to take part in my research or not, and how to ensure their participation does not go back to harm them. This section elaborates on these ethical concerns. First, I reflect on my data collection practice in general, and then I discuss the questions of consent and confidentiality more specifically across two consecutive sub-sections. This serves as a vehicle for rethinking research as an ethical practice in a holistic way, given confidentiality and consent are intertwined.

Overall, I carried out 22 in-depth, semi-structured interviews using an interview schedule adopted for each participant from a general topic guide I developed at the start of the research[308]. Interview participants included community activists or organisers (n=11), trade union activists or officers (n=8), and political campaigners (n=6). The sum comes to 25 as three people interviewed had double roles: two were active in labour and community organising, and one was heavily involved in labour organising while also campaigning on EU migrant citizens' rights with the3million. The vast majority of interviews were carried out in Bristol, but one was in Swindon (with a labour organiser whose work covered Bristol and the South West of England) and two in London (with activists who were instrumental in the growth of the3million campaign, which started in Bristol but had a national, and then transnational reach).

Interview participants for the community and labour organising strands of the research were mainly identified and recruited through the Polish community workers' network. I knew some of them through my work in community development before the PhD project had started. A minority were identified through participatory observation at various events in Bristol throughout 2016. One of the interview participants, a labour organiser, was recruited from amongst my social contacts and subsequently she helped me identify and recruit one more labour organiser. On the other hand, those whom I interviewed in the political campaigning strand of the empirical work, that is activists from the3million campaign, were all identified and recruited through participant observation at its organisational meetings and public events. As described in detail in Chapter 5, I attended the first meeting from which the campaign emerged and most of the subsequent meetings of core organisers for the first year of the group's activity. My first interviews with the3million activists took place in February 2017, so after seven months of participant observation during fortnightly meetings of the campaign's executive team.

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[308] The general topic guide is shown in Appendix C.

My participant observation practice was grounded and I did not seek a vantage point that would be nowhere, the non-place occupied by positivist social science. Instead, I conducted my observations from whereabouts. As shown in the next section, I started from more familiar settings, such as the network of Polish community organisers which kept meeting in various community venues across Bristol, and then moved further afield to locations and groups that were less familiar to me, or which did not exist when the project started. The ethics of my position as a researcher was always based on consent, but often this consent was underpinned by trust more than anything else. Those who knew me through years of community development work did not much care about what it said on research information sheet, and seldom gave it any attention. As the ethnography grew in scope, I started working with more diverse groups of participants, and my approach to ensuring consent and recording data depended on the type of event and its public, as well as my relationship with its organisers or participants. This working from whereabouts was a diversified strategy, and it ranged from participation in small meetings, where I barely spoke and acted as a somewhat anonymous and largely passive participant, to addressing a rally of 2,000 people from the stage set up in front of Bristol City Hall.

This was an exploratory approach, and as such it carried a set of challenges. In particular, around the time of the EU referendum my participation in diverse and unrelated events generated more research opportunities than I could meaningfully engage with. The key challenge was therefore to identify which political processes exactly warranted further exploration through repeated and sustained participant observation and in-depth interviews. The only way to deal with this issue was through reflexive research practice. I analysed all the loose ends I was coming across and selected those that presented the most promising openings for further exploration and data collection. This relied on judgement as the key method: I went to places where EU migrant citizens' rights claims could manifest and where rights could be claimed, but only followed up on events where the initial observation yielded positive results.

The most salient example of this approach, and difficult choices that were often part of it, was the abovementioned post-referendum rally on 28th June 2016. It was initially called "Bristol Stays" but its name was changed by its organiser, an environmental campaigner

Alasdair Cameron, to "Stand United: Bristol." The name change was meant to reflect the fact the event was not in support of the defeated Remain campaigns, but instead it was meant to show "support for internationalism, tolerance, friendship, anti-xenophobia and the environment – irrespective of what happens next in the Brexit process[309]." Cameron sought speakers from all political parties represented on Bristol City Council at the time and I was approached the day before the rally by Carla Denyer and Deb Joffe, Green Party councillors. They were keen to put forward an EU migrant citizen as a speaker and I was relatively active in the party's structures at that time. I agreed to it and prepared a short speech. While delivering it, I scanned the crowd from the stage looking for EU27 national flags. Following the speech, which was warmly received, I wandered through the crowd approaching people and making the most of my five minutes of fame to recruit research participants. By the time I left, I wrote down contact details of a dozen people, individuals and some couples of all ages, who were keen to be interviewed about their experience of coming to the rally. However, within two weeks of this event, I also attended the meeting that started the3million campaign. While I could not have known at that point how prominent the group would become, I decided to focus on participant ethnography at their meetings given theirs was a sustained political work, and not a one-off act of participation in a political event. Further, while my initial conversations with rally participants where framed around their nationality – after all, I approached them as they waived Dutch, German, Czech, Bulgarian, or Polish flags – the soon to be founders of the3million campaign were making explicit claims to EU citizenship, a process which I describe in more detail in Chapter 5. I therefore selected the3million as it was an opening for a case that I had not yet had in the data, one of enacting EU citizenship beyond ethnic lines, in addition to two cases of enacting EU citizenship along and across ethnic lines through electoral and socioeconomic rights claims, which I had already documented

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[309] Email correspondence with Alasdair Cameron, Deb Joffe and Carla Denyer (both Green Party councillors at the time) with the author.

through data collection on voting and organising. While it was the right decision in hindsight, it shows we not only *do* ethnographies[310] but also *select* them.

My smartphone, encrypted and password-protected, was often at the centre of this work. I used it for audio recording during interviews. Those who agreed to participate in in-depth interviews received my information research and consent form[311] ahead of the meeting. It outlined the project's title and its objectives, and showed the contact details for my supervisors. It also asked participants to select whether they wanted to be identified in the study or preferred to remain anonymous. Should they want to be identified, it had a two-tier consent structure so participants could be identified by their name only, or by the name of their organisation, or both. Those who wanted to be identified as members of a group or organisation were asked to ensure the consent of their group or their line manager, as appropriate.

For on-the-spot interviews I did not ask participants to complete the consent form, as that would require them to identify themselves by their name in the first place, which could compromise their anonymity in a public setting and is shown as a barrier for engagement in ethnographic research. Instead, I gave each participant a research information flyer[312].

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[310] Paul Cloke, Ian Cook, Philip Crang, Mark Goodwin, and Joe Painter, "Doing ethnographies," in *Practising Human Geography* (London: Sage, 2004): 169-206.

[311] See Appendix B for the version of the research project information and consent form that I used after September 2016. It shows the final title of the project, on "EU migrant citizens" and not "EU migrant workers." For comparison, I also include an early version of the research information flyer that I used prior to September 2016, showing the old project title and consistently referring to "EU migrant workers". There were no other changes to the project information sheet and consent form, whereas unlike the information flyer which had multiple iterations and was contextualised depending on the event observed.

[312] See Appendix A for a version of the research information flyer that I circulated until the end of August 2016. The "What am I doing today?" section was adapted depending on the event observed – an election, a rally, a meeting – to explain the specific aims for each participant observation. As mentioned above, in September 2016 the title of the project and terminology were altered to reflect the rise of self-identification of research participants as EU citizens in the aftermath of the EU referendum, and I started referring to "EU

Just like the information and consent form, the flyer outlined my project's title and objectives, and stated how the data I collect would be used. It showed my contact details, and the details of my research supervisors as well. I asked all participants for verbal consent to be interviewed and recorded. Four out of the total of 43 participants in on-the-spot interviews refused to be audio-recorded but agreed to be interviewed if I took notes instead. In two further cases I did not record on-the-spot interviews as they progressed from a casual conversation, and while the participants – a consular official and a presiding officer of a Polish overseas polling station – agreed to be on the record and cited under their names, I was conscious of interrupting the flow of our interview by starting a recording. Such interviews were conducted in a public setting, and while I always offered to find space that would provide more confidentiality, research participants seldom followed up on it. In general, they were keen to openly discuss their involvement in the public events I observed – elections, rallies, and meetings.

Electoral observation was the only instance in my empirical work when some of the people involved in an activity would decline interview requests – but even then it was rare. I always stated my main interest was not so much the participants' voting preferences as their motivations to vote in the first place. This seemed to be particularly helpful for involving people in the research. Comments that my work was interesting and relevant were quite common at the end of those interviews, and the general attitude of those who participated was that questions I asked were not being asked often enough. The fact that, in case of voters, I often did not ask them whom they support also helped to build trust. Sometimes, the question of who participants voted for did come up towards the end, and sometimes it remained unanswered, but my main line of enquiry was why migrant citizens voted, what it meant to them, and why it mattered to them in the context of living in Bristol, or in the South West of England if they came from further afield.

migrant citizens" instead of "EU migrant workers". In Chapter 5 I reflect on this change in more detail, and describe how it was affected by feedback from participants and changes in the social field, which I set out to observe.

In addition to audio recording I also wrote down facts, ideas and reflections from my observations in a journal. In the first of the notebooks I used for the journal, I noted theoretical insights – thoughts from books and papers, as well as various lectures and supervision meetings – front to back, and then wrote empirical notes – diary entries and reflective thoughts, as well as names, addresses and dates – back to front until both theory and empirics met halfway. Then, as my empirical work got more intensive, I started running my journal in one direction. Both theory and empirics now intersected on its pages, but it was the field notes that started to dominate it. This was a mundane side effect of my overall approach to do explore theory through practice and practice through theory – that is to keep my readings and fieldwork in dialogue, and use one to fine-tune the other.

I filled up four such notebooks with research and reflexive notes interjecting with notes from readings of literature and discussions of it. There are multiple dates, names, numbers, and email addresses on these pages too, as well as occasional notes of amusement or frustration. Some of it is not data but noise that I cleaned up during the analysis. For example, they contain a mean-spirited graph that I wrote when, having cycled to observe an event held in the Colston Hall to celebrate the year of Bristol as the European Green Capital, I could not find anywhere to lock up my bicycle just because it was a sunny day and everyone else seemed to have cycled in too. These are reminders not just of the thickness of ethnographic work – until it has been analysed, everything is relevant, even if it sounds daft – but also of a degree of confusion inherent in it. Ethnographers argue that "expanded field *work* […] requires expanded field *notes,* and prospective ethnographers can learn much from the growing body of geographers' reflexive, 'warts and all' accounts of their experiences[313]." But I am in fact not sure if there is a great deal to be learned here. There is the irony of the situation, there is maybe a lesson to either drive to environmental events – there will be parking available – or maybe to arrive early if cycling. There is the mundane to be learnt. But mainly, such

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[313] Cloke et al., "Doing ethnographies," 195.

reflections are a reminder that engaging with the social field takes an awful lot of time, can be difficult and dispiriting, and it still can lead exactly nowhere. One has to be ready for it, be ready for repeated failures of observational work, because not everything is relevant and only some of it may produce the desired result. That said, once we give our time and attention while also looking sideways, discovery may well await around the corner.

Occasionally, I also used my smartphone to take photographs outside polling stations, during political rallies, or when following activists and campaigners. Taking photos with a smartphone was casual enough to not get in the way of the flow of observational work. This ubiquitous and unthreatening device made me less of a researcher, and more of a participant: most of the time, I was not the only person to have my smartphone out, snapping photos. However, I took photos infrequently and ensured that people whom I photographed were aware and consented for the pictures to be used in the research dissemination process. This made for selective documentation, but photography was meant to illustrate my work rather than comprise part of my data. I mainly used photography during political rallies in Bristol and events in the House of Commons, and when following a small group of the3million campaigners. In all these contexts, there was an extensive presence from the local, national, and international media, including major broadcasters, and while events participants were not asked for consent to be filmed or interviewed, such consent was implicit in their actions of taking the stage, standing in the spotlight, and speaking out.

Doing theory and practice in such an open-ended way carries specific types of ethical considerations. Research ethics chiefly centres on the notions of informed consent and participant anonymity, but I found both somewhat problematic. In the two sub-sections that follow I first elaborate on informed consent to then move on to the question of participant anonymity.

**Understanding consent**

As I outlined above, tracing political processes in the social field often meant I followed events as they unfolded, and in many contexts introducing my research appropriately was not feasible either due to the event's dynamics – which is best described as the *when* predicament of informed consent, because it is not clear at which exact moment data collection begins – or due to the number of participants involved – which is best described as the *who* predicament because it is not clear what to do if new participants join an event after I had secured the group's consent. Ensuring informed consent was also problematic at recurring events, in particular meetings of activist groups and networks. They were all invariably joined by new participants, but that did not warrant me taking time to explain my role in any detail. In such situations I repeatedly had to resort to a one-liner about being a researcher and collecting data, offering to answer any questions after the meeting, should they arise, but without really elaborating either about the nature of my research or anonymity and confidentiality protocols. This approach usually followed the organisers' explicit requests to keep my introductions short. In one case, when I met the Member of Parliament for Bristol West Thangam Debbonaire with the representatives of the3million on 6th October 2016, the length and pace of the meeting only allowed me to mention my research at its very end. Still, I was stopped mid-sentence by the MP saying "sure, not problem, let me know if you have any questions" before I finished stating the title of the project.

This predicament of consent is possibly best captured by an early participant observation that I turned from field notes into a full-length ethnographic essay. I did not have time for this in the later stages of the research, but it was helpful for reflecting on my ethnographic practice early on. On 1st December 2015 I travelled to the first of a series of six meetings of the Polish network I mentioned above, which was held in St. Werburghs Community Centre. After the meetings, I wrote up my research notes into the following fragment:

> When I arrive, I spot several of old colleagues (not quite friends) in the lobby, so there's a lot of exclamations and hugging. One person in particular, A, can't believe to see me as she assumed I moved out from Bristol. What strikes me

though, aside from me and T there are only women here, and there are many people I've never met before, which is great. The mood is celebratory; all these people work on similar things, and sometimes with the same clients, but don't get to meet often, clearly. So there's lots of genuine "hey, how are yous?" in there, and a positive buzz. I know it doesn't quite tally with the matters that will be discussed but hey, it's great to meet. (…)

As I introduce myself, and I go last, T interrupts to say that I had helped develop the project he became part of, and introduced him to the organisation, and to community work in the area. To this, I say that in fact it was M who came up with the idea of the project I was hired for, so if there's one reason we're all in that room, it's her activism. (…)

But I then get more serious and say that while I appreciate T invited me without consulting anyone, I need to ask them if it is fine for me to be there and take notes for research purposes. Everyone laughs and nods, but R says 'Hmm, I don't know…' That turns out to be a tease but it's a bit of a funny moment because I sort of let her down once, not a situation I could help with but I know she was disappointed last time we met, so I worry there may be a funny dynamic. But no, as the afternoon goes on she's one of the people I talk to the most.

They start asking a bit more about my research, and I introduce it by saying the project seeks to identify ways in which migrant citizens support one another in claiming rights and being citizens, whether they have British citizenship or not, and for that reason I would like to observe their meetings and, if they can spare some time, interview some of them. E right away asks if I can share my findings so far, and I explain these are early stages and, so far, I only conducted two observations at Bristol's polling station during Poland's parliamentary and presidential elections in May and October earlier in the year. They ask about the results, R says the populist and nationalistic candidate Pawel Kukiz and then his-led movement won overwhelmingly – gathering several times more votes in Bristol than in Poland – and Kukiz got 60 percent of Bristol's vote in presidential

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election, despite in Poland he came in third. A says this shows that the attitudes are getting more radical, as past elections were usually won in Bristol by relatively progressive parties. R agrees and says the government's new guidelines on radicalisation, under the Prevent agenda, require schools to act on radicalisation but this is not just a Muslim issue and so she plans to organise workshops with parents at her school to promote inclusive attitudes in response to the growth of Polish nationalism amongst migrants. [Note to self: using Prevent to counter nationalism and radicalisation in the Polish community sounds interesting, follow up with R.] Many people around the table engage with this, nod and say nationalism seems to be a growing problem.

This fragment shows that it was difficult for me to maintain the identity of a researcher without past and present concerns, not directly related to my research, disturbing the seemingly neat boundary between consent and the lack of it. Participants seemed to be consenting more to me being there, than to information being collected. Further, the chairperson was keen to introduce me as a former community development worker rather than a researcher, and participants were keen to hear about my initial findings, and to draw on that information to decide whether they wanted to be part of the research. They were much less interested in my research aims and data protection protocols. In a way, perhaps my introduction as a former community worker served as a reassurance that I understand and respect the basic rules of confidentiality? Finally, as an active participant of the discussion, I found it hard to tell in the end how much the group was concerned about the rise of far-right radicalism in the Polish community in Bristol, and to what extent the discussion went in that direction because of my presence and the fact I was asked to comment on that year's elections, which not everyone was even aware of.

Such haziness was not only a downstream effect. My empirical work was only scheduled to commence in February 2016, once I obtained the institutional ethical approval from the University, but this thesis also includes the material gathered during preliminary research, such as the above cited observation and, in particular, participant observation and on-the-spot interviews conducted during Polish overseas elections which is discussed in much depth in Chapter 3. This preliminary research was meant to inform the overall

research design and fine-tune its methods. Once collected, however, the dataset became an invaluable empirical reference to demonstrate that rights claims of migrant EU citizens, and their transnational politics more broadly, are not inherently progressive. While collecting it I adhered to the same protocols that I did once the ethical approval was granted in March 2016, and hence decided to draw on these findings too.

Thus, ethical research conduct was a process much broader than merely securing the institutional ethical approval from the university. The negotiation of ethics in my research began before this approval was granted and continued afterwards. During events and gatherings I asked those who managed the space – a community hall, a meeting room, or a polling station – for permission to observe and record the proceedings. I never recorded speakers' names, unless it was a public talk or an open rally and their names would be in the public domain in any case. At times, obtaining consent from event organisers, let alone participants, was not feasible. Such instances included participant observation during the abovementioned rally of 2,000 people on outside the City Hall in Bristol in June 2016, or during the mass lobby of parliament in Westminster in February 2017, with attracted 1,700 participants and extensive media presence. In both these cases, organisers had little time to engage with my requests though were keen for me to carry out my research work, and often granted consent before I could explain its aims and how the data would be used. Ethical research practice, therefore, was not based on informed consent alone. Not only in some cases were there too many participants to obtain consent from everyone, but also event organisers had no time or interest in the detail of my work or data handling processes. Thus, my research ethics proceeded from the understanding that in case of open events their participants sought to make their actions public – often the very essence of these events was to generate publicity – and in such cases ethical research conduct was underpinned by retaining fidelity to the event and protecting anonymity of the individual, rather than by obtaining informed consent from each person.

Problems with obtaining informed consent were not confined to large meetings with hundreds of participants. Repeatedly, I found it impossible to introduce my research during short meetings, such as the one with Polish community workers and activists, or the one with Thangam Debbonaire MP mentioned above. The campaigners I worked with

had strictly limited time to make their case in such meetings, and they did not want me to use it for explaining my PhD project. Sometimes I was *asked not to ask* for permission during meetings at all. For example, organisers from Another Europe is Possible group in Bristol did not want me to waste precious time on outlining my research during campaign meetings whenever some new activists turned up.

In short, seeking consent in some meetings would centre it on my research instead of the political work at hand, and in such cases I followed the steer of key participants and protected the anonymity of others. For such repeated observations I developed a routine of simply saying that I was a researcher collecting information and that I was happy to answer any questions. But aside from one case, where a participant in the3million meeting was keen to know more about my research positionality and dissemination strategy, I was never asked any. My research information sheets were not usually accepted either – even though my presence was welcomed in most spaces I used as my research sites. Sometimes I ensured informed consent retrospectively, either verbally or in writing, through various means: subsequent discussion, correspondence[314], or conversations with people whose thoughts I wrote down during public meetings and then decided to use in the thesis.

**Trading anonymity**

This brings me to the second major point in discussions on the ethics of doing research, namely that of ensuring participants' anonymity. While it is conventional to assume that participation in research should be anonymised, and that is the default position of research ethics boards, in practice this is notoriously difficult to achieve in qualitative and,

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[314] For example, Appendix D shows my Twitter exchange with British Future director Sunder Katwala, whom I cite when describing one of the all-activists meeting of the3million in London. Due to the pace of the meeting and the number of participants involved in it, I was unable to introduce my research to Katwala on the day, 28th April 2017. However, he was happy for me to attribute the quote following a Twitter exchange and email correspondence on 2nd May 2018 – over a year later.

particularly, ethnographic research contexts. There is a tension between the fidelity and anonymity of description. It becomes only more salient in place-based research where any effort to anonymise participants carries the risk of reducing the depth and accuracy of description. Anonymity is therefore a trade-off and an imperfect one at that: undermined already during ethnographic data collection and analysis, and compromised further at the publication stage. Often, the reasons why research can remain anonymised, albeit imperfectly, are not so much to do with its design as with chance[315], and there are three main reasons why it can be so. First, participants often no longer remember that they took part in research and so the illusion of their anonymity can be maintained. Second, data collected often remains under-used and under-cited, which results in not so much anonymity as silencing of certain data points. Third, the place and time of research publication are usually remote from the place and time of data collection, therefore obscuring the actual lack of anonymity[316]. Further, as Geoffrey Walford argues, participants' anonymity is often not just imperfect but also undesirable, and that may be so for a number of reasons. For example, the promise of anonymity can be "often initially used as a means of fostering access" on the one hand, and it also risks "the decoupling of events from historically and geographically specific locations[317]" on the other. The latter was a particular risk for my research, where the context mattered empirically and theoretically, given my aim to produce a "thick" geography of specific political processes. Thus, I had to proceed with various strategies not just for ensuring but also for waiving anonymity in a way that is sensitive to the overall principle of doing research ethically – that is, of doing no harm through it – and equitable towards research participants so they were in control of their data.

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[315] Will van den Hoonaard, "Is anonymity an artifact in ethnographic research?" *Journal of Academic Ethics* 1, no. 2 (2003): 141–151.

[316] Ibidem.

[317] Geoffrey Walford, "Research ethical guidelines and anonymity," *International Journal of Research and Method in Education* 28, no. 1 (2005): 89-90.

This impossibility of anonymising participants was especially evident in the case of the3million campaign, which was unique in the UK and could not be adequately described or analysed without mentioning specific events, places and people. However, the group's activists were keen to be interviewed and cited under their real names, and indicated so on their research information and consent forms. The issue of anonymity might be less evident in the case of other empirical entry points. However, while I could claim to have conducted my research in another English city, this manoeuvre could only be partly successful given other empirical openings were discerningly Bristolian: few cities in the UK have overseas polling stations for Polish elections, and even fewer were re-electing their mayors in May 2016. I could not remain true to events without openly pointing to Bristol as the place through which I conducted my research.

My main concern regarding ethical research practice, however, was the habit of equating confidentiality and anonymity, which elevates research conduct above and beyond the social context in which it is embedded. It is often implicit in ethical reflection on empirical research and manifests itself through a tacit assumption that all empirical research should be anonymised, whatever the preference of research participants. My approach was different and, from the start of my empirical research, participants in in-depth interviews were given the choice to either request anonymity – though I usually explained how imperfect it is – or to go on the record. In the latter case they were asked to ensure consent of the group or organisation they were affiliated with.

In practice, and as I mentioned above, the vast majority of organisers and campaigners who already had a public profile through their activism – national in case of the3milion activists, and local in case of community organisers – all waived anonymity. Interestingly, it was mainly trade unionists who, with three exceptions, wanted to remain anonymous. Out of the three who went on the record, two run high-profile campaigns and their views expressed in interviews were already a matter of the public record. More than anything else, there appeared to be a process whereby a decision to waive anonymity was related to a perceived convergence of interests between the researcher and research participants. Those engaged in campaigns, by and large, were keen that they and their organisations are named in the published work, while those who mainly engaged in case work and

directly supported individuals were inclined to remain anonymous. Similarly, those who organised events where participant observation took place also agreed for their real names to be cited, given their work had already been publicly recognised, though they were much more conscious about event participants. By far, the most rigorous vetting process was put in place by a labour organiser from one of the independent trade unions after I requested to attend their workshop for migrant workers. I was required to provide a detailed statement on research aims and the process for ensuring confidentiality, and had to explain my own standpoint in detail before my request was eventually granted. Ironically, data generated through this participant observation remained unused.

In this way the practice of enacting research – that is of operationalising and implementing its aims and objectives – problematised my understanding of consent and anonymity, and destabilised my understanding of ethical research practice in general. First, in many practical scenarios, consent was based more on the relationship of trust than on the reading of the research information sheet that I provided. Few participants read it – some had experience of taking part in research before and simply asked whether the form stated the *usual* things – and everyone signed it. Still, this challenges the notion of *informed* consent. I always provided the information required and got the forms signed as appropriate, but often there was no causal link between the information and the signature, and participants' consent was based on their assumptions about me, or the project. Most often consent in in-depth interviews stemmed from my existing relationship of trust with research participants, or from their assumptions about the outcomes of the research project: most of these participants took pride in their work and were keen to share it wholesale. In the case of participant observation, consent often stemmed either from the publicness of their actions, which were intended to be *seen* and *described* in any case, or from the relationship of trust in case of the network of Polish activists and the3million who assumed I would not misuse the data.

Second, the operations of anonymity were more nuanced than a non-disclosure of participants' identity. I followed their lead on what data would be attributed to them in the thesis and explained the risks of anonymous participation in place-based study for those whose roles are unique and so would be recognisable even if their details were

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pseudonymised. It also had implications for data analysis, which I describe more fully in the next and final section of this chapter: I rely more on quotes from those who decided to be identified in the study on the one hand, and those whose data could be easily pseudonymised on the other. The voices of those who could be easily identified despite pseudonymisation also fed into the analysis but are seldom heard directly in the thesis. So in this instance too the relationship of trust was a fundamental tool in the process of negotiating and ensuring anonymity, and further, this process was not confined to a discreet field of research ethics but spilled over into all aspects of the research, including data analysis.

This reflection links with the significant body of literature that engages with research ethics critically, where the starting point is usually a critique of the unconstrained expansion of the regulatory system of institutionalised processes of ethical approval, with their specific and often implicit concepts of harm, consent and anonymity that seek to be uniform across academic disciplines and research fields[318]. In what follows, multiple arguments are being made about the divergence between the institutionalised practices of ethical approval and enacted practices of ethical conduct in the social field, where ethical judgements are being made at each and every step of the research process. This tallies up with the role of the researcher as the one who navigates socio-spatial processes that are in flux. These processes generate the need to engage with emergent questions of integrity, responsibility, and accountability[319] that cannot be pre-empted by institutionalised audit cultures and can only be met through an open and reflexive research practice.

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[318] Kevin D. Haggerty, "Ethics creep: governing social science research in the name of ethics," *Qualitative Sociology* 27, no. 4 (2004): 391–414.

[319] Lynn Meskell and Peter Pels, "Embedding ethics," in *Embedding Ethics: Shifting Boundaries of the Anthropological Profession*, ed. Lynn Meskell and Peter Pels (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2005): 1-28. Heidi Armbruster, "The ethics of taking sides," in *Taking Sides: Ethics, Politics and Fieldwork in Anthropology*, ed. Heidi Armbruster and Anna Laerke (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008): 1-22.

Ethnographers often express similar concerns. Mike Crang and Ian Cook articulated them particularly well in their discussion on two kinds of research ethics. They argued:

> "first, there are those with a capital E that comprise the broad and fixed principles that might help to shape our plans when research proposals and 'ethical reviews' have to be submitted. And, second, there are those with a lower case e that feed into and emerge from the smaller, everyday encounters tied together throughout the research process. These are a messier, ongoing, impure, continually updated set of ethics that develop over time and through experiences[320]."

Here, I outlined my upper case ethics and showed how this relates to the lower case ethics of everyday research encounters in general. However, given these encounters are exactly that – experiences that do not necessarily amount to any greater whole but remain particular to a specific instance or context of a single interview or observation – my considerations of lower case ethics occasionally resurface in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of the thesis alongside the discussion of research findings.


## Analysing thematically, narratively, and dialogically

While the practice of data collection is impure and messy, data analysis is the stage when the records become information: they are organised in a way that aligns with the analytical framework, with all its conceptual and theoretical neatness. In the case of my research, the process of data analysis was broken down into two stages. First, I identified the three key themes mentioned above – rights claims unfolding *along*, *across*, and *beyond* national frames – which were emerging across the whole dataset. This stage of data analysis took place as data collection was still under way, and its aim was to test how EU migrant

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[320] Mike Crang and Ian Cook, *Doing Ethnographies* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 2007): 35.

citizenship is enacted in relation to national frames. Scholarship on EU citizenship generally tends to be animated by the fundamental questions of the present and the future of transnational, post-national, and supranational citizenship. My first analytical manoeuvre therefore served to align the data with literatures on citizenship. Secondly, I started fleshing out the three themes through reviewing and evaluating narratives contained in the data before the writing process begun, and through assembling particular data points into broader narratives once the writing process got underway – that is, by conducting narrative analysis.

Initially, I organised data in line with my research plan which split up the work by the type of political activity: voting, community and labour organising, and finally lobbying and campaigning based on the case study of the3milion. However, as I started analysing data, each of those three types of political activity also pointed to three distinct modes of political action; each displayed a robust theme. In each research strand political action inevitably pivoted from a sense of identity and belonging on the one hand, and a sense of agency and injustice on the other. The broad themes I identified in the data include rights claims *along* national frames in Chapter 3, *across* national frames in Chapter 4, and *beyond* national frames in Chapter 5.

Across the three themes, research participants' narratives revealed similar stories of becoming politicised in a new place through experiencing injustice and rights claims. The latter were often framed as a performance of cultural or social needs rather than political persuasions – such as maintaining links to the country of origin and building links to the country of residence when voting in the chapter on electoral rights. However, given these enactments centred around struggles against injustice and inequality, they were flagged up as political action in my analytical frame. This designation of political action comes with two caveats: first, the notion of claiming rights broadly meant having a voice – taking part, representing others, and being represented – and not necessarily having an effective voice. Second, I identified taking part, representing others, and being represented as political deeds regardless of the doer's intent. In practice, some research participants questioned the political dimension of their narratives precisely for those two reasons: they

did not see themselves as political either because their actions were not intentionally political, or because they were not sufficiently effective, or both.

Notwithstanding some narrative similarities, there were significant and clear thematic differences between specific articulations of identity and belonging across the collected data. Political imaginations of research participants were animated in different ways with regards to identity and belonging, and they displayed distinct narrative differences between the themes while showing multiple similarities within them. For example, overseas voters were quick to fall back on vocabularies of tradition and kinship, or national boundaries and affinities over physical distance, while citizenship campaigners made strong claims to rights abstracted from national belonging and related to socio-cultural belonging operating beyond national boundaries; these were expressed through popular culture, lifestyle choices, and so on. The three emergent themes were differentially positioned in relation to national frames, whilst also being distinctly associated with each case study – of voting, organising and campaigning.

While distinctly linked, these *modes* of claiming rights along, across, and beyond national frames did not always overlap perfectly with the *means* of political action of voting, organising or campaigning. To give one example, there is a significant level of organising activity in Polish nationalist circles in Bristol. One such organisation is the Polish Youth Association Patriae Fidelis, which was set up in 2011, and between 2013 and 2017 organised a number of public meetings with guest speakers from Poland such as Stanisław Michalkiewicz and Robert Winnicki[321], far-right nationalists associated with the National Movement, and others. These meetings were hosted by in the Polish Catholic church hall – the same venue where the overseas presidential election took place – and reportedly they were attended by dozens of participants. Bristol chapter of Patriae Fidelis also

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[321] See http://patriaefidelis.pl/2013/01/29/stanislaw-michalkiewicz-relacja-z-trzech-wykladow-w-anglii/, accessed 18th November 2018.

organises militarised events for its members, such as paintball or shooting picnics[322]. Should this type of organising also be selected as a case study of the means of political action – to explore modes of claiming rights revealed through it – it would likely serve as an empirical reference point for enacting citizenship along national frames, while other types of organising would serve as a reference for enacting citizenship across them. Therefore, I do not argue that there is any causal relationship between means and modes of enacting citizenship – although I do show throughout the thesis that some means of political action lend themselves to particular modes of enacting citizenship more easily than others.

The selection of case studies meant that in my analytical work cases (*means* of enacting citizenship) broadly aligned with the themes emergent from them (*modes* of enacting citizenship). For that reason I decided to orient my analysis across the latter three themes but retain voting, organising and campaigning as chapter titles and narrative devices. In this way, each case provides a narrative exposition of one primary mode of enacting citizenship that comes through it most strongly.

Voting unfolded as a practice largely organised through national frames and, in particular, participants in overseas elections overall attached significant emotional value to the national frame. This attachment was constant regardless of their political orientations being more national or cosmopolitan, or their views being reactionary or progressive – albeit the former orientations were much more strongly represented within the sample, which is explained in more detail in Chapter 3. Further, I show that negotiations of migrant citizenship through the national frame are transnational practices, and the national frame serves as a medium of articulating one's politics in relation to a transnational setting.

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[322] See http://patriaefidelis.pl/oddzialy/bristol/, accessed 18th November 2018.

Organising was initially planned as two separate case studies of labour and community activism. Initial analysis challenged it as organisers' narratives substantially overlapped. The national frame emerged as an important force organising their enactments, but they aimed to work across it: to integrate migrant citizens into the workforce, into the neighbourhood, or into the city, and to protect their individual rights from being violated by a number of actors: employers, health or welfare services, or others in the community. There were also multiple overlaps and affinities in the personal and political trajectories between community activists and trade unionists. Ultimately, community and labour organising collapsed into a single case study of enacting citizenship through organising, which in Bristol unfolded across national frames.

Campaigning did not emerge as a case study until the aftermath of the EU referendum, but once it did, it evidently pointed towards a new theme of rights claims enacted beyond national frames. Pro-EU activists tacitly drew on the logics of EU citizenship and sometimes made explicit references to it in the run up to the referendum, but most often they invoked individual rights. Following the EU referendum, the3million's emergent campaign was the first instance when I recorded consistent and assertive claims to EU citizenship as a bundle of rights, as well as articulations and performances of cosmopolitan identity and belonging through EU citizenship. As campaigning emerged as the third case study, and became a significant *means* of enacting citizenship, three distinct modes of enacting citizenship became clearly identifiable in the collected data. Given each theme was discrete and robust, and broad enough to accommodate all data points, I organised my findings according to enactments of citizenship *along*, *across*, and *beyond* national frames.

After I analysed the dataset thematically as a whole to identify key modes of enacting citizenship, I deployed a different technique to analyse data slotting into these broad themes. To further explore the three overarching modes of citizenship I used narrative

and biographical methods of analysis, which approach interview data as a story[323] – and may take a life-course perspective[324] – to trace the emergence of specific modes of concern, perceptions of vulnerability, and articulations of injustice, as well as frames of evaluation and methods of judgement. This served to link data points with theoretical discussion on human action being evaluative on the one hand, and on the role of vulnerability and injustice in generating political action on the other, which was discussed in Chapter 1.

In contrast with thematic analysis, where data points are identified and coded to organise the set into themes, and framework analysis, where data points are sought and fit into a pre-designed framework, narrative and biographical methods usually draw on literary theory and they are more suitable to trace how and why processes take place, and have less focus on shared beliefs and orientations amongst research participants – which is the key use of methods based on themes or frameworks. Narratives are usually defined as situated constructions or discursive resources. The situated-construction type definitions emphasise that narratives show how individuals understand their past experience, and thus they are expressions of identity that draw on accumulated experiences, ideas, images, and so on. The discursive-resource type definitions are influenced by Michel Foucault's epistemology and emphasise slightly different qualities of narratives. They show them as analytical tools or "interpretative repertoires[325]", that is, as frames of understanding and evaluation of processes – causes and consequences – that are then deployed to make sense of the world and act in it[326]. This shifts attention from the truth in the story being told to the act of telling it and the identity generated through that process. It also shifts attention

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[323] Taylor, "Narrative as construction and discursive resource," 113–122.

[324] Breckner, "Case-oriented comparative approaches."

[325] Taylor, "Narrative as construction and discursive resource," 113.

[326] Taylor, "Narrative as construction and discursive resource." Also see: Linda Martín Alcoff, "Foucault's normative epistemology," in *A Companion to Foucault*, ed. Christopher Falzon, Timothy O'Leary, and Jana Sawicki (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

from things that were witnessed by the speaker to the act of witnessing and recounting social processes.

This makes it a particularly suitable analytical method for researching performative acts on the one hand, and for tracing rights claims on the other. As Emma Kaufman articulates it, the focus on witnessing and the narratives it generates "is a way to think about how people come to conceive of themselves as agents in the world[327]." She puts forward two propositions on narratives. First, she argues they are to be treated "as a product of speech and a marker of power." Second, she asserts that they have to be treated as operating "according to their own kind of truth[328]" for narrative research seeks to capture the participant's experience. I followed that approach and analysed data narratively to trace emergent concerns, and frames of understanding and evaluating the world that give rise to enactments of migrant citizenship.

I analysed three types of data. The first type comprised transcripts of in-depth interviews with activists, organisers and professionals who either were migrant citizens themselves or, in two cases, engaged with them extensively through their work as labour and community organisers. The second type comprised recordings of on-the-spot interviews, which I analysed in their audio form and only transcribed quotes that I use in the thesis. This was supplemented by the third type of data that provided narratives external to my research participants: my own research notes as well as, to a lesser extent, documentary sources including minutes from meetings and hearings, grey literature and media coverage. This third type of data provided a different kind of narrative that helped contextualise the words and actions of my research participants. The aim of that was not to verify their *truths* – for I did not follow the typology of narrative and historical accuracy

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[327] Emma Kaufman, Punish and Expel: Border Control, Nationalism, and the New Purpose of the Prison. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015): 66.

[328] Ibidem, 65.

found in some strands of narrative analysis [329] – but to generate a multiplicity of viewpoints and thus a more reliable account of migrant citizenship.

Data analysis was therefore the task of re-reading these stories alongside each other and putting them in dialogue. When conducting narrative analysis to research cosmopolitan modes of belonging, Aija Lulle points out that "a narrative is necessarily polyphonic" because of inevitably drawing on: "references, arguments and discourses […] which do not belong solely to the speaker, because they are borrowed or incorporated from the discourses and arguments of others, or play into broader metanarratives that circulate in the public sphere[330]." She follows Mikhail Bakhtin and his work on experience and narrative as "a dialogic exchange – continuous interaction with one another's thoughts and a speaker's orientation towards active understanding[331]." The basic notion here is that narrative can never be wholly self-contained but instead it is relational. Therefore, Bakhtin's literary theory of self shows it as not so much subjective as inter-subjective, and in constant dialogue with self and others. This is why, for Lulle, such interrelated accounts of human experience and understanding produce a foundation for interpretative and analytical undertakings: she sees "narratives as dialogic work[332]" that unfolds in relational registers. Thus, "although we can separate individual and social registers analytically, subjective experience can never be only individual[333]."

My analytical approach here mirrors Lulle's. Her notion of a dialogic exchange as a process oriented towards active understanding links with my analytical approach drawing

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[329] Donald Spence, *Narrative Truth and Historical Truth: Meaning and Interpretation in Psychoanalysis*. New York: Norton Publishing, 1984. Also see Kaufman, *Punish and Expel*, 65-67.

[330] Aija Lulle, "The need to belong: Latvian youth returns as dialogic work," in *Return Migration and Psychosocial Wellbeing: Discourses, Policy-Making and Outcomes for Migrants and Their Families*, ed. Zana Vathi and Russell King (London and New York: Routledge, 2017): 187.

[331] Ibidem, 186.

[332] Ibidem, 187.

[333] Ibidem, 188.

on Sayer's work too. It traces the emergence of frames of evaluation and modes of concern, and it looks for evidence of methods of judgement and articulations of injustice being deployed within participants' narratives. It is this approach that generates findings on the specifics of "reasoning with emotions" that leads to particular modes of political action.

Another aspect of data analysis, and the last issue that I want to elaborate on in this chapter, is the process of data selection. Analytical work operates through inclusion and exclusion, and through amplifying some findings and silencing others. In my empirically informed chapters, I silence narrative constructions too trivial or too tangential to be included – as they contributed too little to the overall argument, or strayed too far from it. While I used data contradicting my initial argument to improve the depth of analysis, I had to sieve out data disconnected from the main thrust of my argument.

The silenced moments are often either the hilarious or the uneasy ones. Going back to my observation notes, I often paused over fragments that did not play a significant part in the analysis and could not help but notice these were often the cheerful and perky moments that make empirical work moving and amusing. For example, aside from the lengthy fragment that illustrates the conundrums of positionality, access, and consent that was cited above, my observation narrative from the December 2015 meeting of the Polish community activists and workers network also has a graph that illustrates the situational comedy and cheerful laughter that I was part of:

> "M remarks how local groups for people with dementia are shrinking in size, despite dementia diagnoses are on a rise. I suggest it's perhaps because the participants keep forgetting to turn up. We laugh, and then we try to start a more serious conversation about young people. They are also vulnerable to dementia, M says, and she makes a general point about migrants often neglecting their health

and wellbeing so an early outset of dementia may go unnoticed – which again provokes a lot of uncontrollable laughter[334]."

There were numerous comical moments and narratives in my data. Some of them are shown in the chapters that follow, but for the most part they remain silenced as the illumination they provide is not of the kind required in academic writing. Mentioning them here serves to give a brief insight into the sheer joy that empirical work can bring and to show that hilarity is part of ethnography too, even if for the most part it is all about getting out of the comfort zone to navigate difficult ethical choices in the social field[335].

## Conclusion

When commencing the research, I assumed two kinds of affinity would affect my positionality. One was the sense of belonging in the place I chose as my research site. I had lived and worked in Bristol for around a decade before I started my research, and that had generated multiple relations of affiliation, friendship, and kinship with some of the individuals and groups that I set off to study. The other kind of affinity was my identity as a migrant and as a citizen, and awareness that I am myself very much part of the political subject that I set out to study. The insider-outsider dynamics and identity are much more complex and include the intersecting questions of gender, faith, class, sexuality and politics. Still, I thought my *proximity* to the communities I researched may affect the research process and it was this notion that animated my reflection on positionality. There is also an inherent power imbalance between the researcher and the reader hardwired into intra-ethnic research because of the language barrier and issues of

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[334] Research notes from the Polish network meeting in St. Werburghs Community Centre on 1st December 2015.

[335] Reger, "Emotions, objectivity and voice," 605-616.

translation[336]. All this is not to say the research becomes any easier or trickier for that reason, but to acknowledge the specific positionality of a researcher studying a diaspora they are proximate to, and the specific relation of trust that arises from it: the expectation of acceptance due to shared understandings and orientations on both sides.

My affinity to the research site and subject did translate into emotional attachment, and this can play a significant role in the research process. It is not a hindrance, and my strategy here was one that had been long advocated by feminist scholars, namely to work through my positionality[337]. This means to acknowledge the researcher's emotions and recognise them as a resource to create "voices that tell the stories of the world around us[338]" and thus produce reliable accounts of empirical worlds. Reflexive practice creates a space where such tensions can be negotiated in a way that gives justice to the welfare of its participants and the integrity of their stories. It is a space where the issues of consent and anonymity are addressed through trust and confidentiality. Rather than silencing subjective positions in the process of data analysis, reflexive research amplifies them and works through them.

The following chapters enact these principles. They use the tools of narrative analysis and reflexive practice to explore rights claims of EU migrant citizens through the case studies that illustrate different modes of citizenship, which were enacted in the social field in the course of my work.

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[336] Young Jeong Kim, "Ethnographer location and the politics of translation: researching one's own group in a host country," *Qualitative Research* 12, no. 2 (2012): 131-146.

[337] Donna Haraway, "Situated knowledges: the science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575-599.

[338] Reger, "Emotions, objectivity and voice," 614.

## Chapter 3 | Voting: claiming rights along national frames

There are good reasons to discuss migration through the lens of economy, but there is ample evidence that movement across borders is animated by a myriad of other drivers. Recent examples of migration from Central to Western Europe, which is often viewed from economistic standpoints, show that these reasons are as often cultural, social, or political, as they are economic. Drivers of migration can be, for example, related to people's understandings of wellbeing and hopes for future life for them and their families[339], or their aspirations to see the world[340], or to learn a new language, meet new people, and thus accumulate social capital[341]. They also may stem from complex but clearly cosmopolitan orientations towards the world[342], an aspect of migration that is not just cultural or social, but also political. Once such complex reasons for migration are acknowledged, it is easier to reimagine migrants as social, cultural, and political, rather than merely economic actors. This complexity also highlights a need to conceptually link the focus on social and political aspects of migrant life.

Citizenship is particularly attuned to this task given it occupies the intersection of political and sociocultural concerns[343]. This chapter, which presents the first of the three windows onto EU citizenship discussed in the thesis, shows how this is so. It engages with the most explicitly political process emerging from the three key aspects of the normative

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[339] Anne White, "Family migration from small-town Poland: a livelihood strategy approach," in *Polish Migration to the UK in the 'New' European Union: After 2004*, edited by Kathy Burrell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009): 67-85.

[340] Laliotou, "'I want to see the world.'"

[341] John Eade, Stephen Drinkwater and Michal P. Garapich, *Class and Ethnicity: Polish Migrant Workers in London. Full Research Report* (Swindon: Economic and Social Research Council, (2007).

[342] Ayona Datta (2009) Places of everyday cosmopolitanisms: East European construction workers in London. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 41, no. 2 (2009): 353–370.

[343] Painter and Philo, "Spaces of citizenship."

construction of EU citizenship identified in Chapter 1 – namely, electoral rights – to show how much they are embedded in place where they are claimed, and in the social and cultural context of migration. Electoral rights are derived directly from the Citizens' Rights Directive for European and local elections on the one hand, and from legislation in countries of origin for external voting in national elections[344] on the other hand. However, as the chapter goes on to show, voting is spatially uneven and the experience of it cannot be simply reduced to a political endeavour. Instead, the narratives of voters presented and analysed here are shot through with questions of belonging, displacement, and obligation to both the place of residence and the place of origin. In this way, voting is shown as an iterative process of figuring out one's place in the world through claiming electoral rights.

The chapter opens with a study of external voting of Polish citizens in Bristol, and then moves on to discuss their participation in local elections. It shows that migrant citizens practice external voting to retain ties and to the country which they have left, but which they render proximate emotionally and symbolically through claiming their electoral rights. These practices make migrant citizens feel connected to their country of origin and bring up the possibility of return – all the while giving them a sense of agency in a place where other opportunities for political participation are circumscribed.

Migration may be a worldly, cosmopolitan act of embracing diversity with no regards for national boundaries. However, it also may be perceived as banishment if migrants felt that they had to, rather than wanted to, leave – just like many voters whose narratives are presented and analysed in this chapter. As it will be shown, the way one thinks of their migration experience may significantly affect the kind of politics that emerges from it. Towards the end of the chapter, these practices are contrasted with migrant citizens' practices of voting in English local elections, which display different dynamics but still

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[344] Bellamy and Lacey, "Balancing the rights and duties of European and national citizens," 1418.

point to the importance of lingering politics from the place of origin in remaking political attitudes in the place of residence.

This argument is laid out across four sections. The first one elaborates on the politics of absence. The second section draws on external elections to show that participation in place of residence may in fact show emotional proximity to the country of origin. The third section elaborates on grounded nationalism emerging through the feeling of displacement away from Poland, which frequently surfaced in the narratives of research participants. Finally, the fourth section draws on data collected during local elections to show that also in this context Polish voters often relied on ethnicised narratives to articulate their voting motivations and preferences. This underscores the fundamental role of the national frame in democratic iterations of migrant citizenship.

## The politics of absence

For many migrants, living in a new place is not bearable without retaining, or reconstructing, a sense of connection to the old place. Their sense of belonging is built by keeping one foot here, and another there. This may include participation in community churches and schools, or cultural and social associations, and there are certain politics at play there. Other migrant citizens reconnect to their old country through engaging in practices that are expressly political – such as overseas elections.

Migrants' voting rights are usually considered on two levels: one refers to their participation in local elections, and another to national elections in the country of origin and residency. The overall trend across Europe and the Americas today is that national voting rights are increasingly decoupled from residency within the state, and yet they remain rather firmly attached to citizenship, while local voting rights are linked with

residency much more than citizenship[345]. This is certainly the case across the EU where national laws on external voting vary significantly. However, most member states have at least limited provisions for it, and many also allow non-nationals to vote on local matters[346]. Furthermore, the rights of EU migrant citizens to vote and stand in municipal as well as European Parliament elections are unambiguously protected by Article 22 of the 2007 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, or TEFU (formerly Article 19 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, or TEC)[347] as well as Articles 39 and 40 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights[348]. These rights are applied directly and there are only three types of restrictions that can be imposed by the member states. First, the Treaties and the Charter allow for mechanisms to prevent voting in more than one country in elections to the European Parliament. Beyond that, member states are also granted optional tools to restrict the right to stand in mayoral elections to nationals only, and to introduce qualifying residence periods in municipal elections for EU migrant citizens in cases where over 20 per cent of the electorate is comprised of non-nationals[349]. And yet, despite these rather generous provisions for local voting, EU law does not interfere with national voting rules. In particular, it does not cover external voting aside from recommending the right to it, and it is also up to the member states to decide who is enfranchised and who remains excluded from general elections held on their territory.

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[345] Jean-Thomas Arrighi and Rainer Bauböck "A multilevel puzzle: migrants' voting rights in national and local elections," *European Journal of Political Research* 56, no. 3 (2017): 619-639.

[346] Derek S. Hutcheson and Jean-Thomas Arrighi, "'Keeping Pandora's (ballot) box half-shut:' a comparative inquiry into the institutional limits of external voting in EU Member States," *Democratization* 22, no. 5 (2015): 884-905.

[347] "Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union."

[348] "Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union." Official Journal of the European Communities, accessed 18 November 2018, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf.

[349] See "EU (1993) Council Directive 93/109/EC," Official Journal of the European Communities, accessed 18 November 2018, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3_A31993L0109. See also "EU (1994) Council Directive 94/80/EC," Official Journal of the European Communities, accessed 18 November 2018 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/ EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A31994L0080.

In practice, this means EU migrant citizens are by and large deprived of national voting rights and that different rules on national and external voting apply across the EU[350]. In some countries, such as Britain, overseas voting has until recently played a marginal role in the democratic process. While it is allowed for citizens who left the country up to 15 years prior to vote, the uptake has traditionally been low. Until 2010 the number of overseas electors registered to vote fluctuated between some 10 and 30-odd thousand[351]. It seems only the spectre of Brexit has managed to mobilise a larger proportion of the three to four million British citizens estimated to live overseas, of which over a million reside in the EU. By the time of the 2016 referendum well over a quarter of a million had registered to vote[352]. France on the other hand – as one would perhaps expect given its strong tradition of republican citizenship standing in a stark contrast with the much weaker tradition of citizenship in Britain[353] – occupies the other end of the external voting spectrum in the EU. Electoral participation from abroad is a well-established practice amongst the French living overseas[354]. Citizens living abroad are divided into 11 overseas parliamentary constituencies, each electing one member of the National Assembly[355].

For the purpose of my study, given the timing and focus of the project as well as issues of access, I chose to observe two Polish elections in 2015 which were organised in Bristol: a presidential contest in May, and the parliamentary election that followed in October. Compared with the British and French examples, Poland sits somewhere in the middle when it comes to external voting. The country's consular officials have a duty to organise

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[350] Shaw, "The quintessentially democratic act?"

[351] Neil Johnston, *Overseas Voters: Briefing Paper no 5923* (London: House of Commons Library, 2018).

[352] Susan Collard, "British citizens or European citizens? Rethinking citizenship post Brexit amongst Britons living in the EU." *Sociological Review Blogs* accessed 3 July 2017 https://www. thesociologicalreview.com/blog/brexit-british-citizenship-and-overseas-voting-rights.html.

[353] Anderson, *Us and Them*, 29-47.

[354] Interview with Nicolas Hatton, 24 February 2017.

[355] Susan Collard, "The expatriate vote in the French presidential and legislative elections of 2012: a case of unintended consequences," *Parliamentary Affairs* 66, no. 1 (2013): 213–233.

elections in the countries or sub-national regions that fall within their remit, but in practice there is a lot of leeway with regards to the location and number of polling stations. Participation rates are not particularly high, with just over a quarter of a million registered to vote overseas at the last parliamentary election. However, a significant proportion of that – 63,281– were registered to vote in the UK, by far the highest number of all countries were overseas elections were held[356]. Interestingly, there were substantial differences between the election outcome in Bristol and the overall election results. Nationalist, conservative and far-right candidates received disproportionately large support from Bristol's voters. This was also the case in other Polish polling stations across the UK. The nationalist-populist Kukiz bloc came in first with 24 percent, the nationalist-conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party was second in the UK with 23 percent but won the 2015 election in Poland and formed the government, and the nationalist-libertarian Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic – Liberty and Hope (KORWiN) was third on 20 percent. The liberal Civic Platform (PO) party, which was second in Poland, only received 15 percent of the vote[357]. This has likely affected the range of views I captured when interviewing the voters, as will be shown below.

When I interviewed the Polish consul overseeing the vote at the Bristol polling station and the station's presiding officer in May 2017, it was clear that the ties between diasporic networks and representatives of their national governments  – which are developed over the years of joint work on cultural and administrative matters – play an important part in selecting locations for overseas polling stations other than the official diplomatic missions[358]. Consulates have a legal duty to organise elections but in places that lack the diplomatic infrastructure, organisational support provided by migrant citizens is invaluable. This also means that voting is concentrated in those areas where diasporic

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[356] See https://parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl/350_Wyniki_Sejm_zagranica, accessed 3 July 2017.

[357] See https://parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl/350_Wyniki_Sejm_zagranica/0/82 accessed 3 July 2017.

[358] Research notes from interviews with presiding officer Krzysztof Lus and consul Sergiusz Wolski who oversaw presidential elections in Bristol, 24th May 2015.

activity is intensive. In Bristol, where there is no permanent consular mission, the first external vote was organised only in 2006, two years after Poland joined the EU and Polish citizens started arriving in large numbers. Since then, Polish citizens have been able to vote in Bristol during each election. The polling station is usually hosted by the Polish Ex-Servicemen's Club in Clifton, now an affluent part of Bristol that became home to many Polish war refugees in the late 1940s. Alternatively, on occasion the vote takes place in the building of the Polish Catholic Mission in Cotham, opposite the Polish church; this was the case in May 2015 when I conducted my first two observations. Both venues are centrally located and well known amongst Polish networks. They are also strongly associated with the more conservative currents of the social and cultural life of the Polish diaspora in the city. Elections in Poland are always held on Sundays, and the turnout typically peaks after church services; it was no different on the days when I conducted my observations and a long queue of voters lined up as soon as the midday mass finished. All this contributed to a distinctly conservative atmosphere, an impression that was further reinforced as the consul remarked that the only election observers to ever be present during the ballot and the count are those who work for the Law and Justice party.

As if to mark his words about stronger engagement from the nationalists and conservatives, a voter turned up in a t-shirt spelling out "Great Poland" over a myriad of swords and eagles, a dazzling display of militarism and nationalism at once. This slogan, this image and this medium of political expression are increasingly popular with ultra-conservative and neo-fascist movements in Poland but also in the UK, where Polish nationalists have managed to establish their presence during far-right demonstrations[359]

[359] For example, some of the participants in an anti-Jewish rally on Whitehall in London on 4th July 2015 wore similar t-shirts with the logo of the National Revival of Poland, an ultranationalist "third position" movement set up in 1981 but openly drawing on the traditions of the fascist Falanga National Radical Camp that was active in Poland in the 1930. See pictures collected in the Guardian's "Anti-fascist counter protest in London - in pictures," accessed 5 July 2017 https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2015/jul/04/anti-fascist-counter-protest-in-london-in-pictures.

and where they were recently courted by the extremist group Britain First[360] to join the apparently common struggle.

Witnessing such blatant enactments of reactionary nationalism in migrant, transnational settings is baffling, but not at all unexpected. Firstly, supremacist social movements today have increasingly transnational reach and, secondly, diasporic networks have traditionally been a fertile ground for the rise of nationalisms. Benedict Anderson explored this trend 25 years ago, and developed the concept of long-distance nationalism to explain it. He argued that migrant nationalists are people who "live their real politics long-distance" and "who have no serious intention of going back to a home, which, as time passes, more and more serves as a phantom bedrock for an embattled metropolitan ethnic identity[361]". In Anderson's interpretation, the idea of a nation somewhere far away could provide a steady source of pride for some migrants precisely because of this spatial distance. Long-distance nationalism operates through absence and detachment, rather than more tangible channels such as social networks and infrastructures, where nationalist sentiments would be more likely to get confronted by mundane realities of diasporic life. Thus, long-distance nationalism is shown by Anderson as an escapist fantasy, and a political position that is largely abstracted from ordinary realities of migrant lives.

Such conceptualisation goes a long way to alleviate bewilderment in a researcher documenting the occasional bigotry of ethnic minorities. However, more recent empirical engagements with nationalism, xenophobia and racism articulated and enacted by Central and Eastern Europeans living in Britain show a more diverse range of factors that animate

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[360] Kayleen Devlin, "The anti-immigration party trying to recruit immigrants," *BBC News* accessed 24 July 2017 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-trending-40509632.

[361] Benedict Anderson, *Long-Distance Nationalism: World Capitalism and the Rise of Identity Politics* (Amsterdam: CASA: Centre for Asian Studies, 1992): 12. Accessed 21 July 2017 https://www.scribd.com/doc/55628099/Anderson-Benedict-Long-Distance-Nationalism. Also see Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparison: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World* (London and New York: Verso, 1998).

their political imaginations. In particular, these imaginations are shown to be strongly linked with people's socioeconomic positions in Britain, and this feeds into an argument that their nationalism, racism, or a claim to ethnic superiority is anything but long-distance[362]. This is because, as Jon Fox and Magda Mogilnicka argue in their paper, this kind of racism can be a strategy of "pathological integration" which is deployed by migrants from Central and Eastern Europe to "to insert themselves favourably in Britain's racialized hierarchies[363]." The findings from my interviews with Polish voters and community activists also cast doubt on long-distance nationalism as an all-encompassing explanation of minority nationalisms, and they disrupt the neat understanding of distance and scale implicit in Anderson's rendering of minoritarian nationalism.

The really interesting point about the conservative and at times even casually nationalistic undercurrent of external voting that I witnessed was that it did not only stem from the voters' persuasions but was the result of the institutional set up of the electoral process. Appealing to a sense of national belonging, locating the polling station by the church or in the building belonging to a traditionalist diasporic institution, and mobilising diasporic networks to organise external voting – all this produces a particular political effect even if its aim is to simply make it easier to manage the voting process. According to the presiding officer, it often is somewhat difficult to staff Bristol's polling station. To make the ballot happen, five people have to put in long working days, from 6 a.m. till around midnight when the vote count and protocol would normally have been completed. Though they are not volunteers their remuneration is modest, around £50 for the day, which is equivalent to the rate paid to polling station staff in Poland. In the view of the presiding

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[362] Jon E. Fox, "The uses of racism: whitewashing new Europeans in the UK," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 11 (2013): 1871-1889. DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2012.692802. Jon E. Fox, Laura Moroşanu, and Eszter Szilassy, "The racialization of the New European migration to the UK," Sociology 46, no. 4 (2012): 680–695.

[363] Jon E. Fox and Magda Mogilnicka, "Pathological integration, or, how East Europeans use racism to become British," *The British Journal of Sociology* 70, no. 1 (2017): 8.

officer "one has to be born with a sense of civic duty[364]" to get involved in organising a vote outside the country, and this was how he explained the reasons for his involvement.

But that sense of civic duty is not necessarily a singular orientation, even if in the broadest sense it is animated by a feeling of political obligation to one's nation. Both the consul and the presiding officer, uneasily, hinted at conflicts within diasporic networks that often seemed to hinder cooperation between the consular mission and citizens abroad. Their descriptions of the drawbacks of working through national frames is consistent with literatures on diasporas in general[365], and intra-community conflicts specifically as they were shown to be a barrier to deeper political engagement[366]. The consul observed it would be much easier to build and manage relationships with a single partner, of course, but that would not be feasible given the lack of cooperation and the degree of autonomy of various diasporic actors.

The trope of Polish networks being perceived as dispersed and disorganised recurred in many interviews, both with voters in external elections[367] and with activists advocating the rights of migrants from Poland and Central Europe. The latter sometimes compared different forms and levels of organising between different diasporic networks in Bristol, and saw the relatively low level of organisation of Poles as a barrier for developing political representation both on the local and national scales. However, this narrative of disorganised diasporic networks is underpinned by an assumption of their shared aims, or a normative view that they should work together. And very often, neither is the case.

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[364] The exact word, as recorded in my field notes, was "społecznik." It does not translate well from Polish to English as a noun derived from "społeczeństwo," which means "society," and describes someone who is an activist but whose activism derives from a sense of social obligation rather than political conviction.

[365] Mohan, "Embedded cosmopolitanism and the politics of obligation."

[366] Joyce Jiang, "The limitations of community organising: an analysis of intra-community tensions among Polish immigrant workers in South Somerset, UK" (forthcoming).

[367] Interview with Paweł, 25 October 2015.

A Polish activist with over 10 years of experience as a community organiser had the following to say about her early work in Bristol:

"We tried to set up with other [Polish] organisations, because you've got the Anglo-Polish Society, right, and the Ex-Combatants Club, and then there was that newspaper Bristol.pl, and there was Bristol24.pl […], and Polish schools, and we tried to meet every now and again and maybe create, what was it, someone called it… United… I think it abbreviated as ZOP[368], United Polish Organisations. Something like that. We tried to create a united voice so we then could speak to, for example, the city council through this… this organisation."

I pointed out this idea sounds a lot like the Somali Forum[369] and she responded "Exactly, yes, yes. But this one, it didn't really work out". Why? "Well, I don't know, there were no spats or anything. I think it just, organically, somehow faltered." But asked if she felt there were many similarities in what they all were doing as organisations, she said: "No, everyone had their own, so to say, turf. So, I don't know, I don't think so[370]". As Giles Mohan argued, diasporic networks are enmeshed in multiple social relations that may pull them in various directions[371]. My work shows this pull may not be just down to vested interests, which Mohan explores, but also stems from having different aims or values, or simply not recognising the need to work together. I will further elaborate on this trope in Chapter 4 when discussing labour and community organising.

Given all these difficulties, I was puzzled to hear that the presiding officer never casts his vote. He explained that he felt Polish elections affected him very little; he forewent his right to vote because he would not feel comfortable deciding on matters that concerned

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[368] Zjednoczone Organizacje Polonijne in Polish.

[369] See http://bristolsomaliforum.org.uk, accessed 8th May 2016.

[370] Interview with Lena, 29 March 2017.

[371] Mohan, "Embedded cosmopolitanism and the politics of obligation."

other people and were for others to decide. On the other hand, he felt strongly affected by British general elections and hence naturalised as a citizen as soon as he could, in part to get the franchise. And yet, he put in a lot of work to organise the election for other Poles as he felt each person should decide how to go about their right to vote taking into account their specific circumstances and expectations of the future. He said: "if I was planning to go back, I would be more likely to vote in Polish elections[372]."

This shows just how complex the links between national belonging, social obligation and external voting are. The presiding officer's involvement in this political process, which at the same time seems distant to him, in fact shows that he cares about other migrant citizens who live nearby more than about his old and distant country. In this context, while it seemed clear that the very structure of the external voting process in Bristol may privilege conservative political orientations over progressive ones, the overriding concern was still care for fellow citizens. Not in the sense of a distant and half-imagined land, but as a concern for those who share the migrant citizen's fate. In a diasporic setting such care is often likely to be articulated through ethnic categories and enacted through national frames as we see in this chapter, and as it will be further shown in chapters on organising and campaigning. However, rather than being read as an expression of nationalism or patriotism, this care can instead be driven by a sense of fairness and the right to political participation above all else.

Selecting external voting in Polish elections and local voting in Bristol elections as the first window on EU citizenship aimed to generate grounds for a discussion of the role of mundane and non-activist modes of citizenship as claiming the rights of EU citizenship. However, the analysis of participant observation and on-the-spot interviews with voters and polling station workers instead points to a discrete trope of transnational politics which is nonetheless enacted along national frames. This is because the narratives of research participants, who engaged in voting in a transnational setting, were typically

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[372] Research notes, 24 May 2015.

articulated through the themes of ethnicity and ethnic loyalties. Key amongst those were the tension between physical distance and emotional proximity to the country left behind, and the notion of being pushed to leave Poland because of political and economic conditions, rather than being pulled to migrate to the UK.

In what follows, politics of external voters was chiefly animated by ethnicised political imaginations. It also often displayed traits of nationalism understood not necessarily as a coherent ideological programme, but as a grounded social practice. Siniša Malešević argues such nationalism may not always be as visible as forms of "virulent" nationalism, but it is nonetheless a formidable political force. He argues:

> "Nationalist ideologies derive their force from the micro-world: from the sense of loyalty and the intense micro-level emotional attachments that human beings develop and maintain with significant others. In this sense, nationalism is deeply grounded in the micro-universe of daily relations[373]."

He calls this kind of nationalism "grounded," partly because it is deeply rooted in ordinary social practices, and partly because it is a steady and unrelenting component of contemporary political landscape. He argues that "an effectively and firmly grounded nationalism entails a stable coordination of organisational, ideological, and micro-interactional realms[374]," and that it is on the rise today[375]. While literatures on socio-political effects of migration on migrants often read it through the lens of transnationalism, conviviality, cosmopolitanism, this chapter shows that this is not necessarily so and some such effects are best read through the lens of ethnicity, ethnic proximity and distance – and, sometimes, nationalism.

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[373] Siniša Malešević, *Grounded Nationalisms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2019): 14.

[374] Ibidem.

[375] Siniša Malešević, "The Rise and Rise of Grounded Nationalisms," *Ethnopolitics* 17, no. 5 (2018): 553-557.

This is in line with literatures on the effects of migration on the receiving society, which are often framed through the tension between contact and threat effects. In their meta-analysis study of intergroup contact theory conducted in 2006, Thomas F. Pettigrew and Linda R. Tropp confirmed that in most cases, contact between different groups reduces prejudice between them just as the contact theory holds[376]. However, a study conducted the same year in Germany pointed to a greater complexity than meta-analytic analysis can show: that the power of intergroup contact effects depends on the size of the geographic unit studied – and is less profound on the scale of a nation-state – and that it also may depend on national policies, immigration regimes, political discourses, economic variables, and the strength of minority political voices[377]. In the case of external voting, contact with the receiving society prompted reflection on, and ongoing reconstruction of, the voters' attachment to their country and nation of origin. This argument is explored in depth in the next section.

## Participating distantly, caring deeply

The presiding officer's confession that he does not vote because he is not expecting to go back to Poland was only baffling since he was so heavily involved in organising the election. However, this attitude of linking the act of external voting with expectations of the future was not at all unusual amongst voters whom I interviewed a few months later, during the parliamentary election in October 2015. Many spoke of their hopes and expectations, and their general future oriented-connection to Poland, rather than their

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[376] Thomas F. Pettigrew and Linda R. Tropp, "A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90, no. 5 (2006): 751–783.

[377] Ulrich Wagner, Oliver Christ, Thomas F. Pettigrew, Jost Stellmacher, and Carina Wolf "Prejudice and minority proportion: contact instead of threat effects," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (2006): 380–390.

roots or identity as a reason to vote. That said, their past oriented connection was never quite so distant either, and both these concerns taken together is what I call the politics of absence. If politics of urban presence, understood as political participation of migrants in the place of residence, is defined as such that "may offer openings for alternative forms of belonging[378]" then this is politics of urban absence. It is urbanised because, as it has been shown, external voting is organised in migrant agglomerations, relies on diplomatic infrastructure, and requires a high density of diasporic networks. The function of absence from the country of origin points to alternative forms of belonging that stem from the intersection of one's care for the country and nation of origin not as an ideological abstract but through roots and routes, past or future, which produce the effect of national belonging through enactments such as external voting. These enactments also give people excluded from electoral politics a sense of agency at a distance: one does not have to be physically present to enact rights to political participation. Further, ideology or nationalist sentiments so visible on the surface can play negligible part in such enactments. Instead, they are animated by a sense of care, responsibility, or belonging despite physical distance – because emotional distance is better expressed in inches than miles.

Just consider my interview with Paulina and Hubert, a young and well educated couple who, as it later turned out, were vocal supporters of Razem (Together), a new party of internationalist social democrats. It later turned out their party did relatively well in the UK and won close to six percent of the vote, against just three percent in Poland. Paulina and Hubert came to cast their votes with their daughter Emilka, who at the time was four years old, and our interview touched on many of the themes that came up across my data on external voting.

Why do you vote, I ask, and she says, "Because it's important." He adds "Important, it matters. We want to feel…" "Democracy," she interjects, "It's democracy…" But that does not really explain why they vote, does it, and so I want to know why voting in Polish

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[378] Darling, "Acts, ambiguities, and the labour of contesting citizenship," 729.

elections while they are in Britain matters to them. And to him, the key thing is this: "Even though we live here, we know it matters, in the perspective of us going back to Poland, of our future, someday. So we want to have influence over what goes on in Poland, still." And this is the future-oriented connection with the other place where one is absent now, but one hopes to be, or just might reasonably expect to be, present one day. That said, this future oriented connection is often inseparable from the past connection because, as she clarifies immediately: "We feel Polish, and we want to influence Polish politics, and right now this – she means external voting – is the only way we can have any influence at the moment." So do they want to go back, I wonder? "We don't know yet but returning to Poland is an option that we're considering, and so we want the situation to be as good as possible," he says. And she agrees, but clearly thinks there is more to it. "Yeah, and however you look at it, from our perspective it's… even if we never go back to Poland, we still use the ability to influence things there."

This is the moment where it clicks, and the interview takes a different turn, as he admits: "And we still, actually, are more interested in what goes on in Poland than in Great Britain." That opens things up, finally: "Yes, that's it… the migrant's fate" she says and laughs. "I mean, when we open a web browser, the first news site we look up is always Polish news."

They said earlier they had lived in the UK for five years and they still care more for the deceptively distant Polish politics than the British politics that surrounds them and so often objectifies them. Perhaps, Polish politics is not as distant as it seems? So my next question is about whether they vote in British local elections. She says "Yes, on occasion, but we're not as regular," and he adds "European, too." So which are more important, if they can evaluate it like that? "Polish [elections] are the most important," Paulina says without hesitation, and adds the following point, making an effort to find words which would precisely express feelings that clearly are important to her: "Emotional, the most emotional… so that's the vote for Polish parliament, and president." Meaning?

"I mean, okay, I won't say that everyone votes on emotions but I do vote on emotions… maybe not that… I'm more emotional about elections for the Polish

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*sejm* and *senat*[379], and president, than those in Great Britain, maybe because I still feel Polish. So Polish politics feels closer still. So it's in that sense. What I take into account when I choose a candidate to vote for, that's not a purely emotional choice. I try to always vote according to my beliefs, and sometimes it's more of a practical choice, never mind…"

I try to understand and ask, when you decide, do you read what the parties suggest? "Yes, we try to decide on merit," she answers, and he adds "Both in local and parliamentary[380]…" Their choice who to vote for, which was the subject of the remainder of our interview, was dictated by a fairly complex political judgement. They took into account their values, but also the prospects of a particular candidate or party, and sometimes they voted tactically. An overriding motivation though was emotion, and that made them prioritise external elections that from another standpoint might seem the least relevant, but which mattered to them the most. That said, these emotive choices also fed back into their political judgements and impacted on who they decided to support in elections.

Their decision to vote externally in the first place, and whom to support in the second place, is a neat example of what Andrew Sayer describes as "reasoning with emotions". He draws on "a broadly cognitive view of emotions as a form of evaluative judgement of matters affecting or believed to affect our well-being and that of others and other things we care about." This leads him to argue that our "judgements may be felt rather than articulated, but they can provide highly discriminating and valuable responses to the flow of experience[381]." Paulina and Hubert not only felt their political judgements instead of having them all thought through, but it was also the experience of political participation that further shaped their values. They always voted, because it was important to them,

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[379] The lower and the upper legislative chamber.

[380] Interview with Paulina and Hubert, 25 October 2015.

[381] Sayer, *Why Things Matter to People*, 36.

and it was important to them, because they always did it. But rather than a circular argument, this is better seen as an iterative process of enacting identity and citizenship simultaneously in a way that is consequential and leads to evaluative political judgements. Acting politically through the electoral process was constitutive of who they were and formed a fundamental part of their sense of agency, that is the capacity "to have influence over what goes on" over there.

Their politics did not mainly derive from either place or mobility construed in terms of absolute space, but rather articulated place and mobility in relative and, above all, relational registers that unlike absolute space also have a clear temporal dimension[382]. Paulina and Hubert's sense of care for Poland shows how their political imagination unfolds in a social space that is relative and exists through human relations that create it – their links with friends and family over there are what prompts them to enact citizenship over here. Furthermore, their sense of agency, shaped by the acts of voting in Polish elections, signifies not just the existence of space created through social connections but a topological folding of this space, when physical distance is distorted by people's actions and relations, which mean that things distant in absolute terms can be brought very closely together through social practices[383]. This sense of agency exists in social fields created from within people, which are represented by their hopes, memories, fantasies and desires: a whole world that is much richer politically than the framework of long-distance nationalism would allow.

This is not to say that physical distance no longer matters. It does, and friction of distance is a key factor to consider in migration research, despite economic and technological change[384]. However, different kinds of distance and proximity have to be considered to

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[382] David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development* (London and New York, Verso, 2006): 119-148.

[383] Allen, *Topologies of Power*.

[384] Michael Samers and Michael Collyer, *Migration: Second Edition*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2017): 40.

make sense of diverse political enactments of migrant citizens. This also includes attention to the reach of citizenship practices. Drawing on the example of environmental activism in South Africa, Clive Barnett and Dianne Scott argued that the rights and obligations of citizens are "shaped by different actors' capacities to project authority and influence over distance by enacting different modalities of *reach*[385]." In their example, focused on activist modes of enacting citizenship, the key process was the creation of "new forms of proximity between actors located in different parts of the world[386]." External voting does the opposite, as it is an enactment of citizenship that maintains already existing forms of proximity in an attempt to withstand their pulling apart by distance. And the felt, rather than rationalised, importance of external voting as the way of practicing political proximity was a recurring theme in my interviews with other voters.

Another voter Paweł, when asked whether it was routine for him to travel from Cheltenham to Bristol to participate in Polish elections replied: "But of course! It's my privilege, though I see it as a duty". Asked if it always had been the case he said:

> "No, I'll admit that not always. Just after I emigrated, after I left for England, I didn't feel a need to belong… no, maybe differently, I didn't feel it was my duty. But I've lived here for eight years now and I came to a conclusion, maybe three or four years ago, so after five years of living abroad… It's my national identity, so to speak."

So it is about identity more than it is about politics? "Yes, yes – I don't get mixed up in politics[387]," he said. Other voters too, when interviewed, gave similar explanations for voting in Polish elections in Bristol even if they voted for very different parties to one

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[385] Clive Barnett and Diane Scott, "The reach of citizenship: locating the politics of industrial air pollution in Durban and beyond," *Urban Forum* 18, no. 4 (2007): 291.

[386] Ibidem, 306.

[387] Interview with Paweł, 25 October 2015.

another. Asked why he voted Miłosz, a young man in his thirties who travelled from Weston-Super-Mare to participate in elections, said:

"Why…? Don't know, never really had to answer this question because it's natural for me. I somehow feel it, why… And because it's important. For sure, the situation in Poland is important for me too, by the way, I've got mates, friends, family there, who all still live there, and it's important for me how this country is shaped, and how I would like it to be, no?"

Asked if he's planning to go back, he replied: "Well, I don't plan to go back to Poland. I'm not convinced whether we'll stay in Great Britain, actually, but to Poland… I mean, I don't intend to. I don't discard going back as a possibility, but rather… rather not for now[388]." He later added that, if anything, he would consider going to live and work in Canada because it seemed like a good environmental and economic setting for him. While it is not particularly easy to emigrate to Canada with a Polish passport, he thought he could feasibly move there since he had naturalised as a British citizen soon after he earned the qualifying period of residence in the UK, which at the time of the interview was six years for EU citizens. However, when asked if he had voted in British elections, Miłosz said:

"No, last time I didn't vote. I simply had a dilemma, because I'd vote for a party which would make many things harder for immigrants. But because I'm a migrant myself, and I know this would directly affect people I know, my friends, or family who maybe might want to come here one day. But I have, you know, that understanding that some controls over migration should be in place, somehow, because if you don't have that then look what happens in many cases, no? So I didn't vote, basically, I abstained, because I had a conflict of interests. A conflict of interests, and of internal feelings."

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[388] Interview with Miłosz, 25 October 2015.

But is he similarly conflicted when voting in Polish elections? "No – he says chuckling – in Polish, I'm not[389]." By this, he meant that over there he is not conflicted because over there he is not a migrant, but a member of the nation and the society through birth, and that allows him to vote for immigration controls over there without feeling conflicted.

This leads onto the second significant trope evident in the narratives I collected on external voting in Polish elections, that is the blatant anti-migration sentiments of migrant citizens. Anti-migration attitudes and beliefs cropped up as frequently as the intertwined sense of care for the distant family and friends, and sense of agency generated through the act of external voting. It may sound paradoxical that, despite being migrant citizens themselves, Polish voters time and time again expressed political sentiments that were oriented against migration and migrants in general. But as the following section will show, these orientations again have more to do with the politics of absence – forms of belonging that are enacted with reference to one's roots and routes, and that aim to counter the forces of absolute distance through enactments national identity in a migrant setting – than the politics of presence in a place where one is.

## Reluctant migrations, intimate nationalisms

In interviews, voters often pointed to migration flows and border regimes as important factors animating their political imaginations and actions. Their own experience of migration did not automatically translated into pro-migration views, however. Many did not see their own mobility as something they cherished, but spoke of it as a more or less inevitable life choice that they had to make, which was all but forced on them by political and economic forces that were largely out of their control. This is perhaps best illustrated

[389] Interview with Miłosz, 25 October 2015.

by a passage from my interview with Katarzyna and Staszek, a middle-age couple who were both in their fifties and had three grown-up children living with them in the UK.

When asked if they were regular voters Staszek said: "We're voting for the second time[390]" – despite having lived in the UK for over a decade, they only participated in the two 2015 elections, the presidential in May and now the parliamentary in October. So why not before? Katarzyna hastily responded that what made them vote was:

> "The real chance for improvement… the real chance for improvement. I hope if something is going to change, what we think about, then we're not the kind of people who like emigration. Simply put, what went on in Poland for several, more than a dozen years, just made many people emigrate."

Here, she was referring to her expectation of the electoral victory for the nationalist-conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party whose candidate Andrzej Duda had been voted in as president six months earlier. Indeed, PiS won a parliamentary majority at that election, thus ending the eight-year rule of the liberal Civic Platform (PO)[391]. She later talked about their hardship in Poland in the 1990s, when the country's economy was rapidly liberalised and, after decades of shortages under the communist rule, they finally could buy anything but could afford nothing. They also both spoke about their failed entrepreneurial endeavours which ended up with bankruptcies and forced Staszek to seek work abroad long before the whole family moved to the UK. He said of that time and of their intentions:

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[390] Interview with Katarzyna and Staszek, 25 October 2015.

[391] In Poland the PO is casually described as a liberal party although in the European Parliament it is part of The European People's Party (EPP) which is liberal-conservative and centre-right, and until 2009 included Britain's Conservative Party among others.

"We're from the generation that once tried to change things in Poland, in the 1990s, and that period was a bad period for Poland. The system[392], which was created in Poland at that time meant that people who really, from the bottom-up, wanted to do anything were, generally speaking, simply destroyed, on all levels. And now, after eight years of the activity of the Civic Platform we're reaching the conclusion that radical changes are needed, and we take this, this, maybe, not a lesson but, er, so to speak, this perspective on Poland we take from the fact that we're here and we observe the political system here, which we find more suitable for us than the system in Poland".

When questioned further, they said they felt politicians were more prone to corruption and nepotism in a proportional representation system, and that they were more accountable to their voters in the first past the post system. To substantiate that they mentioned canvassing, which does not take place in Poland, and generally felt the electorate was respected more in the UK. They also spoke of their mistrust of Poland's broadcast media – or "the Polish-speaking media" as they put it, which usually implies suspicion of outlets owned by multinational companies at best, and at worst is an expression of antisemitism incensed by the increasingly faded elite status of several Polish journalists of Jewish background chiefly associated with Gazeta Wyborcza[393], the

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[392] Talking about the system, which also can mean a stich-up (*układ* in Polish) is usually a giveaway for nationalist, revisionist and right-wing narratives that paint the 1989 Round Table Agreement between the communist party and democratic opposition as a betrayal of true, national revolution. In this narrative Poland in the 1990s and 2000s was governed by the system, or a stich-up (*układ*) of post-communist and post-opposition elites, oligarchic business figures, secret services and organized crime that betrayed ordinary people. This narrative was set out in a series of speeches by Jarosław Kanczyński, the almighty but unaccountable chairman of the PiS. See for example: Jarosław Kaczyński (2006) *Tekst wystąpienia Jarosława Kaczyńskiego w debacie o 100 dniach rządu Kazimierza Marcinkiewicza'*, accessed 14 July 2017: http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,3169952.html.

[393] Widely seen as cosmopolitan, liberal, and Jewish, public intellectuals linked with Gazeta Wyborcza and its chief editor Adam Michnik have been under fire from the nationalist movements and parties since the early 1990s. This hostility related to both their backing of Poland's politically and economically liberal

official newspaper of the democratic opposition, which in the 1990s became Poland's largest broadsheet.

In terms of their political orientation, the overriding concern was the feeling of displacement away from Poland, and of becoming the migrants they never really wanted to be. And their reason for voting was that they wanted to see revolutionary changes over there, so when they reach retirement age they can return to Poland. But Staszek stressed the desire to:

> "return to a normal country, to a country where, excuse my language, you don't feel like having a bloody fit when you turn on a news channel! Though really, at present, we mainly get news from the internet. This so-called Polish-speaking television is of no interest to us[394]."

By this point they were both declaring right-wing views despite not being asked. Staszek was more vocal and he also spoke against the welfare state. They both saw Britain as a country that gave them a chance to prove themselves, and not as one that provided a safety net when they slipped through the Polish system of social protections. When asked whether the Eurosceptic and anti-migrant rhetoric of the British right had challenged them and their views, Staszek emphatically replied:

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transformations, and to their support for communism as young students in the 1950s and 1960s. The fact these intellectuals were often children of activists in the pre-war Communist Party of Poland – which was persecuted by Poland's nationalist regime in the 1930s and then repeatedly purged by Stalinists – has been a staple part of the narrative on ideological continuity between communism and liberalism in Poland, and the lack of genuine transformation to democracy. Nationalist authors also explicitly argued that it was precisely this lack of genuine transformation that forced many to emigrate from Poland. This case was famously outlined in: Rafał A. Ziemkiewicz, *Michnikowszczyzna. Zapis choroby* (Warszawa: Red Horse, 2006). The argument on impure, communist origins of Poland's media was recently consolidated in: : Dorota Kania, Jerzy Targalski, and Maciej Marosz, *Resortowe Dzieci* (Warszawa: Media. Fronda, 2013).

[394] Interview with Katarzyna and Staszek.

"No. No. I'll tell you what, when it comes to the issue of leaving EU, this is the right of the Brits to… to have the right to debate this, this issue, and it is their sovereign decision. Still, I think that our situation here, it rather won't change. Because we've lived here for a while, we can see what the situation is more or less, and I think it won't have a major impact on us if Great Britain leaves the EU and just imposes some restrictions or something like that[395]."

However, they also admitted they were both in the process of applying for permanent residence cards to ensure their immigration status in the UK in case of the vote to leave, while their three children were gathering documents to apply for British citizenship. And then, as if to find something less divisive than what he had said so far, Staszek added:

"The intentions of all people are similar. The readiness to participate in elections shows that the majority of people can see some, some, I'd say, some way to resolve those Polish problems. They boil down to… they always seem to have one common denominator… I mean everyone will say that in Poland, right, we want to have a certain level of prosperity. And then, the differences are about, so to say, where it's all meant to come from. (…) The only, er, the only I'd say difference you make in election is linked with the willingness… with the awareness of where it's all supposed to come from. I understand people who have some sort of health issues or, don't know, some adaptability issues and so on… They're simply going to vote for the social side to get something out of it."

But in his view, things were simple: "you either do something and have something, or [not and have] nothing[396]." That was why he self-identified as a right-winger. He had a vision of a country that will make people work hard but that will also offer abundant

[395] Ibidem.

[396] Ibidem.

opportunities to live a prosperous life, not one that makes emigration the surest path to prosperity. His nationalism was not distant and abstract. It was proximate and personal. After all, as Malešević put it, "nationalism is not only a political ideology but also a particular form of human subjectivity and social practice that is firmly embedded in the everyday life of modern social orders[397]."

When conducting interviews I encountered numerous voters of all ages and backgrounds that saw politics in ways that resembled the politics articulated by Katarzyna and Staszek, and expressed very similar feelings to them. The key tension emerging from those encounters was the emotional and logical disjuncture between the voters' own immigration status and experience as a somewhat privileged category of migrants, afforded to them by the EU rights to free movement, and their conviction that national boundaries need to be shored up and immigration controlled. This was often followed up by their assertion that their presence in the UK, while a result of autonomous decision-making, was partly driven by political and economic processes greater than themselves. In this sense, there was no contradiction in their thinking about migration and borders between their political beliefs enacted through voting and quotidian experience of life in the UK. It was also the mundane experience of this migrant life that made them care even more for Poland, either because they were planning to return or were angry that their home country was unable to give them what other countries did, in their view.

Tomasz, a truck driver who had lived in the South-West of England for 13 years at the time of the interview but had never voted before, similarly justified his engagement in external elections. He asked:

"If I can get on with my life in this country, why can't I get on with my life in Poland? I know this may not change much but... not sure how old you are, and how interested in Poland you are, but for the last 25 years we had the same people

[397] Malešević, "The rise and rise of grounded nationalisms," 554.

in government that we had in the late 1980s and 1990s. […] They should be eradicated from our political life. […] Why are we even having this conversation here? Why are we not having this conversation in Poland, you and me? Because it's impossible to live there[398]!"

It was no different when I interviewed a group of young airspace engineers: Mariusz, Janusz and Asia, all in their twenties. They moved to Bristol a couple of years before to work for Rolls Royce as subcontractors, and said they took part in all rounds of external elections organised in the city in 2015. They never really made the effort to engage in local elections though, and thought it resulted from the transience of their life in Bristol. This could also get in the way of external voting, of course, but Mariusz said their participation in external elections is important so that they "have something to go back to[399]" and Janusz added "yeah, and to me, there's a need for a change in Poland." When asked if the fact they left Poland affects their political judgements, Mariusz replied:

> "Technically, we're migrants here. But what some parties in Poland say about how we should welcome people who don't particularly want to adapt to our culture… When we arrived here we had to adapt. We don't drive on the right hand side and we have adapted, more or less, to this culture. I think if they adapted, if they came on the same terms on which we came, then it's okay, but[400]…"

Like other voters whom I interviewed, they seemed more concerned with emigration than immigration. Janusz observed, "promises were made that the Poles [who emigrated] are going to come back but somehow they're not." Mariusz, laughing, added that "there was an election campaign ad saying the Poles will come back from abroad, and then they guy who said that, he emigrated himself." He meant Donald Tusk, the PO leader who quit as

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[398] Interview with Marcin, 25 October 2015.

[399] Interview with Mariusz, Janusz, and Asia, 25 October 2015.

[400] Ibidem.

Poland's prime minister to became president of the European Council. According to Mariusz, Tusk promised that "Polish migrants will come back, we will all be making a lot of money, and then he left himself. He is making a lot of money," and they all laughed at that. But they did not come across as cynical, and Mariusz said he voted "to have something to go back for. So that this country takes better care of itself, and not so much for others[401]."

I remarked that it did not sound like a thumping endorsement of the EU despite them being in Bristol because of Europeanisation, but Janusz could "see no link here[402]." They did not think their presence in Britain had much to do with the EU and they were not worried about the EU referendum either. As with other interview participants, they assumed they would be able to remain in the UK regardless of its outcome given the shortage of airspace engineers in the country. They said their respective teams at Rolls Royce comprised of between a quarter and a half of foreign nationals, and they also argued migrant workers delivered many crucial services in less qualified roles.

This was a commonly held view amongst voters I interviewed that day. Paweł from Cheltenham, asked if he felt European, replied:

> "To me, European citizenship doesn't exist, there's no such thing. (…) The European Union helped me, for example, choose England as a destination country, but it didn't make me decide to leave. I might have chosen another country[403]."

This may sound paradoxical, but the story of the three airspace engineers' migration to Bristol helps illustrate how people can square their life trajectories with disdain, or at best ambivalence, towards the EU. Janusz said they got "enticed" to come to Bristol, and Asia

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[401] Ibidem.

[402] Ibidem.

[403] Interview with Paweł, 25 October 2015.

said that in fact "it was them who came for us". They explained that recruiters working for Rolls Royce came to their university before they graduated and offered them jobs and generous pay[404]. They did not mind migrating but they did not feel like migrants either. It was clear to them that a migrant is somebody else, the other who refuses to adapt to a new culture, and someone who actually wants to live wherever they please. They thought they lived where they were enticed to go by a foreign corporation, and their main reflection was that they deserved to be offered similar conditions in Poland without the need to migrate in the first place. If they were to live wherever they pleased, this would likely be Poland, as evidenced by their desire – realistic or not – to go back one day.

These are reluctant migrants who are driven away from their country of origin, rather than drawn towards their country of destination, and they do not identify as migrants. Their status is always qualified in the way they narrate their own subject positions. They are either *technically migrants*, or *migrants unlike others*, or *migrants for the time being* – until they can return. They are only partly responsible for their own mobility as they see it. They did not want to leave – they were pushed out of their country by what they perceived as economic lassitude and political ineptness.

The notion of long-distance nationalism hinges on the notion that migrants rebel against their multiple identities as they:

> "find it painful to accept themselves as hyphenated persons. If they are politically marginalized and economically subordinated in the metropoles where nonetheless they try their best to remain, for a hundred practical reasons, their emotional life and political psychology often remains nostalgically orientated towards a heimat which, thanks to capitalism and late-century technologies, retains a powerful daily grip over them[405]."

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[404] Interview with Mariusz, Janusz, and Asia.

[405] Anderson, *Long-Distance Nationalism*, 9.

However, the concept was developed with ethnic minorities in mind and not necessarily migrants. In his essay, Anderson observes that the process of European integration increasingly undermines the role of nation states in regulating the economy, but not so much on institutional and symbolic levels. While regarding the former things have moved on considerably in the last 25 years with the development of the EU's institutional framework[406], the lack of symbolic attachment is still widely acknowledged, whether it is seen as a deficiency or as a defining feature that underlines the complementary status of EU citizenship[407]. Due to these institutional and symbolic differences between the EU and nation states, Anderson foresaw the possibility of "an ethnicization of existing nationalities[408]" in the EU that would proceed as a response to political and social exclusion migrant citizens would face when moving between member states.

My empirical findings show that while some degree of such ethnicisation might be happening, I would not associate it with processes at the European level but with migrant citizens' lived experience of migration: the sense of loss, or rejection, or disappointment with their country of origin, which in turn drove their desire for a radical change in 2015. This is why, instead of calling it long-distance, I conclude that nationalistic sentiments articulated by these voters were actually intimate and animated by their emotions and memories of what Poland was when they left, rather than desires and fantasies about what it could or should be.

Thus far, this chapter explored tropes related to migration reconceptualised not merely as presence, but also as absence. They included deep care for the distant nation and proximate compatriots, as well as intimate and experiential nationalism. The former related to reconstructing one's links to the distant country through electoral participation,

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[406] Amin and Thrift, *Arts of the Political*, 135-156.

[407] Bellamy, "Evaluating union citizenship," 597–611.

[408] Anderson, *Long-Distance Nationalism*, 11.

and the latter involved evaluating one's motivation to migrate and fate as a migrant in a political register. In doing so, research participants reconfigured their subject positions from being immigrants – a category they only "technically" felt part of – to being emigrants. These narratives enabled them to articulate grievances against successive Polish governments and articulate their own position in the transforming world.

The next and final section of this chapter turns to electoral participation in local elections to show that enactments of migrant citizenship through local voting similarly escape reductionist and singular classifications. Instead, voting is again shown to be the device allowing migrant citizens enact their desire for belonging and voice, which results in the emergence of diverse politics that try to accommodate national identity in a transnational setting.

## Political orientations in and out of place

When interviewing external voters who took part in Polish elections, I also asked them questions about their participation locally. Paweł, the voter from Cheltenham who told me that he started voting to shore up his national identity and from a sense of duty, said he never voted locally "for the first three or four years" because he "didn't care about it at all, but then it changed." He added it was around the same time when he started voting in Polish external elections, but for different reasons:

> "It's about, so to speak, my relationship with the place where I live. It's Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, so however you look at it, I've lived in this place for some time and it's also mine now. (…) In Poland, I used to live in many different places. A couple of years here, a couple of years there, one degree here, another degree there. And I had never developed a connection to any particular place. But

here, for eight years now, I've been in one place. And I'll tell you what, I don't intend to change that. I like it[409]."

Paweł then spoke about his life in Cheltenham, which he compared to that of his Polish friends. He thought some of them neglected their Polish identity – which he described as "beautiful" and something to nurture – and they lived cosmopolitan and somehow disconnected lives instead. Other, in his words, "never really left Poland mentally" and spent their time watching Polish television channels without ever trying to seriously connect with the new place. When challenged that his actions were then akin to flipping the channels, and trying to connect in multiple ways at once – which I thought was a handy metaphor of transnationalism – he said it was more than that and as a migrant citizen one should "proudly represent where you came from, but genuinely and politely live in the society that is around you." His vision was one of a migrant spirit that is creative and forges new identities, but that such identities should not be completely disconnected from ethnicity or place. This exposed an interesting intersection of the local, the national and the transnational in his political thinking, but it did not make him feel particularly warm about the EU. "I don't think the EU is any good," he said. Asked how he would vote in the forthcoming referendum if he had a vote, he answered: "It's a tough question. I think… Leave." I asked him like I was asking everyone else whether it does feel somewhat contradictory to him. If it was not for the EU, and Poland being part of it, he would probably never live in Cheltenham. "Possibly. That's very likely… I think I would have a much harder start here, because of the legal set up like the right to work. I don't know if I'd come here in such situation. I'd likely choose another country, in such a case.[410]"

To better understand the motivations and concerns of migrant citizens voting locally, I conducted participant observation and short interviews during the May 2016 election for

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[409] Interview with Paweł, 25 October 2015.

[410] Interview with Paweł.

Bristol's mayor and city council. I chose Lawrence Hill ward as the research site due to a significant proportion of Central and Eastern Europeans living there. The ward also has a sizeable proportion of Somali residents, who are often EU citizens and secondary migrants. In addition, Somali community networks are an interesting case because they are well organised and politically connected in the city[411]. This came across quite strongly during the Race Equality Mayoral Question Time event organised in the neighbourhood about a month before the vote, where the only questions about specific community issues were by and about the Somalis. They comprised a large part of the audience too, while a survey conducted during the event showed only 4% of it identified as Eastern European[412]. Lawrence Hill is traditionally a Labour stronghold. Hibaq Jama, who holds one of the ward's two seats on the city council, was the first Somali councillor elected in the city. When a Somali candidate Ahmed Mohamed Duale ran for the Conservatives in 2015 he came in third with 15.13% of the vote[413]. During the 2016 election the Tories did not stand a Somali candidate and their vote share plummeted to around 4%[414].

The election day was scorching hot. I decided to observe the vote outside a polling station in St. Luke's church in Barton Hill neighbourhood, nearby a Polish shop, a Caribbean cafe, and a mosque that is predominantly attended by the Somalis[415]. For part of the time I assumed a double role, taking notes for my research with the Green Party's rosette. I was helping out Jon Eccles, the Green candidate who was at the station for most of the day but seemed to be really suffering from the heat. He had been sat in the sun since the morning and I came to relieve him in the mid-afternoon. This obviously had consequences – when I put on the Green rosette quite a few Labour organisers and candidates who had

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[411] Interview with Lena.

[412] Research notes, 5 April 2016.

[413] See http://www2.bristol.gov.uk/LocalElectionViewer?XSL=main&ShowElectionWard=true&ElectionId=69&WardId=10, accessed 2 August 2017.

[414] See http://www2.bristol.gov.uk/LocalElectionViewer2016?XSL=main&ShowElectionWard=true&ElectionId=70&WardId=23, accessed 2 August 2017.

[415] Research notes, 5 May 2016.

been friendly up until that point became wary. But it helped engage everyone else. People were chatty and friendly, possibly because it was a glorious day, and I stroke up conversations with polling station staff going out for a breather or a smoke. Traffic at the station was rather low, but everyone told me it had been busy during the morning school run with Barton Hill Primary just across the road. Every now and again someone came out of the high-rise blocks surrounding the church and walked slowly to the station, usually greeted somewhere along the way by one Labour activist or another. Labour run a tight operation here, most of the time they outnumber voters and there were no other campaigners aside from Jon, as he soon came back.

The chair of the Somali Forum was there too, and he greeted all the Somali voters coming in. He chatted to them in Somali but every now and again I picked up the words "yes we can," "Labour" and "Marvin." The latter presumably related to Marvin Rees, Labour's mayoral candidate. When I interviewed him later, he said he was there to explain to people the procedural aspects of the vote, such as that they could cast two votes in the council election as there were two seats contested. Apparently, to many it was confusing as they assumed they only had a single vote. He was adamant he was not campaigning but was very open with me about his own choices. In the meantime, the Labour Somali activists ushered people in and were constantly on their mobiles. It all seemed spectacularly well organised, and both Labour candidates had assistants passing phones to them and driving them around the ward.

When the polling station's presiding officer came out for a smoke we talked about migrant citizens' participation. To her, it was sometimes hard to know who is a migrant citizen, but she thought few of them turned out. Jon, the Green candidate, echoed her remarks and said that few Europeans living in Lawrence Hill even knew they had the right to vote when he canvassed them.

Identifying migrant citizens in the sparse crowd of voters was tricky, but I kept staring at everyone and eavesdropped diligently to catch non-English words. And there they were: Dariusz and Helena, a couple in their fifties who were chatting in Polish when I approached them. They had just voted and both were adamant that given they live in

Britain and pay British taxes, they should have some say in how things are run. But when asked further, it turned out their political imaginations were articulated through the familiar narratives of nation states and migration controls. Their voting history was particularly interesting. In the first election after arrival they voted Labour, out of gratitude for Tony Blair government's decision to not impose transition periods on the eight accession countries that joined the EU in 2004[416]. In the following elections they supported Liberal Democrats, partly out of disappointment with how things were going for them in Britain. At present, they said their key concern was immigration so they changed their allegiances again. When I asked who they were concerned with exactly, Helena replied "you know who[417]" but refused to elaborate. When pressed, they said too many people were coming to the UK in from outside Europe, and that these people were reluctant to work, that they caused social problems, and that inward migration had to be stopped. But Dariusz said they were also wary of supporting the most anti-immigration party as that might also affect them too, and besides the UK Independence Party did not field candidates in Lawrence Hill. So, in his words, they voted for the second-most anti-immigrant option.

As Dariusz and Helena walked away I interviewed another Polish couple, Grzesiek and Agata. They were both manual workers in their thirties, whom I had met through my earlier work. They voted Green, which surprised me after repeatedly hearing about Polish voters' consistently right-wing persuasions. Agata said they were swayed by election flyers with a strong focus on social justice, and Grzesiek said he particularly liked the housing policies. He wanted to see more socially owned homes being built. When I asked about migration policy, on which the Greens are possibly the most liberal party, Krzysztof answered it was fine with him. He said he loved the ability to come and settle in Bristol that he had, and for that reason thought no one else should be denied that. Agata was more

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[416] At the time only the UK, Ireland and Sweden opted out from the transition periods that lasted up to seven years in other EU member states.

[417] Research notes, 5 May 2016.

sceptical and said problems are sometimes stirred by migrants from outside Europe. But Grzesiek, if anything, thought that most problems were to do with "all those people[418]" and made a hand gesture towards a nearby council estate. Asked what he meant, he uttered "Angole" – a derogatory Polish term for the English – and stereotyped them as just going about on their mobility scooters and getting obese, instead of working. Agata was visibly taken aback by him being so blunt and disapproved, but Grzesiek insisted that if anyone could talk about a culture of worklessness in Lawrence Hill, it would be about the English not working and not migrants, from whichever country. He later moderated it by saying he respected everyone and just thought resources should be shared more fairly.

Few people showed up at the polling station, so I changed my tactics and moved to stand outside the Polish shop. It was much easier to identify migrant citizens, mainly Polish but also other East Europeans. However, many told me they did not vote, or did not know they could vote, and many did not know it was an election day at all. But then Ania, a woman in her thirties whom I also met through my previous work, stopped by to tell me she had voted for the first time in Britain earlier that day. She had lived in Bristol for a decade and had never voted before but, after numerous conversations with her friends living in the same ward, she decided to take part and vote for the party they all supported. Initially, she would not say which one. Asked about the forthcoming EU referendum, she said: "I am anxious about it. I'm anxious, as we don't know what's going to happen to us[419]". Did it affect her choice who to vote for in the local elections? "Yes, it affected it!" As she is leaving, she asks me how I voted, and I say Green. She laughs and says now she can tell me too, and that she also voted the Greens like many of her friends. The party's internationalist policies seemed to land particularly well with them, she said, because of the forthcoming EU referendum.

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[418] Research notes, 5 May 2016.

[419] Interview with Ania, 5 May 2016.

Alongside occasional indications that some migrant citizens embraced internationalist politics, there was another consistent trope running through many narratives I captured during external and local elections. It suggested migrant voters always feel somewhat out of place, and their attachment to imagining politics through national frames holds back their participation. This was perhaps best expressed by Basia, who lived in Bristol for over nine years. I interviewed her near a local polling station during the local election, only to hear about her reluctance to participate in any elections at all. When I asked about the looming Brexit vote, she said:

> "I don't know what I could vote for, because this is not my country, right? Okay, I live here, I work here, I raise my kids here, but it's not my country and it is not for me to decide for the English. I don't know what would be better for them, I haven't actually spoken to my English friends about this, what they would want in general, but what I would want is to not decide for them."

On the one hand, this statement contrasted strongly with her account of missing Bristol when she goes to Poland during holidays. On the other, it resonated with several other narratives of voters who felt the EU referendum was not something they should be deciding, however long their residency in Britain. The meaning of local politics and participation was thus negotiated through the national frame.

In his work on European citizenship Etienne Balibar observed a paradox of cosmopolitanism which, despite its ambitions of overcoming national forms, inevitably falls back on them to articulate its own terms. The importance of cosmopolitan belonging beyond nation states was nonetheless clear to him: without European people as a symbolic group and a political identity there could be no European public sphere and no European state "beyond technocratic appearances[420]." At the same time, however, Balibar warned against too strong a drift towards post-national approaches, so widespread in the late

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[420] Balibar, *We, the People of Europe,* 2.

1990s when he wrote, and did not think the key struggles over European citizenship can be adequately captured by the tension between defending and overcoming the nation. He saw a possibility that the resurgence of the national and the insurgence of the post-national are in fact manifestations of other, deeper processes.

Writing a few years later on the same theme, Rosi Braidotti reframed the processes of reconstructing European citizenship. She argued the key aspect of post-nationalism would be not so much to overcome the nation as to do away with ethnocentrism, and to rearticulate the figure of a citizen not as a subject of laws and a repository of agency but as a process through which laws are applied and agency is enacted[421]. Such citizenship can only be, as Balibar also argued, anchored in a multifarious European identity that offers the chance to overcome the hegemonic singularities of national identities and which is by design oriented towards cultural hybridity and exchange. This, I think, is a salient thought: that the post-national is not so much about looking away from the national form, as about engaging with it critically.

The theoretical foundations of such post-national thinking are solid, but the question is where such hybridity and openness are meant to come from. As shown in this section, and throughout the chapter, mobility alone is insufficient. Writers such as Yasemin Nuhoğlu Soysal, working on post-national forms of citizenship and belonging, have progressively accepted they inevitably exist in tension with national forms as the sites where rights are organised and cultures safeguarded[422]. But as Saskia Sassen observed, the post-national field is messy. It unfolds both *without* and *within* national forms – those *withins* are inevitably construed as cities – and it has several dimensions: legal, political,

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[421] Braidotti, "On becoming Europeans."

[422] Yasemin N. Soysal, "Post-national citizenship: rights and obligations of individuality," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Political Sociology*, ed. Edwin Amenta, Kate Nash and Alan Scott. (Malden, Oxford and Chichester: Blackwell, 2012): 383-393.

cultural, economic and psychological[423]. Ultimately, this leads to the recognition of various types of citizenship that are at least partly decoupled from nation states and includes "the emergence of social and political communities constituted through transborder migration[424]." My own empirical work, discussed in this chapter, shows that transborder migration may result in various citizenship processes and give rise to diverse politics. They may disrupt national frames, but they can also reinforce them.

## Conclusion: Extra-ordinary routines of political action

This chapter focussed on external voting practices of Polish citizens in Bristol and also commented on their participation in local elections to argue that transnational citizenship can be creatively enacted along national frames. First, it showed that external voting is a creative political enactment, arising from a multitude of reasons and emotions. In Bristol, organising the vote required state representatives and diasporic activists reaching to one another, and so it relied on particular diasporic infrastructures and institutions to facilitate political action. Nothing was obvious about it, which is perhaps best illustrated by the polling station's presiding officer who thought it was his civic duty to organise an election and then abstain from the vote. And then, the voters whom I interviewed did not "act out already written scripts[425]" but instead presented complex and nuanced narratives of their actions.

As I argued in Chapter 1, this illustrates that the focus on the figure of activist citizen[426] may obscure more understated and mundane – *ordinary* – processes[427] which allow

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[423] Saskia Sassen, "Towards post-national citizenship," in *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner (Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 2002): 277-291.

[424] Ibidem, 282.

[425] Isin and Nielsen, *Acts of citizenship*, 38.

[426] Isin, "Citizenship in flux."

[427] Neveu, "Of ordinariness and citizenship processes."

people to articulate and enact citizenship in extra-ordinary ways. Polish voters I interviewed acted on their sense of care for, and emotional proximity to, the country they left. This proximity stemmed from visceral existentialism rather than abstract ideology. This is in line with Malešević's argument on "grounded nationalism" which holds that "the omnipotence of nationalist habitus stems from its organisational, ideological and micro-interactional ground-ness[428]." They also turned out to vote as this gave them a sense of agency, regardless of their politics. Secondly, the experience of *emigration* often was more formative for these voters' politics than the experience of *immigration*. Or at least, these two experiences affected them in distinct ways, thus calling into question whether any politics of migration can be discussed without attending to politics of emigration, which was intertwined but distinct from the politics of immigration. Thirdly, my research of enactments of electoral rights suggested that progressive politics may indeed emerge from the politics of migration – but that it does not emerge by itself; that is, it does not result from transborder mobility alone. In the next chapter I return to this finding when discussing community and labour organising practices of Polish and EU migrant citizens.

The empirically grounded analysis presented above raises two questions that are consequential and will resurface in the chapters that follow. First, just how much these elections and formal political activity in general are derivative products of infrastructures and institutions, and to what extent they are means through which migrant citizens enact their political identity? If we seriously engage with the latter possibility then elections, from relatively dull administrative processes and non-events, turn into vehicles for political action in the sense of reassembling one's emotions and values while trying to connect with the world outside and influence things that, on a regular basis, one feels affected by. Secondly, just how routine are those seemingly depoliticised practices?

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[428] Malešević, "The rise and rise of grounded nationalisms."

From my own political standpoint I often found it hard to document the narratives of my research participants without a profound sense of discomfort and disagreement. When analysing these narratives, however, I developed an equally intense conviction that their political enactments, whether disagreeable or not, are creative. It may be discomforting that in the cases I explored here the experience of migration was often shown to create a new kind of nationalism rather than a new politics of cosmopolitanism, but this discomfort strongly points to the dangers of dismissing reactionary political processes as routine, or as a space of Rancièrian *police* – political control – rather than politics – political change[429]. When the proponents of migrants as a revolutionary subject ignore these processes, they flatten and distort the world of migrant politics and migrant citizenship.

That said, migrant citizenship can be also mobilised in progressive ways – and this will be explored further in the next two chapters on organising and campaigning.

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[429] Rancière, "Ten theses on politics."

## Chapter 4 | Organising: claiming rights across national frames

In the previous chapter I discussed voting practices of Polish migrant citizens in Bristol as a window on the enacted and experiential realities of EU citizenship. Research participants interviewed and observed in the course of the research drew on new grammars of political action – that is, "ways of being in the world, of experiencing one's own and the other's embodied subjectivity[430]" – which were based on collective identity, but at the same time distinctly personalised. They deployed ethnicised narratives to articulate and act on political concerns. These narratives were centred on the notions of communal and national belonging, but they problematised national citizenship to make sense of transnational spaces which migrant citizens inhabit, and to act politically within these spaces. The importance of this process is that it shows how political narratives of the old are deployed to articulate new concerns and interests, and to enact new identities.

I begin this chapter by elaborating on my observation that the subject matter of much of the research on migrant politics – that is spaces of nationalism, transnationalism, or newly emergent spaces that, it is argued, escape the logics of national belonging altogether – is in fact focused not so much on the *modes* of migrant politics, as on the *means* of doing it. I will do so by showing that migrants creatively engage with social networks and political processes, no matter if they run along national boundaries or across them, to act on their matters of concern. These matters, however, do not readily overlap with national or transnational belonging even if they are articulated and legitimised through them, and often articulate universalising rather than particularistic political agendas. In what

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[430] Kevin McDonald, *Global Movements: Action and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006): 1. Also see Therese O'Toole and Richard Gale, "Contemporary grammars of political action among ethnic minority young activists," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33, no. 1 (2010): 126-143.

follows, I will describe and analyse processes of migrant citizens' political participation through labour and community organising practices to bring to the fore the cosmopolitan traits of such political action, and to identify processes of democratic inclusion of migrant citizens that are practiced through everyday spaces of ordinary life.

The argument unfolds in three sections. The first section provides an empirically informed analysis of spatio-temporally situated and politically transformative claims of socioeconomic rights. In the second section these claims are shown to pivot from a condition of socioeconomic vulnerability, and a subjective sense of injustice. These chapters draw on the narratives of labour and community organisers to show that migrations in the aftermath of the 2004 enlargement of the EU produced an intensely political field where modalities of injustice were negotiated and social networks formed. These networks were formed with reference to national frames, but chiefly operated across them. Finally, the third section links the empirical material presented here with the framework of acts of citizenship to argue that politically transformative events are inevitably grounded in, and pivot from, mundane action in the social field which is driven by ordinary concerns and values.

## Migrants organising through work and place

Organising practices in Britain generally operate across national boundaries, although they may rely on ethnicised frames to enable and mobilise, or justify, the political participation of migrant citizens. Recent literatures on urban diversity provide multiple accounts of processes reconfiguring ethnicity either through engagement with ethnic *difference,* which underscores the role of encounter and event for the emergence of new types of ties, or through the emergent *commonalities* that are discovered in cosmopolitan encounters[431]. However, they often leave out the question of how "everyday social

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[431] Moroşanu, "Researching migrants' diverse social relationships."

practice can effectively contaminate political practice[432]" to bring about social change. This limitation has been recently recognised in labour studies where the political change unfolding through the intersection of organising practices in place – be they labour of community focused – has become part of research agendas [433]. Here, I frame labour and community organising – which I understand as political action through and by social networks that instigates social change – as a participatory process of reconfiguring political space that opens it up to enactments of migrant citizenship.

Networks – understood as sets of interactions of differential intensity – can be mobilised for political action and can also prefigure particular political effects in specific spatio-temporal contexts, but this is not a straightforward, causal relationship[434]. Firstly, the differential intensity of networked relations has a double meaning: it implies that density of social interactions varies between places, but it also accounts for the issues of presence and proximity that go beyond physical distance. Intensity therefore cannot be read as density alone. This means that, as it has been shown in the previous chapter on voting, networked interactions can be spatiotemporally distant but intense nonetheless. The analytical work done by any specific conceptualisation of social networks in the study of political action should therefore not be reduced to a topographic account of social action, nor should it be divorced from thinking on how relations of power operate, unfold through space, and mould these networks[435]. The effect of this conceptual move is that it opens up an empirical inquiry to "different modalities of spatial reach[436]" which problematise

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[432] Hall, "Migrant urbanisms," 859.

[433] Gabriella Alberti, Jane Holgate and Maite Tapia, "Organising migrants as workers or as migrant workers? Intersectionality, trade unions and precarious work," *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 24, no. 22 (2013): 4132-4148. Gabriella Alberti, "Moving beyond the dichotomy of workplace and community unionism: the challenges of organising migrant workers in London's hotels," *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 37, no. 1 (2016): 73–94.

[434] John Allen, *Lost Geographies of Power* (Maiden and Oxford: Blackwell, 2003).

[435] Allen, Topologies of Power.

[436] Barnett and Scott, "The reach of citizenship."

notions of spatial presence and distance. It also shifts the focus to differences and commonalities that are constructed, rather than discovered, through political action, which is distributed across social networks of varying levels of intensity.

Research that engages with migrant politics through conceptual frameworks eclipsed by the liberal state and national identity is useful to illuminate how political claims are articulated and enacted, for they usually end up drawing on one or the other, or both. However, this work tells us little about political imaginations of migrants which, as has been shown in the previous chapter, are animated by multivalent obligations, concerns, and interests that are often contradictory and which operate through local, national and transnational scales[437].

As Stijn Oosterlynck and his collaborators recently argued, engaging with political imagination and solidaristic practices of migrants is not only productive in the context of migrant citizenship, but the transformations of the welfare state. In the early twentieth century welfare states amalgamated various forms of social and political solidarity into state managed forms, which were protected by citizenship rights. However, in the late twentieth century, increasing ethnic and cultural diversity posed a challenge to both formal redistributive policy and informal charitable support. For this reason, they argue that "diversity compels us to look for solidarity in a different spatio-temporal register, namely that of the everyday places and practices in which people engage across ethnic and cultural boundaries.[438]" This, by and large, means looking towards spaces where solidarity emerges through a low-key and local enactments of citizenship.

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[437] Mohan, "Embedded cosmopolitanism and the politics of obligation," 880.

[438] Stijn Oosterlynck, Maarten Loopmans, Nick Schuermans, Joke Vandenabeele and Sami Zemni, "Putting flesh to the bone: looking for solidarity in diversity, here and now," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39, no. 5 (2016): 764-782.

What is missing in this framing, however, is an acknowledgement that such practices, unfolding across ethnic and cultural boundaries, are inevitably productive of new boundaries, and that exclusion is always a derivative product of practices of inclusion. This is not to undermine the importance of the shift from frames organised around state and mobility to those oriented towards solidaristic engagements, which are place-centred and person-centred – but still tell us a great deal about states[439]. Through this crucial manoeuvre we can ascertain that social, economic and spatial bounds of migrant politics are not given but are instead constructed through a political process.

The accession of ten new members of the EU in 2004, and in particular the so-called accession eight (A8) countries mostly from Central Europe[440], resulted in a large influx of migrant workers to Britain. The main reason was that while most EU member states opted for transitional arrangements limiting free movement rights for up to seven years for the new members, Britain alongside Ireland and Sweden decided not to do so. Britain had experienced large-scale migrations before, including 200,000 arrivals from Poland alone in the aftermath of World War II, but migrations that followed the 2004 enlargement had markedly different spatial dynamics and encountered different labour market conditions. This, in turn, affected how trade unions engaged with them. Nigel Costley observed this process from the vantage point of the TUC's regional structures in the South-West of England, based in Bristol, and can still vividly remember the days that followed the accession:

"The big change was 2005, when it was clear that something dramatic was happening in terms of, particularly, the Polish community arriving, and arriving in a way that was different from previous waves of migration. In the South West,

[439] Painter, "Prosaic geographies of stateness."

[440] They were the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia from Central Europe and Slovenia from Southern Europe. The other two countries admitted to the EU in 2004 were two Mediterranean islands and former British colonies, Cyprus and Malta.

people were arriving in market towns and rural communities, they were working in farms, fields, food factories, and so it was a much more scattered, dispersed arrival of people. It was the West Country's small towns that would have very little, if any, experience of diversity or migration. They were panicking.[441]."

This emergency, caused by the sudden influx of migrant workers after borders opened up in 2004, has quietened down substantially since then. According to Iza, a Polish labour organiser who has also worked in Bristol and the South-West of England:

"Early on, it definitely was like that, because it was the boom period, late 2004 and 2005, that is. Suddenly, everywhere there was a lot of Poles. But now it's settled down. We have unionised workplaces. Polish workers understand why they should join trade unions. So this has changed as well. Comparing with 2005, 2006 when I started [working for a trade union] there has been a fundamental change in knowledge and awareness about what trade unions do and how they do it[442]."

At that time, multiple initiatives were emerging on the intersection of labour and community issues, and in the mid to late 2000s plenty of them emerged in Bristol too. The role of women within them kept recurring in my empirical work and – as mentioned in Chapter 2 – meetings of the network of community organisers I was part of for over a year were almost exclusively attended by women. Hanna, a community organiser and generalist advice worker who started operating in Bristol at the time of accession, describes how her caseload usually included a mix of diverse socioeconomic issues.

"Say, they were people arriving… it wasn't really discrimination just people arriving to work, which somebody had promised to them, and say they landed here with a small child and luggage and there was no work. And they came into office

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[441] Interview with Nigel Costley, 7 August 2016.

[442] Interview with Iza, 12 April 2017.

with luggage, something had to be done. Or a woman who was served notice by her landlord, some dodgy guy, and she risked being on the street so we had to find her home. A lot of that was very urgent, finding homes, getting welfare. […] There was a lot of cases related to work, where people were treated badly, or not being paid, or laid off[443]."

Hanna's work quickly attained a high profile in the city, which she attributes to density of its diasporic networks. When I interview her, she is firmly established as a self-employed generalist advisor. We sit in her home office, and the phone keeps ringing constantly. When I comment on her popularity, Hanna mentions her work was featured in the Polish press, though she also plays it down somewhat.

"There was even an article about me in a Polish paper. A journalist came over from Poland and wrote it, and called me the angel of Bristol, you know. [Laughs.] For me, helping people is a bit of an addiction really. I really like helping and solving problems, so I was doing what I knew I can do well, and I think I helped many people[444]."

On the one hand, the density of social networks in Bristol seemed to have helped Hanna work with numerous initiatives supporting migrant citizens, and then set up as an independent advisor. There was also some suggestion in participants' narratives that isolation puts migrants at risk of exploitation. For example, Hanna told me about the practice of law firms charging EU migrants over £500 for services which cost less than £100 in places where alternative sources advice are also available, such as Bristol:

"My friend told me, she had that conversation yesterday with some girlfriend of hers from Cornwall, they charge over £500 for help with [permanent residence

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[443] Interview with Hanna, 31 May 2017.

[444] Interview with Hanna.

applications]. In such places, there is no one else to help and these people have nowhere to go, so they go to these lawyers, or wannabe lawyers, and pay that[445]."

However, geographic isolation and practices of self-help that develop in such context could have unexpected and very positive impacts on community relations. As Basia, a trade union project worker from Bristol whose remit covered adult education across much of the South West recalls with amusement:

"I worked on that ESF-funded[446] project and there were some criteria, that people enrolled had to have worked and lived in Cornwall for three years. And my role was to find these people, so I had to research where there are Poles in Cornwall, which factories they toil at. [Laughs.] There was also a lot of Portuguese, and that was a really interesting experience. I landed up in that village, very tiny place right in the middle of Cornwall, where Polish and Portuguese workers were housed in caravans. And when we had the meeting to assess their English we found they couldn't speak a word of it, but the Portuguese spoke Polish, and Poles spoke Portuguese. [Laughs.] It was unreal. And then we enrolled them all into English for beginners. But I was shocked because, when we tested them, people were coming and not speaking English, they were speaking to one another and then you hear their accents. And I go, where are you from, you're not from Poland! And we had a whole church hall full of these guys[447]."

Given it was a recurring trope, I was keen to document the participants' thoughts on the reasons for such a prominent role of women in this kind of informal, mundane forms of organising. When asked about it, Costley observed:

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[445] Ibidem.

[446] European Social Fund. It provides funding for employment and education opportunities across the European Union.

[447] Interview with Basia, 20 August 2016.

"I'm sure it's worthy of a thesis. I think, this is anecdotal, but the fairly rigid society that had been Poland, very male-dominated, so my sense was that a lot of young women were coming to the UK not necessarily to escape that but they saw a bigger vision for themselves. And they wanted to make a good life here, not just for themselves, their families, but their communities[448]."

The problem with this framing is that these gender dynamics of migrant citizenship were not only limited to Poles or Eastern Europeans in my research. This chapter shows how migrant women from Western Europe where central to the post-referendum mobilisation of EU citizens, and their activism can be hardly attributed to the fact they left traditionalist countries. However, it resonates with wider evidence on political participation of migrant women. The gender gap in political participation was shown to be narrowing at different times in the past century[449]. While women still do not participate in politics as extensively as men, research from the United States has shown that gender dynamics of participation are different in migrant populations. For example, Michael Jones-Correa argues that migrant women typically are more open to change and are more likely to be braver than men in their political socialisation, behaviour, and expression[450].

Research on the gendering of political participation is usually concerned with the general population rather than migrants, and it is often focussed on the underrepresentation of women in institutionalised forms of politics. Where it does evaluate activist forms of participation, it reveals a complex interplay between socioeconomic regimes and gender differences. A recent study by Silke Roth and Clare Saunders – which compared women's participation in protest in Sweden and Britain – shows that it is higher in countries where

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[448] Interview with Costley.

[449] Linda L.M. Bennett and Stephen Earl Bennett, "Enduring gender differences in political interest: the impact of socialization and political dispositions," *American Politics Research* 17, no. 1 (1989): 105-122.

[450] Michael Jones-Correa "Different paths: gender, immigration and political participation," *International Migration Review* 32, no. 2 (1998): 326–349. DOI: 10.1177/019791839803200202.

public gender regimes in general have better inclusion and equalities outcomes, in this case Sweden [451]. Based on their findings Roth and Saunders argue that women's participation in politics depends on their presence in the public sphere, and on the type of event where participation is measured.

Findings presented here point in a different direction. They suggest that the experience of migration may upset traditional gender hierarchies, while generating multiple openings for political action through a multitude of injustices that are part of migrant life. This array of concern prompts women to act politically, and the lack of established channels of political action means there are no gendered hierarchies in place that would hamper their participation. This is in tune with Adam Elliott-Cooper's analysis of the role of women in recent campaigns against black deaths in custody. He argues that, while there is no singular explanation for it, the prominence of women campaigners stems from racialised, gendered, and oppressive forms of policing. This points to family as "a space of resistance[452]" and to the primacy of relationships of care in this kind of political action.

The strong presence of women in migrant activism is not limited to organising, and it resurfaces in the chapters that follow. However, such a progressive gender trajectory does not necessarily mean that migrant activism is inclusive in all its aspects. The reflection on the gendering of the early organising practices led Costley to discussing its darker side, namely the racialisation of migrant organising.

> "This is over-generalising, but the men were often wanting to come to the UK and almost bring the culture with them… There were some difficult conversations about equalities for example, that you've come to Britain and we want you to be

[451] Silke Roth and Clare Saunders, "Gender differences in political participation: comparing street demonstrators in Sweden and the United Kingdom," *Sociology* (2018): 1-19. DOI: 10. 1177/0038038518803008.

[452] Adam Elliott-Cooper, "'Our life is a struggle': respectable gender norms and black resistance to policing," *Antipode* 51, no. 2 (2019): 546.

treated fairly, we don't want you discriminated against because you're Polish. But equally, we don't want you to discriminate against women, or… I mean, for many Poles, they were arriving in Bristol and seeing Black people for the first time. It had been a very… mono-culture in terms of the Polish society. So it was quite a traumatic shock, I think, for many of them[453]."

This shock is evident in the work of Jon Fox and his collaborators, who wrote extensively on the racialization of European migrations. In a series of papers, Fox, Laura Moroşanu and Eszter Szilassy argue that the whiteness of EU migrant citizens is, on the one hand, trumped by tabloid discourses of cultural difference, which then serve as a basis of racialised exclusion and injustice. On the other hand, however, that same whiteness is wielded by migrants themselves to assert and maintain unjust power relations in their own workplaces and neighbourhoods. This leads to twofold strategies in Central Europeans: one is to, by and large, embrace the dominant meritocratic values and discourses in Britain, and the other is to use race – to wield whiteness – in order to gain social, political or economic advantage[454]. These strategies are not only problematic in the normative or ethical sense, but they also may stifle effective political action. To act against racialised injustice, EU migrant citizens would have to be able to problematise and reconstruct their own "race" as white migrants in the first place, and be able to identify alternative ways of creating social bounds to articulate not only injustice, but also solidarity. But this has only happened to a very limited degree, and attention to institution responses to this new racial and ethnic dynamics in Britain shows that migrants' attitudes and practices are closely related to wider social processes. As Costley explains:

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[453] Interview with Costley.

[454] Fox, Jon E., Laura Moroşanu and Eszter Szilassy, "Denying discrimination: status, 'race', and the whitening of Britain's new Europeans," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41, no. 5 (2015): 729-748. Fox, "The uses of racism". Fox et al., "The racialization of the new European migration to the UK."

"They didn't see, maybe still don't see their issues as… within the context of race. Which was an issue perhaps for them, but which was an issue for the race equality world that then existed. We had race equality councils who were predominantly focused on visually black BME communities, and some were very adept at adjusting and welcoming new arrivals from Eastern Europe. But some were, I think, nervous about this – we've now got to pay attention to a bunch of white Europeans arriving[455]."

The reaction of British trade unions was also very uneven in their attempts to adapt to the new landscape of work and to organise this newly migrated workforce. It can be partly explained by the fact that the EU enlargement happened at the time when promoting racial and gender equality was increasingly important on the trade union's agendas, though with somewhat mixed results[456]. In any case, trade unions and their national federation, the Trade Union Congress (TUC), started to organise migrants at their workplaces by reaching out to communities through various means such as visiting housing estates, or working with grassroots and faith groups[457].

To some extent, all mainstream unions developed specific community organising approaches but they often varied quite significantly in their scope and method[458]. The GMB went as far as to set up a migrant workers branch in Southampton in October 2006, the first such branch in Britain's post-war history, largely in response to the large number of new arrivals from Poland. Though it started with just 70 workers, by 2008 the branch

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[455] Interview with Costley.

[456] Kirton and Greene, "The dynamics of positive action in UK trade unions."

[457] Interview with Costley.

[458] Holgate, "Community organising in the UK." See also: Jason Heyes, "Recruiting and organising migrant workers through education and training: a comparison of Community and the GMB," *Industrial Relations Journal* 40, no. 3 (2009): 182–197.

had grown considerably and had 560 members[459]. Similar initiatives sprung up elsewhere in the country, although they did not take the form of formal migrant branches. Ultimately, however, the Southampton branch lost its relative autonomy and was merged into the GMB's regional structures[460]. Iza, who has worked with that branch before moving to Bristol, explains:

"People should integrate, not separate. These were the initial years, when there's a need for response; then you need strategy. Now it all looks a bit different. We don't need separate structures[461]."

Basia, who also has knowledge on the operation of the Southampton branch, adds:

"Southampton, yeah, it was working rather well, you know, there are many Poles in Southampton… But on the practical level maybe it didn't work too well. One rule in the unions is that we are divided into local structures and if someone lives in, say, Swindon, then it's hard for them to get to a meeting in Southampton. So over time, migrants were moved individually into local structures. And the other thing is why, as unions, should we focus on Poles when we have plenty of other minorities too? So today, each union has to have a strategy for engaging migrants in general. And it all depends on the sizes of branches, workplaces, you know, multiple local dynamics[462]."

As of the summer of 2016, all branches and organisers within GMB that once had been engaging with particular groups of migrant workers are part of the main structures, and work with all members regardless of nationality and immigration status. The only

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[459] Stephen Mustchin, "Unions, learning, migrant workers and union revitalization in Britain," *Work, Employment and Society* 26, no. 6 (2012): 951–967.

[460] Interview with Iza.

[461] Ibidem.

[462] Interview with Basia.

exceptions to this are union learning representatives and project workers, who still recruit migrants for language courses[463]. While it may be interpreted as part of the process of "integrating diversity" into the labour movement, it was also a sign of the new arrivals using the unions to address their situated, particular concerns that were not just confined to the workplace. These changing dynamics became evident within the migrant groups too, which the TUC picked up through their community outreach.

"We just tried to, using whatever intelligence we had, discover who was doing what across the region. Some of these little networks were very informal and very transient, based around one person. It might have been one person from the post-war generation but they knew the language so they could help people arriving with form filling, some of the basics. But those little groupings, societies, whatever you want to call them, I think their agendas, you could tell that the agenda was shifting from raw exploitation at work and being ripped off by gangmasters, to things like housing, education, health… This was definitely a community starting to settle and becoming more integrated.[464]"

What stands out in this account is the important role of emergent and transient networks, often centred around one activist – such as Hanna, "the angel of Bristol." The story of Lena, who set up the Central and Eastern European Family Club in Barton Hill, Bristol in October 2007 and run it for a decade, also points to the role of key citizens-organisers. More importantly, it similarly underscores the fact that even when organising took place along ethnic lines, ethnicity was performed to achieve visibility and secure representation for an invisible minority in a diverse city, and ultimately performed an integrative function. Initially, Lena's aim was to improve visibility of the Polish community in the city:

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463 Interviews with Iza and Basia.

464 Interview with Costley.

"It was always my impression that the Poles were almost invisible, they were audible but not visible, like we didn't really exist in all those strategic conversations out there. It was always my impression that we should say: how about involving the Polish community as well[465]?"

The putative Polishness of Lena's club – it was often referred to as the Polish Club, but there were always many Russian speakers there and other Central and Eastern Europeans whenever I visited – was needed for it to perform its representative function, and to ensure access for marginalised members of newly migrated communities, who struggled with accessing mainstream services due to language needs. Ultimately, this sense of togetherness helped generate a sense of ownership, a sense of place, and a sense of belonging:

"Why people came…? Mostly for their kids, to listen to that language, and also because they could, you know, express themselves. We could express ourselves in our own language, it's just somehow easier to share these experiences in the first language… Grandmas often came along, who couldn't speak any English… It became such a moment, it became a habit that it's a Thursday and we're going to the club. So I think information sharing was important, but it was also about this atmosphere of being together, having a place of our own[466]."

And this reflection by Lena is crucial, because to her community organising such as through the family club was not a way of cultural distancing from the world around, but a way to get involved in this world on an equal footing. It is no coincidence that, she decided not to embed the club with a nominally Polish space – and in Bristol that would either mean the Catholic Church, or the Ex-Servicemen Club described in the previous chapter. Instead, she set up in Barton Hill, where a large proportion of newly migrated

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[465] Interview with Lena.

[466] Ibidem.

Europeans lived. Initially the Club was hosted by the Wellspring Healthy Living Centre. When it outgrew the relatively small creche room at the Wellspring, the Club moved across the road to the Barton Hill Settlement, to a large, dedicated and child-friendly meeting space on the ground floor, with a big garden. There was nothing there to indicate Poles, or Central Europeans were meeting there on Thursdays. This spatial ambiguity was not used to generate a sense of Polishness in the UK, but to build self-confidence and self-esteem amongst people, who wanted to belong:

> "In my view, to live well together people must feel well as individuals… The club was a kind of place that later helped us integrate with the wider community. Because often, people were coming but after a time they would say they now go to another club, a multi-ethnic club… I think it gave them confidence and opportunity to meet, so they could later go someplace else together…  So I think in fact, there was an element of integration to it[467]."

A key trope which emerges from Lena's narrative is a sense of temporality inherent in claiming rights. The politics the migrants enacted as citizens in their local areas was understated, and it was a slow burn – but it had a discernible political edge nonetheless. Every Thursday, Central European families were taking the space, exchanging ideas, and meeting others.

All the groups represented amongst the network of Polish community organisers, which itself kept meeting in various community venues across Bristol, operated in this way. They were setting up dedicated projects for either Polish or Central European migrant citizens, but these were generally embedded with local community centres and support services. Another such example is the work of Ula, a wellbeing worker who set up a counselling project that supported hundreds of Polish-speakers in Bristol. Ultimately, their mental health work went mainstream as all volunteers involved in the project got

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[467] Ibidem.

hired by statutory and community providers of mental health. Ula organised the volunteer counselling project with her friend Agata upon recognising that newly arrived migrants faced significant barriers in accessing mental health support, which was primarily down to the language barrier and insufficient knowledge of service provision. However, she also readily admitted it was also a way for them to gather work experience and overcome access barriers that they faced as mental health practitioners with limited work experience in the UK.

"I was applying for jobs I'd been trained to do, and was being told my degree wasn't recognised. They didn't know what my qualifications were, ostensibly, so I got everything translated while doing bar jobs. And still, nobody wanted to give me a proper job, and they kept saying they didn't understand what I was qualified to do exactly. This was frustrating, right? You're doing those bar jobs, trying to find a way out… and hitting a wall. And they're just not recognising your diploma. And back then Agata, oh that was just so typical, she applied for a job with an eating disorder clinic, or some sort of psychological clinic in any case. She applied as a psychologist, and they replied they had no such vacancies, but offered her a cleaning job instead! Very helpful. Really so very helpful. I guess they saw her name, where she's from, her Polish diplomas, and went like get real, you can clean here, all right. So this volunteering gave us… It was such a thing where we can do something in this country, link up with other organisations, hire some rooms, connect, see what can be done. And maybe, one day, we can get proper jobs off the back of that. Which worked out! [Laughter.][468]"

Ula and Agata organised their project to support Polish-speaking patients, but from the get-go they attempted to mainstream it. At the same time they treated it as a means for resisting the sudden loss of their socioeconomic status that was part of the migration experience. Like Lena's family club, their ambition was not to create an exclusively

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[468] Interview with Ula.

Polish or Central and Eastern European space, but to develop a vehicle that would allow social bridging, and would enable them to develop professionally and connect with others. While initially they tried to set up their project in partnership with Polish community groups in Bristol, they soon gave up on the idea and linked with mainstream mental health charities.

> "Polish organisations didn't give a toss. I went to church but the priest said 'No, we sing here, we have the light-life movement, we've got guitars…' Other Polish groups either ignored us, or refused us... And then, we went to an English organisation and they're like wow, great idea, we'll give you space. It was Bristol Mind, they even cut keys for us! [Laughter.] Incredible, no? Bristol Mind cut a key for us, so we could see people on Saturdays[469]."

While Ula and Agata knew exactly what problems they wanted to address, Lena started her cub without a clear idea, and said of that time: "I didn't know how it all works, I just had a place and started advertising the group to everyone [470]." But the purpose of the club became clearer once it started operating:

> "To me, it was a club, a place, where people came. They were mostly Polish of course but not exclusively, because Russians also came, or other people who simply spoke Polish, Russian or English, as these were languages that I could communicate in. So it was a place created specifically for Central and Eastern European families, to support one another, to share things[471]."

Secondly, it also shows that non-workplace concerns, such as housing, education and health, prevented migrants from deeper engagement with trade unions. This is because

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[469] Ibidem.

[470] Interview with Lena.

[471] Ibidem.

such socioeconomic concerns cannot be resolved through labour organising practices, but they could be helped through community organising and self-help. Lena explains this change of dynamics from labour to community issues in the late 2000s.

"These were the times when people didn't understand how the healthcare system works, and why they only ever prescribe paracetamol. You know, it was this kind of concern, 'why a midwife and not a doctor' and so on. People compared how things worked in Poland and England, it was as if these systems weren't compatible at all, and they had lots of questions. And the club was a place where they could access information, share information together, and support one another. At the same time, we were inviting external speakers, people from various services and organisations to introduce their work to us. And they also could ask questions to us, and it was such a period of meeting one another. A lot of children was being born at that time, and it was more each year, as it was the period when women started to arrive. Remember? Cause initially it was men, but then families started joining them.[472]"

Here, Lena describes how the adaptation problems that were first picked up by trade unions spilled over into other domains of social life, unrelated to work, and this forced a level of self-organisation within emergent migrant communities. Simply put, workplace organising was not necessarily the key concern of those newly arrived but instead their concerns related to wider socioeconomic rights. Trade unions, nonetheless, also tried to connect to these concerns in the city and the wider region, and this led them to develop new strategies and community organising in particular to engage migrant workers outside their workplace, for example "through English classes and community work. Not even necessarily trying to recruit them because you know that if they join the union on a zero

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[472] Ibidem.

hours contract, they probably wouldn't get asked back[473]." But when asked about the sustainability of this model, Costley says:

> "Unions, the whole rationality of unions is building on a collective strength in a workplace. Can you recruit people across a community, and not in workplaces or scattered workplaces, where the common bond is… what? And the danger is that it simply becomes, it's like an insurance scheme. You join something so you can get advice when you need it; you've got help when something goes wrong. […] But if you have a common interest and there's a collective, things can happen[474]."

Articulations of common interests and enactments of collective identity are in this view the essence of industrial citizenship, while legal and institutional frameworks seem of secondary importance. Shared interests can be articulated through whatever means available, such as popup unions and direct action, and rights can be claimed collectively once union membership is delineated only informally, through social networks. The emerging questions are how such shared interests are constructed – as we have seen, they should be all but taken for granted given the relative and relational character of migrant workers' economic lives – and how are collectives delineated exactly?

As the section that follows shows, a sense of injustice was a notion that most visibly animated the construction of interests and collectives in the narratives of activists and organisers from Bristol, both in work and community setting. However, injustice was not necessarily understood in the same way by research participants. The following section, therefore, elaborates on the modalities of injustice identified in the narratives I collected.

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[473] Interview with Costley

[474] Ibidem.

## Modalities of injustice

Trade union organisers interviewed for this project acknowledged difficulties relating to recruiting migrant workers. Aside from the language barrier, key problems included limited knowledge of unionism amongst many migrants or negative experiences of unionism in the country of origin, as well as their expectations of work and life in the UK. This knowledge and understanding translated into the ability to identify and articulate injustice in terms of both workplace and livelihood, and had impact on organising practices.

Firstly, in what links back to the politics of absence discussed in the previous chapter, migrant citizens often arrived in the UK as political beings. They had specific sets of ideas about their role in the society and economy, and they also had particular experiences and beliefs developed in the country of origin. All this impacted on their ability to organise in the UK. As Costley explains:

> "It was complicated for unions because people were coming with their own perceptions of what a trade union was, and it wasn't good. You had some people believing that Solidarność[475] had gone from being the revolutionary movement to forming the government and then privatising, and being the cause of an economic crash. The communist unions, equally, were disregarded and lost a lot of support because they were tainted with the old communist regime… […] For the people arriving here, that was their legacy[476]."

The comments were echoed by other organisers. Iza said:

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[475] The independent Polish trade union founded on 17 September 1980 at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk under the leadership of Lech Wałęsa.

[476] Interview with Costley.

"I think, in particular, people straight out of school who arrive, the young generation, they have no experience of trade unions. It a bit of a strange thing, people don't want to get involved because they don't know what it is. On the other hand, the older generation of migrants that we have here, they don't have a *positive* experience of trade unions. So they don't want to get involved, especially early on, because their opinion is that trade unions in Poland were a political party that didn't necessarily stand up for people… 'We know the history, we won't engage.' And trade unions in Poland right now, in the 21st century, comparing their power or even, so to speak, what they can achieve in comparison with England, we're way behind. Way behind! We're unorganised. Groups of workers aren't organised, they have no awareness of this power[477]."

This last comment is echoed by Basia:

"With the new generation of Poles, you often start the conversation by asking if they've ever heard about trade unions, and the majority of people say they have not. So, really, you have to start from scratch[478]."

This links with observations and narratives captured in the previous chapter, where I evaluate the role of politics of absence in the political narratives of migrant citizens. Every trade union activist, officer, and organiser I interviewed pointed to the importance of existential residuals for enactments of migrant citizenship. Politics of the country of origin leaves a lasting imprint on political imaginations of migrant citizens, and organising practices seeking to connect struggles across ethnic lines – articulating shared interests of European migrants and British workers – are still informed and, in this case, undermined by the history and politics of the country of origin. In specific cases of organising in Bristol, the relational politics of Polish organising was constantly at play.

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[477] Interview with Iza.

[478] Interview with Basia.

Aside from the legacies of trade unionism in the post-socialist world, Basia associated recruitment problems with the cost of union membership but also the lack of "awareness of the collective power[479]" amongst migrants. She stressed that workers organised in Britain wield much stronger influence than in Poland. Some of the participants also observed that the transient lives of migrants are not conducive for political action and result in the lack of engagement with trade unions. This resembles the relatively low levels of engagement with electoral processes amongst migrant citizens, especially in the first years following their arrival, described in the previous chapter. Basia framed it as:

> "this kind of in-betweenness… They got fixated on their job and they're neither here nor there. They don't think of coming back to Poland, but they don't think of what's next either[480]".

Costley remarked on the reverse side of this spatial ambiguity, namely on the impact of temporary migration on engagement with the unions. He recalled a public event he was running in Poland, in cooperation with trade unions there to advise prospective migrants on the pitfalls of the British labour market.

> "I remember when we had a stall in Warsaw, we were advising potential migrants on things to look out for and not get ripped off, and there were a number of… 'Oh, I've been to the UK before, and I'm going again, I want to build an extension on a house, or I want to buy a car.' And they consciously knew that they were going to come to the UK for three months and get ripped off […] but overall, it was a very rational calculation[481]."

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[479] Interview with Basia.

[480] Interview with Basia.

[481] Interview with Costley.

It shows that one person's injustice might be a price worth paying to another, and this can be a stumbling block in the struggle for social justice and transnational mobility at the same time. Yet despite organising migrant citizens at work often comes with a set of challenges specifically linked with their ethnic or social background, or their place of origin, activists and organisers identified numerous problems with setting up migrant branches and designating union representatives to work with particular ethnic groups. Some were already highlighted in the previous section, and all participants who referred to this style of organising agreed that such approaches were not sustainable in the long run. Iza was perhaps the most vocal critic of this style of labour organising, but from a slightly different standpoint insofar as she saw it as undermining the service aspect of trade union work in the first place.

> "You have to provide some service standard, and that's your obligation to the members. Once you've recruited Polish reps, you need to give special training, including language support. […] I noticed, for example, that people now ring the office and want to speak to a particular organiser, or a Polish interpreter, because they got recruited at a point when we had Polish-speaking organisers, who are now gone. And, you know, you have to manage expectations[482]".

The focus on service provision is unsurprising. As mentioned above, there seems to be little evidence in the literature to directly link trade union membership and activism of migrants with the intent to have a political voice, or to consciously construct a collective. The research presented here generally does not challenge that. Iza observed that in her experience:

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[482] Interview with Iza.

"there are people who are interested in politics, but usually people join when they experience injustice, or they are in a position when they simply want to change something, and when they grasp that unions are a way of achieving that change[483]."

Nonetheless, activists interviewed for the project agreed that most often, people organise for pragmatic reasons. Lena, a community and labour organiser from Bristol, described how she joined the union where she now is a workplace steward:

"A friend from work told me, 'you should join because you work with children and you need support, you need – should something happen, some kind of problems – you need some protection.' So it was quite selfish. […] But I think it mobilises people when membership becomes something really useful and practical. At the same time, as a steward, I tell them that everyone should be a member, and so on, because it's a movement. The reality is though, most people join only in such moments [of hardship][484]."

A senior official of one of the largest trade unions in Central Europe, whose brief includes strategic development and international cooperation, including with British unions, also felt that the primary role of trade unions is not their political role but their social function of providing services to their members[485]. Service provision in his view is an entry point for organising work, and collective power is a result of people getting involved for personal, rather than political, reasons. On this, however, there was a difference between those research participants – activists, officers and organisers – who stressed the importance of service provision, and those who thought organising practices in themselves were the essential act of industrial citizenship, understood in both pragmatic and normative terms.

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[483] Ibidem.

[484] Interview with Lena.

[485] Interview with Jurek.

Notably, this understanding overlaps with the two main strategies used in trade union work – prioritising either service provision or labour organising – and participants' narratives linked and overlapped with these debates to a degree. Notwithstanding such differences, the trope of joining a union to redress *situated* rather than *structural* injustice, that is to resolve a particular problem at work, recurred in interviews from rank and file activists to those responsible for strategic decision making. In addition, most agreed that new arrivals were keen to resolve problems they encountered in Britain and redress *situated* injustice once it was identified as such. In the words of Costley:

"Young, motivated people arriving from Eastern Europe, they are exactly the sort of people the unions need. […] They also have a natural sense of justice, or injustice, and they would, within a reasonably short period of time, they would want to put things right[486]." He associated this zeal to mend things with a "human instinct to get stuck in and help people[487]."

Iza, the union project officer from Bristol, also recognised that in some cases – especially of people who become union reps, stewards and organisers – reasons for joining a union are altruistic, and sometimes explicitly political.

"It just dawned on me! That union rep, who became a rep because while he was fine, no harm came his way, he actually was doing really well in the company, but he struggled seeing harm done by his company to other people. He said something had to be done, and we started talking, and then he joined and agreed to become a rep. And I know a good few people who engaged knowing little about trade unions and I mean migrants, who engaged politically. I'm not saying it's a mass

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[486] Interview with Costley.

[487] Interview with Costley.

movement but there are cases when someone is recruited as a rep, and then engages further, goes to meetings across Europe and so on[488]."

While some migrants joined unions to be political through them, the cumulative experience of stewards, organisers and project officers who recruited migrant workers suggests that new members were predominantly drawn in by collective bargaining arrangements, eligibility for ballots, and willingness to address specific problems at work. While new members are often encouraged to join by their fellow workers, employment disputes and the need for workplace advice and representation are by far the most powerful tools of migrant recruitment [489]. This is often an organic process, and many workers only join when they personally experience injustice at work[490]. However, while British trade unions sought this as an opportunity to involve migrant citizens, it would be wrong to assume such experiences of injustice automatically led to the emergence of solidarities or even brought migrant and British workers together.

"There are structural reasons why workplaces are sometimes divided. It's partly deliberate. So we had a number of instances where migrant workers, often under the banner of agency workforce but they were almost exclusively migrant, would be treated differently, often located differently at the workplace to create a division. On that basis they were paid less, treated worse than the existing workforce. And that can have a complicated effect because in some workplaces the native, the existing workforce, they don't want to be affected by the poor pay conditions, they don't want to be undermined. But rather than seek to recruit them, and give them a pay rise, their reaction is sometimes to strengthen that division, to try and isolate them and keep them separate[491]."

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[488] Interview with Iza.

[489] Interviews with Iza, Basia, Marcin, 10th August 2016, and Alberto D'Elia, 8th March 2017.

[490] Interviews with Iza, Marcin, and Alberto D'Elia.

[491] Interview with Costley.

It was not always a one-sided process and it was not exclusively the employers who benefitted from these kind of arrangements – or situated injustices – but sometimes existing workers were keen to retain such workplace divisions too, as they gave them advantage over the migrants. I documented several stories where migrants challenged such situations themselves, once the reality of migrant life sunk in and they began to understand their position within the workplace as unjust. Iza's history of arriving as a temporary migrant to work in the food industry in an agricultural setting only to become a labour organiser a few years later is illustrative of this process.

"We arrived as a group of friends, through an agency that recruited workers in Poland. They have offices in Poland, still do, it's one of the agencies[492] I pestered a lot once I started to work for trade unions. We arrived and were housed as a group, in Bath, so it's a typical migrant's story. There were meant to be great living conditions… It was all presented differently in Poland. We were going to work in a cheese processing plant, we knew that, but it was meant to be different: day shifts, eight-hour working days, couples were supposed to have private rooms, and so forth, and so on. We ended up nine people, three of whom joined us on the way – we hadn't known them before – in a two-bedroom house. […] Plus the commute to the plant, half an hour a day, and it turned out the working day was 12-hour and night shifts only! They gave us no choice."

Were the British working day shifts and the migrants night shifts?

"Exactly, exactly. A classic. Typical. So we were working for 12 hours a night and when we said we want time off on weekends or shorter working hours – as these

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[492] The name of the agency anonymised.

were not the terms as presented to us in Poland – they said if we don't like it, we can go back to Poland.[493]"

Iza identified this as a clear injustice but, after her initial three-month contract ended, she negotiated better terms with her agency and decided to go back to the same plant in Somerset, mainly to have a chance to improve her English. And that is how her engagement with the unions started: "Going back to the cheese plant, for day shifts, there it started, there were meetings there… The cheese plant had recognised trade unions and in general, I was always the person with the big mouth, and I spoke out a lot." While Iza did not see herself as a particularly political – "I always wanted to stay away from politics[494]" she told me – she was outraged by undignified treatment of her, and her fellow workers, by the employers. She also wanted to alert other, non-migrant workers to this injustice. Therefore, when she was given the opportunity, she joined a trade union to later become a full-time organiser. The route that took her there was as much political, as she sought to have a voice and an ability to challenge unjust working conditions, as it was social.

"Trade unions as such didn't introduce themselves to me. We just came along to meetings that other workers told us about, us, non-unionised workers. So we came along, and in that place there was such a division… 'Migrants, they'll do anything for money, they'll accept any working hours.' Nobody understood the situation we were in. Those workers fought for pay rises, because their unions bargained each year, and they saw us as those who diminish the chances for any pay rises because we'd do any job, for any money – which wasn't true… So we came along and I remember Kevin was there, my former manager[495], and I sat at that meeting and

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[493] Interview with Iza.

[494] Ibidem.

[495] A senior GMB organiser and Iza's subsequent manager at the union.

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listened to what they were talking about. We had a lot to say too but, obviously, nobody from the group of migrants spoke out.[496]."

However, what matters equally is that Iza did speak out at that meeting and this was a moment – one that resembled others from the accounts I documented – where nationally or ethnically delineated interests were reconstructed through an articulation of shared interests and collective subjects of socioeconomic rights.

"During this meeting I started to mention issues and so this meeting became the trigger […] for the unions to bring people together. Local workers realised that in fact, we have the same aims that they do. And in the end, we started a conversation, a dialogue, and it all went from there. I started to speak up for migrants, and at that point we all joined the union. Everyone. Everyone did, because I did, because when I arrived to that plant I was one of those who spoke the best English[497]."

From then onwards, Iza worked closely with Kevin, the senior organiser she mentioned, who remained her mentor and supervisor for over ten years while she worked in various roles within her union. She has organised campaigns against the British National Party (BNP) in Wiltshire towns, developed education activities for migrants, and organised a number of cultural events to link different ethnic groups around issues of social justice. Perhaps, she just happened to be the right kind of person in the right place, at the right time. As Basia, Iza's colleague from the union said, "first and foremost the key to organising people, and it doesn't matter Polish or British, is finding the right rep[498]." But her narrative shows clearly how the absence and the presence intersect in political imaginations and enactments of migrant citizens, and how they become a vehicle for learning, identifying, and articulating injustice.

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[496] Interview with Iza.

[497] Interview with Iza.

[498] Interview with Basia.

This shows the pitfalls of taking the notion of injustice for granted, and points to the importance of understanding injustice as emergent and recognised through rights claims[499]. Here also lies the importance of organising practices as a form of engagement that unfolds across national frames in response to migration: it articulates new modes of injustice and iterates new modes of citizenship. It is politically transformative, while the effects of such transformations reach beyond migrant communities themselves.

## Enacting citizenship through organising

The realities of migrants' claims of socioeconomic rights analysed in the two above sections shed light on two aspects in particular. First, they show that new modes of organising emerge in response to the specific spatio-temporal context: from the wider migratory processes, to specific economic configurations and social networks and infrastructures found in Bristol and the wider region. Second, they show that these dynamics of organising are animated by different modalities of injustice, which include unequal treatment in place of residence but also values and experiences that belong in the country of origin. And third, they show it as reliant on individuals, the organisers, stepping up and taking responsibility on behalf of the wider group. All this translates into spatially uneven and temporally iterative socioeconomic rights claims. These political transformations often happen on relatively small scales, and result from repeated enactments of citizenship over time, which bring in new actors and concerns.

The effort of migrant activists is usually aimed at integrating those newly arrived within the existing institutional structures that enable organised action. However, research participants also spoke about two distinct modes in which this process of extending rights to include newly arrived migrants is political. The first mode is best described as politics

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[499] Clive Barnett, "Towards a geography of injustice," *Epifyytti* 45, no. 1 (2016): 111–118.

infusing one's life once they engage in organising work – and therefore *they become political* through this work which is based on claiming socioeconomic rights on behalf of others. The second mode is best described as one bringing their politicised lives to the organising context – and therefore *they politicise* networks they become part of. At the same time, participants usually did not consider themselves political, often because they saw their work as mundane, and associated it more with ensuring individual rights were upheld rather than with pursuing more far-reaching political goals.

Basia, the project worker delivering union learning schemes to both migrant and non-migrant workers, gave a particularly striking account of the first mode of politicisation when she said about her work:

"It is not about political engagement. But, by extension, if you work for the unions you have to be politically engaged, as they are political organisations. You go to the congress and talk to people about the training you organise, you listen to the delegates' speeches… You know, in a sense you're immersed in it. So I think I may not even myself quite understand how much my political awareness somehow developed because I work for the unions. But it wasn't, like, that I'm going to be some great activist[500]."

The second distinctive mode of enacting citizenship through labour and community organising practices drew on cultural factors and existential residuals. This was how activists narrated their roles and their work, and how they evaluated whether it is political or not. Camila, a labour and community organiser from Bristol, used her experience from Italy as a baseline to asses whether her life in the UK was political. She observed:

"If you grow up in a left-wing environment, or as a left-wing person in Italy… I mean, it's kind of really easy to do stuff, and you don't necessarily call yourself an

[500] Interview with Basia.

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activist. I think it's very different in the UK. […] When I was a student we occupied our college, I went to lots of demonstrations… It's normal, it's natural if you grow up in that environment. You know what I mean? I wouldn't necessarily call myself a radical. Everyone goes to demonstrations, you know, in their teens. […] I started going with my parents! And then, my school mates! It's definitely a thing, in Italy, it's just normal[501]."

These two modes of political participation – by learning to be political through organising and by bringing one's politics into organising – recurred often in the interviews with both labour and community activists. For example Alberto D'Elia, a shop steward working in Avonmouth docks – who was active in party politics in Italy in his youth but said he grew interested in more mundane but pragmatic forms of effecting change on workplace or neighbourhood scales – remarked how racist and sexist his trade union representatives were when he became a member. He took pride in how it changed when he challenged a sitting union rep to an early election and won it.

"For me, you know, I bring something new into this. Before, of course, there would have been some sexist comments, there would have been some racist comments, they have been part of this thing, of being a rep. There was a culture of that. […] Here, I have to bring my own position. I have to respect everyone, regardless of race, sex, and so on. […] So in this way, you have to be political. In the sense of politics meaning the rule – the government of the city – and this government has to be more equal[502]".

He considered his participation in the unions, and the participation of people like him, as transformative because of the lived experience of migration and of seeking a political voice would result in trade unionism being done differently. This act of bringing personal

[501] Interview with Camila, 26 May 2017.

[502] Interview with Alberto D'Elia.

experience into political work was the most feasible way of effecting social change to him, and that was how he thought his work as a union rep – responsible to no one but his union members – enabled him to be more political than working in party political structures in Italy.

But the participation of migrants in trade unions has implications that reach far beyond their workplace, even if it is motivated by mundane concerns and small injustices at work, or by the willingness to act at local scales where political effects can seem more tangible and immediate. Before the EU referendum Britain's largest trade unions including Unite, Unison and GMB, as well as the TUC, came out in favour of the country's continued membership of the EU, partly to protect the interests of their migrant members. Once the referendum was lost by the Remain side, Unison sought ways of supporting migrant workers and established links with the3million, a national grassroots campaign that was set up in Bristol to ensure continued residence and acquired[503] rights for EU nationals. Trade union organiser Katia Widlak, who build the relationship between the union and the campaign, and then acted as a liaison between the two groups, said Unison had to get involved given out of around 1.3 million of their members, over 400,000 are migrants and at least 40,000 of that number are from EU member states. The union's motivation was twofold. First, following the EU referendum Unison faced multiple enquiries from migrant members experiencing anxiety about their immigration status, and so it sought an organisation with expertise in this area where members could be signposted to. Second, it sought a partner for running a political campaign to protect migrant members' rights[504].

Initially, cooperation between the two organisations included signposting Unison members to the3million's website and online forum, as well as disseminating information about the group through the union's local branches. By December 2016 this collaboration

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[503] The notion of acquired rights broadly covers socioeconomic entitlements going beyond the rights of residence.

[504] Interview with Katia Widlak, 21 February 2017, and field research notes.

became more strategic, and most notably Unison offered to help organise and coordinate a mass lobby of EU migrant citizens in the House of Commons on 20th February 2017, to precede the triggering of the Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union by the British government, and again on 13th September the same year, before the fourth round of Brexit negotiations. The first mass lobby was also supported by New Europeans, the only campaign to promote the values of EU citizenship in Britain before the referendum. Amongst the organisers, only Unison had experience of holding mass lobby events in Parliament, so it took care of logistics: organised room bookings, provided stewards for the event, and helped activists meet their Member of Parliament during the lobby.

On 20th February 2017 well over a thousand migrant citizens turned up, and some of them queued for up to three hours to lobby MPs and network with other activists and organisers. Most of those I asked about their affiliation were not Unison members and attended the event out of concern for the EU citizenship rights. Given that it was scattered between the lobby and two different rooms in the House of Commons, it was difficult for Unison and the3million to adequately monitor the event, but they estimate up to 500 people got into Parliament, and many more were unable to enter despite queuing for over an hour outside the Parliament. At the start of the event a number of prominent MPs including Sir Keir Starmer, the Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, signed a pledge to protect the rights of EU citizens residing in Britain, and over 70 MPs overall were engaged at the event by their migrant constituents[505]. In addition, citizens and unionists mobilised for the event spoke to multiple media outlets including the BBC and Sky News as well as the press, which helped secure positive coverage in its aftermath[506].

It is impossible to know whether the lobby had any tangible effects on the wider case of EU migrant citizens' rights after Brexit, aside from raising the prominence of the issue. But the above example clearly shows that growing participation of migrants in Unison,

[505] Ibidem.

[506] Interview with Hatton.

and Unison's growing reliance on migrant members[507], led to the union's involvement in what effectively is a migrants' rights campaign, entirely divorced from industrial or employment disputes. I will get back to the mass lobby and its effects during the discussion of campaigning and acts of citizenship that go beyond the national frame in Chapter 5. Here, it is meant to serve as an empirical reference for the argument that the extension of industrial citizenship, by which I mean migrant citizens' participation in the trade union movement, may not be driven by concerns that are intrinsically political, and yet can result in transformations of power through practice. In and of itself, participation in labour organising opened up possibilities for political action that would not be possible otherwise and created new grammars of solidarity between migrant rights and workers' rights campaigners. What is crucial, this solidarity was not discursive but it emerged through action. Just like with the two modes of acting politically through trade unions described earlier – that is, reframing the scope of concern through articulation of shared interests, and broadening the space of political action through civic inclusion – this new grammar of solidarity between unionists and migrants proceeded from specifically situated instances of injustice that were identified, negotiated and resisted through social action.

In the last two decades, the most comprehensive theorisation of citizenship-as-action came in the form of acts of citizenship[508] – discussed in Chapter 1 – which are defined as enactments whereby social actors constitute themselves as citizens through making rights claims. This draws our attention to time- and place-specific practices of citizenship, but also recognises the institutional context in which particular rights claims are staked. Isin's framing of citizenship is attentive to "those acts that transform forms (orientations, strategies, technologies) and modes (citizens, strangers, outsiders, aliens) of being

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[507] Interview with Widlak.

[508] The framework of acts of citizenship was most comprehensively outlined in co-authored volumes. See *Acts of citizenship* (2008), ed. by E.F. Isin and G.M. Nielsen, or *Enacting European Citizenship* (2013) ed. by E.F. Isin and M. Saward.

political by bringing into being new actors [and] through creating new sites and scales of struggle[509]."

Crucially, the focus on enactments displaces the subject, or the bearer of rights, as the central figure for investigating citizenship[510]. Instead, it is argued that subjects of rights are formed through their claims and not the other way around, which echoes Judith Butler's theory of performativity with its key assertion that "the 'doer' is variably constructed in and through the deed[511]." When deployed in empirical work, such an understanding of citizenship diverts our attention away from the subjects of legal discourses and towards processes that enable people to constitute themselves as citizens and enable groups to coalesce and collectively demand recognition of their claims[512]. Thus, we are drawn towards the social field where citizenship is embodied and where particular matters are articulated as common struggles.

Further, such an understanding problematises spaces and scales of citizenship action. As described by Isin and others, acts of citizenship take place at particular sites, most often in places where national or supra-national authority can be directly spoken to, shouted at, or subverted through making claims or expressive performances. Enactments that are being described are events and have a clear temporal dimension, but they also rely on mobilising particular social networks most often defined along racial, ethnic, gender, sexual or class lines. Sites where citizenship is enacted usually take the form of judicial, legislative and executive assemblies, or prominent public spaces. What links them is that they all are sites where political decisions are made or where a group of people can gather to demand recognition as political actors. While the state remains an important reference

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[509] Isin, "Theorising acts of citizenship," 39.

[510] Staeheli, "Political geography: where's citizenship?"

[511] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 142.

[512] Engin F. Isin "Claiming European citizenship," in *Enacting European Citizenship*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 19-46. Andrijasevic, "Acts of Citizenship as Methodology."

point for enacting and understanding citizenship, it is decentred as a site of action and a scale of analysis to make space for other, largely transnational, perspectives: social networks and movements operating across borders and drawing on international justice and human rights regimes.

This points to a key limitation of the framework of acts of citizenship, which is that due to its focus on dramatic and transformative performances, it deliberately privileges activist modes of claiming rights[513] and so it points towards politically animated and highly visible networks, groups and coalitions as entry points for citizenship research. It is thus missing out on the ordinary, mundane aspects of political action and is thin when it comes to tracking the relation between the social and the political, which have been traced earlier in this chapter.

The last element of the empirical analysis presented above – the mass lobby supported by Unison – could be seen as a dramatic and theatrical enactment of citizenship because migrants lobbied the British parliament despite not having the right to vote, and were recognised as bearers of political rights by MPs. But its essence was not the transformative performance of citizenship on the day, but the long-term impact of broadening Unison's membership base to involve migrants, including EU migrant citizens, as well as months of organising and cooperation between three organisations that co-hosted the event. The processes behind that broadening of the membership base was even more complex, deeply rooted in social life, and begun years before the trade unions took a stance against Brexit.

The aspects that sets acts of citizenship apart from most of other styles of theorising and analysing citizenship is its political imagination. Isin et al. take inspiration from Jacques Rancière with his much-cited distinction between politics and the police[514], where the

[513] Isin, "Citizenship in flux."

[514] Rancière, "Ten theses on politics."

former is all about mundane procedures and actions of organising, voting, campaigning, and so on, and the latter is the expression of radical difference and conflict which is the force that animates political life. Ultimately, acts of citizenship depend on the notion of activist mode of enacting it that is construed as the art of "making a break, a rupture, a difference[515]." In Isin's work there is a clear sense of when things get properly political: "by contrast to active citizens who act out already written scripts such as voting, taxpaying and enlisting, activist citizens engage in writing scripts and creating the scene[516]." Only activist citizenship with its direct claims to justice is deemed novel and transformative, as it goes beyond already instituted forms and practices of political participation and representation.

What is particularly relevant here is that this imagination leaves ordinary labour and community organising outside the scope of properly political action altogether. Workplace and community organisers, whose narratives were analysed in this chapter, recognised their work as rather mundane. They were typically preoccupied with organising European migrant citizens to act against situated injustices, such as equality at work, or equal access to community spaces and mental health services, for example. Trade unionists generally emphasised the service provision aspect if their work over political influence, and alongside community organisers they focussed on providing practical support in city neighbourhoods and dispersed communities. But at the same time, their work is political because it slowly transforms the way unions or councils operate, or because it was the potential to politicise new members and activists. The two relatively routine modes of enacting citizenship identified in this chapter – reframing the scope of concern through articulation of shared interests, and broadening the space of political action through civic inclusion – were all part of a chain of events that led to more explicitly political action, such as the mass lobby described above. However, such action

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[515] Isin, "Citizenship in flux," 380.

[516] Ibidem, p. 381.

is not a condition to recognise workplace or neighbourhood based acts of citizenship as political.

The key argument of citizenship formations approach, on the other hand, is that to understand the tensions and potential citizenship offers to those suffering injustice or exclusion we must first understand how it is constructed in specific historical and geographical conditions. Sallie Marston and Katharyne Mitchell take issue with a universal subject of rights and argue that citizenship is "constructed in specific periods and places[517]." This brings up the issue of scales and of social, spatial, and economic organisation of citizenship, and ultimately decentres the state as the key scale and site of political action. For this reason, Marston and Mitchell escape spatial singularity and pay attention to dynamic, variable, non-linear and intersectional aspects of citizenship as processes that occur at the same time at a variety of scales and in different places. In addition, while rejecting a universal subject of rights, citizenship formations do retain universalising qualities as they task citizenship with "enabling equality and justice for all[518]". Through political action, which follows from various forms of social organising, citizenship can be extended to groups excluded from national citizenship and it can operate across borders too. While their definition of political action is never quite spelled out, they see granting existing rights to new social groups as politically transformative and democratic, as it broadens the space of civic inclusion – and this reading is closely aligned to the one presented in this chapter.

It is also similar to Catherine Neveu's writing on ordinariness and citizenship processes[519]. She discusses three distinct representations of citizenship: active, activist, and ordinary, and argues they all point to "an essential tension of citizenship processes: that they can, at the same time or successively, discipline or emancipate, enforce norms

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[517] Marston and Mitchell, "Citizens and the state," 100.

[518] Ibidem.

[519] Neveu, "Of ordinariness and citizenship processes."

or open new possibilities for their questioning and transformation."[520] But she points out that ordinary aspects of citizenship often go unacknowledged, and that we often miss what she calls the *feeble signals* of citizenship. To her, this is because

> "…'ordinary' is thought of either as these moments when 'nothing happens' in political terms; that is 'nothing' according to a very restrictive definition of politicization that defines it as manifesting interest in the formal political sphere (parties, elections, and public debates), or as 'routines' that reproduce the usual legal and social framework."[521]

The empirical analysis of labour and community organising presented here suggests that citizenship indeed moves seamlessly between these forms of social action. Joining a trade union or providing practical support to fellow migrants on a neighbourhood level may not be meant as a political act, but rather as a tactics to better one's employment conditions, and yet it has a political dimension because it does broaden the scope of civic inclusion and rearticulates interests. Ultimately, as I have signalled with the example of Unison but will develop further in the chapter that follows, this can steer the direction of political campaigning. While it may seem like the reproduction of politics as usual, the acts of organising and supporting migrant citizens result in unexpected political consequences.


## Conclusion: Sharing concerns, articulating interests

In this chapter, I worked through the concept of citizenship as a process to analyse workplace and community organising as devices enabling political action by migrant workers to argue that the extension of citizenship through spatially dispersed processes

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[520] Neveu, "Practising citizenship from the ordinary to the activist," 87.

[521] Ibidem, 88.

of participation has political implications that go beyond particularistic demands for justice. This is because such action reframes the scope of concern through articulation of shared interests and broadens the space of political inclusion through the participation of migrant groups. This activism is enabled by the formal construction of the EU citizenship[522].

Migrant voters in Chapter 3 where often motivated to take part in external elections because of their sense of being displaced away from Poland, and vulnerability associated with it. They more strongly associated the precarity of their status as migrants not with their conditions of existence in Bristol, but with the fact they had to leave Poland in the first place. Their European citizenship manifested through support for the country left behind, so they could go back or be proud of it at least. The actions of migrant organisers described in this chapter were also driven by vulnerability, but it manifested itself differently: through experiences of inequality or injustice in the community or the workplace. To act on their concerns, they took action across ethnic lines and engaged in organising practices which, even if aimed at their own ethnic or regional communities – other Poles, or Central Europeans – generally resulted in integrating diversity into Bristol's, and British, political life. Voters exercised their European rights with regards to electoral participation, whereas organisers did so by contesting the socioeconomic landscape, and making demands to inclusion and voice.

The practices of migrant organisers are significant insofar as they illuminate the scales, sites, and modes of political inclusion of EU migrants that exist on the fringes of the Citizenship Directive. They are facilitated by the free movement because migrant organisers have the right to reside in their communities, and the right to labour at their workplaces. As the chapter shows, however, their right to equality and justice has to be hard won in both. They fall back on some existing institutional and infrastructural support such as existing trade unions, community centres, and local services, but they are also

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[522] Bellamy and Lacey, "Balancing the rights and duties of European and national citizens," 1418.

reliant on the actions of individuals and networks driving change. This shows that politically transformative events are iterative, incremental, and inevitably grounded in existing political frameworks on the one hand, and ordinary concerns emerging in the social field on the other.

In the next chapter, I move on to discussing how such concerns and values are mobilised to claim rights and enact citizenship beyond the national frame altogether, but how such rights claims are still predicated upon existing means of political action, including social networks, mass media, and democratic institutions.

# Chapter 5 | Campaigning: claiming rights beyond national frames

Across the previous chapters I developed an argument that reading citizenship merely as a membership status neglects the significant potential for political action enabled by multivalent practices of claiming rights. When articulated, these rights claims iteratively resignify and reinvent citizenship.

Thus, I reconceptualised citizenship as a device that enables political participation and representation through claiming rights: to electoral participation, or to social and economic equality. I applied this understanding of citizenship to analyse external and local voting, and workplace and community organising in Bristol, and evaluated them as modes of political action performed by migrant citizens. I argued that extensions and transformations of citizenship through such spatially dispersed and uneven processes of participation and representation have political implications that go beyond particularistic demands for justice. This is because such action reframes the scope of concern through the articulation of shared interests and broadens the space of inclusion through the participation of migrant citizens. These processes are significant insofar as they decouple citizenship from nationality, and because they partly defuse the tension between universalism of cosmopolitan concern and particularism of citizenship processes[523]. This illuminates the scales, sites, and modes of political inclusion of migrant citizens. Enactments studied here also show that politically transformative events are inevitably grounded in, and follow from, mundane action in the social field. This action is, in turn, driven by ordinary practices, concerns, and values[524].

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[523] Rapport, *Anyone*.

[524] Sayer, *Why Things Matter to People*. Barnett, "Situating the geographies of injustice in democratic theory."

Empirical work presented in this chapter turns to the third set of rights identified in Chapter 1 and related to residence. Data collection for this window on EU citizenship was carried out between 2016 and the early 2017, and so it was dominated by the events leading up to the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU – ultimately won by the Leave side – and then its fallout. The research included exploratory ethnography of groups campaigning for the Remain side in Bristol in order to identify whether EU citizens were active in them as an organised force – and it found that they were not – as well as of the more or less ephemeral groups that emerged in the aftermath of the vote. Most importantly, a campaign called the3million[525] formed in Bristol to protect the rights of EU migrant citizens after Brexit. I joined the group as a participant observer, and later interviewed its founders and prominent campaigners. Observational and interview data about the3million, supplemented by documentary sources such as newsletters, and position and research papers produced by the group, form the main evidence base for this chapter. Some detail on the negotiations on the rights and status of EU citizens post-Brexit, while not the focus of the chapter or the thesis, is added for context as necessary.

Reflexive comments are present in this chapter to a larger extent than in preceding chapters because, as highlighted in Chapter 2 on *Researching citizenship*, participatory engagement was instrumental for data collection in this strand of my empirical work. The inclusion of reflexive elements has therefore a twofold objective. Firstly, they speak to the predicament of "strong objectivity[526]" by defusing the tension between the subject and object of knowledge, often overplayed in social research. Secondly, utilising my subjective position as a "research resource[527]" served to create a granular account of the extraordinary mobilisation of EU migrant citizens after the EU referendum. Reflexive

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[525] See https://www.the3million.org.uk, accessed on 17 July 2018.

[526] Sandra Harding, "Rethinking standpoint epistemology: what is 'strong objectivity?'" *The Centennial Review* 36, no. 3 (1992): 437-470.

[527] Reger, "Emotions, objectivity and voice."

elements therefore serve to enhance reliability and validity of this account, which in qualitative research are conceptualised as "trustworthiness, rigor and quality[528]".

The two previous chapters explored transnational voting and organising practices as political enactments unfolding along and across the national frame, and underpinned by EU citizenship both as a political-economic formation and a socio-legal regime. In the former sense, EU citizenship created a particular set of conditions that spurred large-scale migration to the UK, but also gave grounds to contestation that culminated with the 2016 Referendum and Brexit. In the latter sense, EU citizenship provided a set of rights enabling political action, from limited electoral rights to the right to equal treatment. The voters and organisers observed and interviewed for this study used these rights to enact citizenship.

In this chapter, I move on to discuss how ordinary concerns and values centred around the EU right to reside were mobilised to claim rights and enact citizenship beyond the national frame altogether. In doing so, I demonstrate that the political potential of citizenship processes does not simply derive from the interplay between territorially defined belonging, participation, and rights – which are often seen as the three core values of citizenship[529]. I take my argument one step further and show not only that civic participation and rights claims are instrumental in constructing a sense of belonging for EU migrant citizens, and that they can operate along or across national boundaries, but also that legal rights are given meaning through political action – through claims and their recognition. I also demonstrate that all this political action is itself underpinned by much more mundane values, concerns and practices. Therefore, rather than being constructed as an intersection of belonging, participation, and rights, citizenship is the device that links them with ordinary concerns – including the most fundamental ones like residence.

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[528] Nahid Golafshani, "Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research," *The Qualitative Report* 8, no. 4 (2003): 597-606.

[529] Bellamy, "Evaluating Union citizenship."

In conclusion, I bring together the three means of enacting citizenship discussed in this thesis – that is, through voting, organising, and campaigning – to summarise my argument. I argue that, despite the multiple tensions between local, national and cosmopolitan scales of citizenship and its enactments that unfold along, across and beyond ethnic networks, the key question is about their potential to reiterate citizenship in increasingly inclusive registers. Taken together, the thesis shows that the democratically transformative potential of citizenship results from its performative and hence *iterative* characteristic. Each performance alters the meaning of citizenship and usually expands – but may also contract – the space of democratic inclusion of people, norms, values, and ideas, in a process that Seyla Benhabib terms "democratic iterations"[530] which was explored in Chapter 1. In this sense, citizenship endows individuals with power so they can make claims upon the state, and upon one another, through which they effect political change.

To some degree, this stands in contrast with the main current of debates on EU citizenship reviewed in Chapter 1 on *Conceptualising citizenship*. These literatures are largely organised by questions of rights, participation and belonging derived from the formal rules of membership. In what follows from such a focus, the attention to spatial aspects of EU citizenship is animated by arguments on membership derived from territorially understood notions of national belonging[531] rather than the specificity and unevenness of citizenship processes. This approach is problematic for several reasons: firstly, such legal

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[530] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*. On iterability, also see: Jacques Derrida, "Signature event context" in *Limited Inc*. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988). Gordon C. F. Bearn, "Derrida dry: Iterating iterability analytically," *Diacritics* 25, no. 3 (1995): 2-25.

[531] Adrian Favell, "European identity and European citizenship in three 'Eurocities': a sociological approach to the European Union," *Politique Européenne* 30, no. 1 (2010): 187-224. Sassen, "Towards Post-National Citizenship."

rules of membership have been repeatedly shown to have "fuzzy edges[532]" which focusing on the national frame tends to refine. Secondly, citizenship operates through a myriad of processes which are "not only legal but also cultural, social, economic and symbolic[533]" and the national frame manifests itself differently in each of these processes. And thirdly, while citizenship is "shot through with the question of power[534]" the focus on territoriality brings up just one of its dimensions: state power. It skims over more nuanced understandings of how power unfolds through various scales, problematising traditional understandings of proximity and distance, and how it is met with practices of citizenship characterised by a high level of spatial complexity and sophistication[535].

In this chapter, therefore, I study EU citizenship through the encounters of ordinary migrant concerns about residence with political processes that affect it to glimpse beyond the national frame and shed light on transformations of citizenship that followed the 2016 referendum on the UK's membership of the EU. An empirical case of the3million campaign to secure the rights of EU27 citizens living in the UK after Brexit serves as a base to discuss citizenship as an encounter with power, unfolding in a quiet register that operates in-between territories and scales. This argument is outlined in three sections. The first one briefly reviews emerging literatures on Brexit and introduces the notion of Brexitland as a political landscape of anxiety and intimate uncertainties, which was generative of political action to defend rights the vote to leave the EU put at risk. The second part traces political action that took place in Bristol with regards to Brexit and Europeanness before and after the vote, to show how assertive claims to EU citizenship emerged from the landscape generated by the referendum and were articulated by the nascent campaign group, the3million. The third section elaborates on the specific methods deployed by three concerned citizens to draw distant others into close reach and

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[532] Jo Shaw, *New dawn for citizenship in the UK?* Accessed on 20 October 2017 https://medium.com/@userjo_shaw/new-dawn-for-citizenship-in-the-uk-95115b8a89c4.

[533] Isin, "Claiming European citizenship," 19.

[534] Allen, *Topologies of Power*. Allen, "Powerful city networks."

[535] Barnett and Scott, "The reach of citizenship."

build the3million as a campaign that connected tens of thousands of people and was recognised as a political actor by the UK Parliament and Government, and the EU Commission and Parliament.


## EU migrant citizens in Brexitland

As I will show throughout this section, the EU referendum caught migrant citizens off guard, and this had implications for both the result of the vote and its aftermath. Nicolas Hatton, who became the strategic co-chair and the public face of the3million campaign that emerged in Bristol following the referendum, observed that the relative inactivity of migrant citizens in the run up to it was partly the result of the rushed decision to hold the vote, and to exclude migrant citizens from it:

> "By the time the Parliament had voted for the referendum it included the franchise, so there was nothing you could do. I think a lot of people got caught out because they didn't really think about it, and then there was very little time to campaign to get the franchise right, so I think everyone got caught out. It was left to the political parties, who failed us miserably on this. And then, the referendum, I was following that online, I was posting stuff like a lot of people were. The only thing I did which was different was that I published an article in Bristol 24/7[536] asking for my British chums to vote to stay in the EU considering… I can't remember exactly what I said, but it was [aimed at] the Europeans' friends, and spouses, and colleagues.

[536] A local print and online magazine. The article was entitled "A plea to my British friends" and was a call to vote Remain, as well as a reminder that EU migrant citizens are "denied a vote" in the referendum. See: https://www.bristol247.com/opinion/your-say/a-plea-to-my-british-friends/, accessed on 17th November 2017.

So, that was the only thing, because I could feel that it was not going very well, I would not have done that otherwise. It was very obvious, the polls were showing a trend and I could feel the trend was negative… It was very clear that the Remain campaign was on the defensive. But then… on the 23rd it seemed that people had voted the right way and I went to bed thinking 'Yeah, it's going to be fine.' But then I woke up on the 24th and it was not fine[537]."

The sense of having to face a new reality permeated the lives of EU migrant citizens ever since the day after the referendum. The trope of waking up to Brexit recurred in multiple interviews with campaigners, as well as with migrant citizens not implicated in political activism. It kept resurfacing through research but also in my everyday life, which became entangled with my work much more than it was before the referendum. Three weeks after the vote, I was invited to the recording of Gary Younge's programme *Eastern Europeans in Brexitland*[538] for BBC Radio 4 in Bristol. I went there as a researcher, and also as an Eastern European. Mid-July was the time when the #postreferendumracism hashtag was trending on Twitter[539] and reports of hate crime started circulating ever more widely – they were later backed up with official statistics showing a spike immediately after the referendum[540]. For these reasons, the talk about the anxiety felt by Europeans living in Britain started to reach the national media[541]. Our conversation, which involved several

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[537] Interview with Hatton.

[538] See http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07sy81f, accessed 14 November 2017. The recording took place at Wellspring Healthy Living Centre on 18th July 2016 and the programme was originally broadcast on BBC4 on 14th September 2016.

[539] See https://twitter.com/hashtag/postreferendumracism, accessed on 14 November 2017.

[540] Daniel Devine, "Hate crime did spike after the referendum – even allowing for other factors." *LSE Brexit Blog*: http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2018/03/19/hate-crime-did-spike-after-the-referen_dum-even-allowing-for-other-factors/, accessed 19 March 2018.

[541] See for example Hayden Smith and Claire Hayhurst "Three race hate crimes every hour since EU referendum, say Met Police," *The Independent*, 5 July 2016: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/brexit-race-hate-crime-eu-referendum-met-police-a7121401.html, accessed 17 November 2017.

Polish migrant citizens, revealed the anxiety we all felt and revolved around what seems to be the fundamental question for understanding the European perspective on Brexit: what changed around us after the referendum, and what changed within us? To what extent did our rights and sometimes our bodies become fair game after the votes were cast, and to what extent did the vote reveal our vulnerability, that for years went unacknowledged?

In that context I reflected on my interview with a Polish shopkeeper the morning after the referendum, and how he recalled his way to work earlier that day. Normally feeling at home in Bristol, the morning after he could not help but to wonder whether the people he passed on his way to work that morning had voted to leave or remain. He said:

> "Initially, cause I've been here for seven years, I started to feel… During the time before the referendum, so until yesterday, I felt this was my second home, and my second homeland, where you can begin to get familiar with it and feel accepted into your social group. But after the vote, I immediately felt alienated. I suppose most people felt like that. Now, going down the road, they wonder: was it this one who voted Leave, or was it that one who voted Leave. Simply, you start asking yourself questions, and every one of us is trying to find some answers[542]."

In conversation with Gary Younge I argued this was the biggest change brought by the referendum in the absence of any serious proposals about what Britain is meant to look like outside the EU. While officially nothing changed on the day of the referendum, practically a lot changed that day: where there had been trust now there was suspicion; where there had been confidence now there was anxiety. But even more importantly, the day of the referendum is also a lens through which we can clearly see that the confidence migrant citizens had in the UK, the EU, and in their rights in general, was fatally ill-conceived and misplaced.

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[542] Interview with Grzegorz, 24 June 2016.

The tensions between the false sense of security afforded by the rights of EU citizenship and its shaky political fundamentals – for it is a complementary status[543] and as such, in the case of migrant citizens, open to challenge by others in the political community that one is not fully part of[544] – came across strongly through the 19 interviews I conducted on the day of the vote and the day after. I spoke with British citizens who voted to leave or remain, including voters from ethnic minorities, and with migrant citizens who could not participate in the vote but usually had an opinion on it. I also chose two polling stations to observe on the referendum day. One was in Totterdown[545], a formerly working class neighbourhood in South Bristol that is leafy, colourful, and gentrified[546], but whiter and less ethnically diverse than the city's average. The other one was the polling station where I observed the local election a month earlier, set up in Barton Hill[547], an inner city neighbourhood that is its most diverse, but which also suffers from socioeconomic deprivation and rapid gentrification at the same time, with short life expectancy, staggering child poverty, and all known woes of areas affected by inequality and poverty. Interestingly though, it is also one that bucks the trend for low rates of political participation in the so-called deprived areas and repeatedly records high turnouts in local and national elections.

However, while the bulk of data on which I draw here was collected after the referendum, I started my ethnographic work in the run up to it – and this work was central to how I

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[543] Shaw, The Transformation of Citizenship in the European Union.

[544] Shaw, "EU citizenship and political rights in an evolving European Union."

[545] For the neighbourhood profile of Windmill Hill ward, which Totterdown is part of, see: https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/436737/Windmill+Hill.pdf/9bbfbdbb-78f2-42c0-96bf-910a9316fcfc, accessed 5 October 2018.

[546] In 2016 The Times included Totterdown on its shortlist of the 20 hippest places to live in Britain, see https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/20-hippest-places-to-live-in-britain-5dsjccxkrt8 accessed 18 November 2017.

[547] For the neighbourhood profile of Lawrence Hill ward, which Barton Hill is part of, see: https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/436737/Lawrence+Hill.pdf/bec15541-2bf1-4702-9d70-c9f5d54f8bb2 accessed 5 October 2018.

understood and documented its aftermath. The key finding from that pre-referendum ethnography was that it failed to identify any organised campaign effort by EU migrant citizens in Bristol. I spent the two months in the run up to the referendum attending meetings organised and co-organised by Another Europe is Possible, a Remain campaign which was also most vocally defending migrant rights and free movement. With a single exception, I was the only EU migrant citizen attending their meetings, and only once we were joined by two Spanish activists. That meeting was organised in the Hydra Bookshop in Bristol's Old Market on 2nd June 2016 and was held under the banner of Anti-Capitalists Against Brexit. The Hydra, now defunct, used to be a hotbed of radical activism in Bristol in the 2010s. It was also an anarchist bookshop and a café, which famously only charged £1 for its hot drinks, but also refused to serve brews any more elaborate than lattes – and you could not take your latte for granted either. The Spanish pair, as I later learned, were activists from the Alliance for Workers' Liberty, and they were mostly interested in the Anti-Capitalist component of the meeting. They never returned and I found it both telling and ironic that the only EU migrant citizens to ever express interest in defending the Remain side were a doctoral researcher and a pair of Trotskyist activists.

Nevertheless, through numerous meetings and events, and in particular through my participant observation of Another Europe is Possible campaign in Bristol, I learned just how much the referendum device itself polarised the public and precipitated political action. The meetings drew a crowd diverse in terms of age, occupation, and political orientations. While many were veteran activists, most of them had never before campaigned on an electoral matter and instead were labour, migrant, or environmental rights activists. There were also some who became active only because of the referendum, and had no prior experience of, or particular interest in, political campaigning.

My own experience of the campaign, while largely benign, included a dose of hostility and anger that I had never before experienced in Bristol as an infrequent campaigner, protester, or canvasser. It occasionally got distilled into singular events when the division and anger came to the surface and was very apparent. A week before the vote, as we were leafleting outside ASDA supermarket in a predominantly White British ward of Bristol,

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a Leave supporter pointed at a silhouette of Britain on a badge I was wearing and spat out: "What I want is to put fucking barbed wire around this island, so cunts like you can't get in[548]." There was an element of comedy to this encounter too, as he then admitted that he had missed the voter registration deadline and was angry knowing he would not be able to vote at all. In itself this was a uniquely combative event, but it was emblematic of a much wider issue: the adversarial design of the referendum process affected the public debate and political positions taken before and after the vote.

That sense of a deep political divide opening up through the vote intensified early on the referendum day, which I started at the polling station in Totterdown. It was set up in a church hall, next to a sizeable construction site where terraced houses were being built by a dozen or so workers. Outside the station there were two tellers from the Stronger In campaign, but nobody from Vote Leave. One was a middle age man and the other a younger woman. Later I found out he had a degree in economics from an elite university and worked as a documentary filmmaker, and she was an academic researcher working at a digital media centre. He was more active, approaching everyone who were coming in to and going out from the station, recoding their voting choices on his telling sheet – if the voters were willing to disclose them. The vast majority of them was voting to remain, as it happened, and later figures confirmed the share of the vote for Remain in the ward was 73%[549]. Whenever voters refused to share their preference, which did not happen a lot, he would grimace a little, mumble, and mark them as "Leave" on his sheet anyway. He was not unfriendly or condescending, but rather amused at how easy it was to read people's voting choices from the manner in which they responded to his presence there. As I arrived, the tellers managed to sway one voter who came in undecided but said he would vote to remain after speaking to them.

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[548] Research notes, 15th June 2017.

[549] See https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/901750/Area+D+Count+wards/0fbb0ebe-8a02-40b4-bace-ca7a2adef06b accessed on 18th November 2017.

I interviewed both campaigners as they worked, and the recordings are interrupted by brief conversations with voters entering and leaving the polling station[550]. At one point a man in his twenties, visibly minority ethnic, and wearing a builder's outfit – his trousers stained with mortar and paint – said that he had just voted to leave. The middle age campaigner softly, barely audibly replied "Oh dear" to this. I listened back to the recording many times and it sounds like a light-hearted throwaway remark. But as he said it, the young man sharply turned around and shouted with frustration bordering anger: "Why did you say 'oh dear?' You're obviously middle-class, right? You have a nice house and a lot of money, right?" Here, he gestured with his fingers as if counting cash and his voice turned into an angry bawl. "I don't have a lot of money, and I want out! Out!!!" The tellers were stunned by this but the builders working at the adjacent construction site, which the young man did not come from or return to, started clapping and cheering him. Emboldened, he shouted back "What do we need Brussels for!?" and then turned around and started to walk away. The teller shouted back at him "No, they need us!" but the young man was no longer listening. Then, the other teller remarked "Oh, these builders here are all for Leave, I think… They shouted at us before" and we resumed our interview, like nothing much happened.

Following the referendum, there has been a wide debate in the UK and beyond over the reasons why the country, albeit by a relatively narrow margin[551], voted to leave the EU. The immense media interest opened a channel for the nascent academic debate to feed into the public debate on the referendum outcome. As a result, there was an outburst of hot takes on the vote from social scientists and most vocal amongst them were the voices shaped by the genre of quantitative political science. Matthew Goodwin and Oliver Heat, for one, initially read the result through the lens of deep social divisions that transcend

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[550] For a discussion of on-the-spot interviews as a research method, see Chapter 2.

[551] Leave won 17,410,742 votes, or 51.89 percent of the valid total, and 16,141,241 votes, or 48.11 percent, were cast for Remain. In addition, there were 25,359 invalid votes, that is 0.08 percent.

generational, educational and class positions[552]. They argued the vote to leave was brought about by not just economic but, crucially, cultural subjugation of areas and populations swept away by the ruthless current of liberal modernisation that had profound economic and, more importantly in their view, cultural effects. Their narrative identified people who were let down by the processes of modernisation and globalisation as the pivotal collective actor that brought about Brexit. On their view,

> "the vote for Brexit was delivered by the 'left behind' - social groups that are united by a general sense of insecurity, pessimism and marginalisation, who do not feel as though elites, whether in Brussels or Westminster, share their values, represent their interests and genuinely empathise with their intense angst about rapid change[553]."

This argument was later slightly recalibrated to include a spatial dimension and claim that:

> "the public vote for Brexit was anchored predominantly, albeit not exclusively, in areas of the country that are filled with pensioners, low-skilled and less well-educated blue-collar workers and citizens who have been pushed to the margins not only by the economic transformation of the country over recent decades but also by the values that have come to dominate a more socially liberal media and political class[554]."

In so doing, it pitched the left behind against the liberal elites to explain the vote through this "tale of two countries."

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[552] Matthew Goodwin and Oliver Heath, "The 2016 referendum, Brexit and the left behind: an aggregate-level analysis of the result." *The Political Quarterly* 87, no. 3 (2016): 331.

[553] Matthew Goodwin and Oliver Heath, "Brexit and the left behind: a tale of two countries," *British Politics and Policy at the LSE Blogs* accessed 22 July 2016 http://eprints.lse.ac.uk /73016/.

[554] Goodwin and Heath, "The 2016 referendum, Brexit and the left behind," 331.

Responses such as Goodwin and Heat's focussed on values and beliefs, and thus partially sidestepped questions of class in their analytical frameworks, to explain and validate the rise of concern amongst White British voters alarmed by the pace and direction of social and economic changes in the country. Eric Kaufman framed this concern through an agonistic relation between "open" and "closed" personal values[555]. Further analyses argued the concern over immigration – and in particular over its rate, and the level of national jurisdiction over the number of arrivals – was what generated the desire to "take back control." In so doing, they framed a vote to leave as a means to close national borders and bring down the number of migrants arriving and settling in the UK[556]. As signalled, there was a limited consideration of spatial aspects of the vote to leave within these frames, but it was confined to a reductive register and animated by the discussion of the metropolitan versus the parochial without making much effort to robustly conceptualise either. Further, the parochial was not elaborated on beyond its depiction as the non-metropolitan; a serious shortcoming given its stated significance for the referendum result.

Some of the few early interventions not following these reductionist logics, where the outcome of the referendum did not necessarily overlap with binary forces that precipitated it, came from geographers. Jane Wills, for one, theorised the vote and British democracy spatially and stressed the neglect of places, regions, and localism in decision-making.

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[555] Eric Kaufmann, "It's NOT the economy, stupid: Brexit as a story of personal values," *British Politics and Policy at the LSE Blogs,* accessed 22 November 2017 http://eprints. lse.ac.uk/71585/. Eric Kaufmann, "Interview with Eric Kaufmann: cultural values and the rise of right-wing populism in the West," *British Politics and Policy at the LSE Blogs*, accessed 22 November 2017 http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/70308/. See also Eric Kaufmann, "'It's the demography, stupid:' ethnic change and opposition to immigration," *The Political Quarterly* 85, no. 3 (2014): 267–276. DOI: 10.1111/1467-923X.12090.

[556] Matthew Goodwin and Caitlin Milazzo, "Taking back control? Investigating the role of immigration in the 2016 vote for Brexit," *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 19 no. 3 (2017): 450–464. DOI: 10.1177/1369148117710799.

Instead of calling for reduced migration, she pointed to the devolution agenda as a tool for bridging the country's division after the referendum[557]. Kevin Cox, on the other hand, empirically analysed the overlap between regional, rural-urban, and class dynamics of the vote in his brief comparative study of *Brexit, Frexit and Trump*, and brought up its intersectional aspects[558]. Amongst other things, his working paper points towards the relative significance of social class and the urban-rural dimensions of the referendum.

Further research problematised the salience of shifting values and ethnic change as the structural reasons behind the vote to leave. In their paper drawing on individual level data, rather than aggregate level data as the earlier work on Brexit, Harold Clarke, Goodwin and Paul Whiteley emphasized "the importance of benefit-cost calculations, risk assessments and emotional reactions" for shaping the voters' choices, and crucially observed that "the narrow Brexit decision voters made on June 23rd thus reflected a diverse mix of calculations, emotions and cues[559]" and was not representative of any singular, undercurrent characteristics. For Satnam Virdee and Brendan McGeever, on the other hand, the single factor that does not fully explain the fact but does stand out is not so much a concern over immigration as "politicization of Englishness[560]," or mobilisation of nationalism for political purposes.

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[557] Jane Wills, "Return of the town hall: will Brexit bring British democracy closer to the people?" *The Conversation,* accessed 19 November 2017 https://theconversation.com/return-of-the-town-hall-will-brexit-bring-british-democracy-closer-to-the-people-62194.

[558] Kevin R. Cox, "Brexit, Frexit and Trump," accessed on 19th November 2017 https://kevinrcox.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/brexit-frexit-and-trump.pdf.

[559] Harold D. Clarke, Matthew Goodwin, and Paul Whiteley, "Why Britain voted for Brexit: an individual-level analysis of the 2016 referendum vote," *Parliamentary Affairs* 70, no. 3 (2017): 439-464.

[560] Satnam Virdee and Brendan McGeever, "Racism, crisis, Brexit." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41, no. 10 (2018): 1802-1819. DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2017.1361544. See also Richard Hayton, "The UK Independence Party and the politics of Englishness," *Political Studies Review* 14, no. 3 (2016): 400–410.

The work which emerged after the 2017 snap election, called by Prime Minister Theresa May in the aftermath of the referendum "to secure the strong and stable leadership the country needs to see [the country] through Brexit and beyond[561]", started adding additional layers of complexity to problematise the binaries that plagued analyses of the political landscape that emerged and reasserted themselves through the vote. It begun to examine the underpinnings of arguments deployed thus far, which framed open and closed values, cultural and economic concerns, and the metropolitan versus the parochial as discrete, exclusive and antagonistic categories. For example, it more systematically introduced the concept of place into the debate and, vitally, begun to show the town as a site where cultural decline and economic neglect most clearly intersect in contemporary Britain[562]. It also acknowledged that the deep political divide that the referendum wrought was representative of long-term social cleavages opening up in the UK in the process of economic, social and spatial restructuring. There is now a steady flow of analyses that acknowledge the complexities of the vote to leave and the interplay between its economic, cultural, spatial and social dimensions. Some of these studies begin to scratch the empirical surface of rudimentary proxies for social class and, for example, unpick the correlation between higher levels of social and cultural capital and the Remain vote[563]. There is also emergent qualitative and theoretical work on Brexit. For example, Alan Finlayson outlined his argument about *Brexitism* as not so much a political programme, but as a political philosophy which "has, at its core […] the conviction that the future is

[561] Theresa May, "Prime Minister's statement on general election," accessed on 19 November 2017 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-39630009.

[562] Jennings, Will, Will Brett, Adrian Bua, and Rachel Laurence, *Cities and Towns: The 2017 General Election and the Social Divisions of Place* (London: New Economics Foundation, 2017). Accessed 19 November 2017: http://neweconomics.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/      FINAL-CITIES-AND-TOWNS.pdf. For a similar but journalistic account see: Sarah O'Connor, "Left behind: can anyone save the towns the economy forgot?" *Financial Times*, 16 November 2017 https://www.ft.com/content/b6dbf34e-c987-11e7-aa33-c63fdc9b8c6c.

[563] Siobhan McAndrew, Paula Surridge, and Neema Begum, "Social identity, personality and connectedness: probing the identity and community divides behind Brexit," *SocArXiv*, accessed 13 November 2017 https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/w95xa.

unknowable" and where "there is no such thing as a more or less reasonable judgment of things to come[564]." This epistemic manoeuvre shifts the focus from what people think to how they think it, and replaces the empiricist question of who voted to leave, to explore ideology that framed these decisions.

While it is not the aim here to provide a comprehensive review of the work on Brexit, let alone explain the vote to leave in detail, the referendum itself and its perceptions are important in as much as they created an inescapable backdrop to the activism of EU migrant citizens both before and after the campaign. This backdrop is what Gary Younge called the Brexitland[565], a political and social landscape that emerged through the vote and provided an inescapable setting for the activism described and analysed in the remaining part of this chapter. What is clear from the above review is that the more we know about the causes of the vote to leave, the more complex they become, and hence any singular narrative on the referendum is lacking. However, it is also clear that concerns over immigration, broadly understood, surely were a major issue that animated voters' imaginations on in the run up to the referendum day, and once the Leave side prevailed, they became the concern of EU migrant citizens living in the UK.

For this reason, Angus McDonald highlights the series of anxieties that the referendum has given focus to and amplified: one is the anxiety about national identity past, present and future, and another is the anxiety about the rise of illiberal and populist politics that many see as threatening[566]. The theme of anxieties distilled into and spilling over from the vote to leave was also picked up by Daniel Knight, who qualitatively explored "reconstituted futures filled with new anxieties, expectations, and speculations" provoked

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[564] Alan Finlayson, "Brexitism," *London Review of Books* (18 May 2017): 22.

[565] See http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07sy81f, accessed 14 November 2017.

[566] Angus McDonald, "Our democracy, our identity, our anxiety." *Law and Critique* 28, no. 3 (2017): 323–343.

by the uncertainties of Brexitland[567]. Much of the qualitative writing on the effects of Brexit is centred on the theme of anxiety and even if the language of uncertainty is used instead, it is immediately brought to a personal level, for "there is not just one big political cloud of Brexit uncertainty somewhere far above people's heads; there are many, and very intimate uncertainties[568]" involved.

Brexitland therefore emerged as a political space where the rights of EU migrant citizens were not just precarious, but also unsettled in a way they had not been before the referendum. The hapless confidence in these rights, often seen as abstract and distant before the vote, was replaced by relatively widespread and intimately felt anxiety over future status, amplified by concern over anti-immigration sentiment. In some cases, as documented in the remaining part of this chapter, these "intimate uncertainties" inspired new political discourse and praxis of EU citizenship. It was articulated and enacted through intimate and ordinary narratives and practices which were brought into public view and thus became politicised, transforming acts of everyday life into acts of political action.

## You don't have rights, you use them

This abrupt change brought about by the EU referendum, and Brexitland anxiety in particular, generated tangible political effects. As the remainder of this chapter shows, a new space for political action and civic engagement opened up once EU migrant citizens' vulnerability was exposed through the referendum. Undoubtedly, many factors

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[567] Daniel M. Knight, "Anxiety and cosmopolitan futures: Brexit and Scotland," *American Ethnologist* 44, no. 2 (2017): 238.

[568] Lulle, Aija and Russell King, "Multi-layered uncertainties of young 'Brexiting' Eastern Europeans in the UK." *The Sociological Review Blog*, accessed 22 November 2017 https://www .thesociologicalreview.com/blog/multi-layered-uncertainties-of-young-brexiting-eastern-europea ns-in-the-uk.html.

contributed to this flurry of activity in the aftermath of the vote – from rallies to more sustained and organised forms of political action – but my argument here is the anxiety about one's status and recognition of one's vulnerability proved an important catalyst for claiming, or using, rights. This argument is in line with my understanding of precarity and vulnerability outlined in Chapter 1, where I present Andrew Sayer's argument that:

> "our vulnerability is as important as our capacities; indeed, the two sides are closely related, for vulnerability can prompt us to act or fail to act, and both can be risky. Capacity and vulnerability are always in relation to various circumstances, whether passing events or enduring conditions[569]."

This rendering of agency is a significant departure from seeing it in terms of ability alone, in the sense that it allows for exploring people's capacity to act – particularly, for them to act politically – while acknowledging various types of constraints and the importance of circumstances of these actions.

Writing in the spring of 2017 about Bristol specifically and its predicament with Brexit – for it is a majority Remain city, although with significant pockets of Leave sentiment – Jon Fox argued that "post-Brexit Britain has become a world of 'what ifs', and until documents are signed in Brussels it will remain as such. It's not Brexit we need to deal with, it's the uncertainty Brexit has created[570]". His assessment is very true in a sense, and yet the narrative of unqualified uncertainty is more problematic than that of anxiety or "intimate uncertainties" discussed earlier in this chapter. Taking back control comes with more what-ifs than one can count, of course, but we also know for certain what is at stake and what needs to be protected: the rights of citizens – once taken for granted – clearly became a subject of political struggles. And if there is one thing which the

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[569] Sayer, Why Things Matter to People, 5.

[570] Jon E. Fox, "#BristolBrexit: a city responds to Brexit," *Open Democracy*, accessed 22 November 2017 https://www.opendemocracy.net/jon-fox/bristolbrexit-city-responds-to-brexit.

referendum device revealed for certain, it is that citizens' rights are theirs only for as long as there is an effective form of government to underwrite these rights, and only in as much as there are courts to enforce them. In the cognitive vacuum of "red, white and blue Brexit[571]" nothing became less uncertain than the need to defend the rights that were suddenly put at risk. This required people organising, coming together, articulating demands, and holding to account: it required people using their rights "not to condemn or endorse Brexit" as Fox says, but to do something about its consequences that, while uncertain, were already being felt the day after the vote.

This research unfolded under the theme of precarious citizenship and so by design my empirical work was attentive to spaces opened up for political action through the vulnerability of people who live in the UK and yet lack the full rights of political participation. In this sense, it was geared towards identifying ways in which EU migrant citizens mobilise politically, and not towards measuring the prevalence of such mobilisation. However, as mentioned above, despite getting involved in pre-referendum campaigning I failed to identify any signs of grassroots organising around EU migrant citizenship before the votes were cast.

While leafleting in Bristol city centre on Friday and Saturday evenings in June, two weeks before the referendum, I briefly spoke to many, mostly young, migrant citizens[572]. Their instinct invariably was to refuse flyers and say that they were not eligible to vote, although some did take flyers when I asked them to pass them on to their enfranchised friends, neighbours, and maybe partners. This shows that attitudes to political participation are strongly shaped by a sense of political enfranchisement and disenfranchisement, something that Emilia Piętka-Nykaza and Derek McGhee explored in more depth in their comparative research on Polish citizens' perspective on Independence and European

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[571] "Theresa May: we want a red, white and blue Brexit," BBC, accessed 22 November 2017 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/38223990/theresa-may-we-want-a-red-white-and-blue-brexit.

[572] Research notes, 10th and 11th June 2016.

referenda in Scotland, and general elections. Specifically, they observed "the emergence of a more assertive EU migrant sense of stakeholder citizenship which is characterised by a willingness to participate in 'their hosts' political and collective affairs[573]" in response to fragmented and unfinished citizenship formations made visible through divergent rights of political participation. Their line of argument builds on the recent yet already influential concept of stakeholder citizenship, proposed by Reiner Bauböck and discussed in Chapter 1. It frames citizenship as membership status but assumes that non-citizens have instrumental and intrinsic reasons to seek such membership; instrumental, as it protects their fundamental rights, and intrinsic, because it brings respect of self and others[574]. In short, it holds that non-citizens will participate in the life of their polities if given a chance and purpose. My empirical material points to the referendum as a particularly salient political event that pushed some EU citizens to act because of anxiety over their rights stemming from this acute sense of political disenfranchisement – because they were denied a chance to participate, they discovered their purpose.

Within days from the referendum there was unprecedented civic mobilisation in Bristol. On 28th June a rally was held on College Green opposite the City Hall and an estimated 2,000 people turned up, which is a sizeable rally by Bristol standards. Some were EU citizens holding their national flags: Bulgarian, Czech, Dutch, French, German, Polish, and others[575]. In the crowd near the stage, I met Nicolas Hatton for the first time. Back then he was the French consular delegate in Bristol and a concerned citizen, but soon after he went on to set up the3million, the largest grassroots pressure group working to protect EU migrant citizens' rights after Brexit. On 10th July he organised a smaller meeting initially aimed at the Francophone community in Bristol but at the last-minute organisers extended it to involve all Bristol residents whose rights would be affected by Brexit. Over

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[573] Derek McGhee and Emilia Piętka-Nykaza, "From privileged to thwarted stakeholders – Polish migrants' perceptions of the Scottish Independence Referendum 2014 and the UK General Election in 2015," *Citizenship Studies* 20, no. 6-7 (2016): 899-913.

[574] Bauböck, "Morphing the Demos into the right shape."

[575] Research notes, 28 June 2016.

180 people turned up and while the majority of those who took the floor identified themselves as French, there were also people from Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and a Dutch-Somali community activist[576].

The mood at the meeting was frantic, with people sharing their stories of long-term residence or of recent arrival in Britain, but in all cases expressing anxiety about their future. Many worried they would not qualify for permanent residence cards as these are only issued to qualified persons, that is those who meet the Home Office's stringent regulations[577] that implement or – according to many legal commentators – frustrate the implementation of the European Citizens' Rights Directive[578]. There was even a widowed pensioner who had lived in Britain for over 50 years and worried she would not qualify now that her British husband had passed away, given she no longer had a job or private health insurance[579], an obscure requirement[580] routinely used by the Home Office to turn down students, parents, and elderly applicants for permanent residence.

After this meeting the3million campaign was formed. Its name was derived from the approximate number of EU migrant citizens living in Britain, and it was decided at the first meeting of the core group of organisers in The Clyde pub in Redland, a leafy neighbourhood of north Bristol, in July 2016. The meeting was attended by Hatton and Anne-Laure Donskoy, who later became the group co-chairs, as well as Maike Bohn, a public relations professional who became the media coordinator, and Christophe Gaspard, who started managing the3million online forum on Facebook. There were

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[576] Research notes, 10 July 2016.

[577] Home Office, *The Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2016*, accessed on 13th June 2017 http://www.eearegulations.co.uk/Regs2016.

[578] "Directive 2004/38/EC," Official Journal of the European Union.

[579] Research notes, 10 July 2016.

[580] Yeo, Colin (2017) Comprehensive Sickness Insurance: what is it, and who needs it? *Free Movement Blog,* accessed 22 November 2017 https://www.freemovement.org.uk/comprehen sive-sickness-insurance-what-is-it-and-who-needs-it/.

several other people present at the meeting including Sonia, a graphic designer. Alongside Hatton, a professional marketing executive, Sonia developed the blue and yellow logo of the3million, which was later half-jokingly described to me as "catchy, homely and cheesy, just what you want to make it memorable" by one of the group's members.

I found it striking just how focussed and strategic that meeting was. Bohn said she had already discussed setting up a campaign to defend residence rights of EU migrants with Thangam Debbonaire, a local Labour MP who was also vocally pro-Remain. Hatton, similarly, was clear that he was not keen on organising "ask a lawyer type" meetings where people could get information about their individual immigration cases, but which left strategic issues unaddressed. Instead, he said the lack of representation of EU migrant citizens in the national debate made them vulnerable. He proposed that the group should aim to change that through engagement with the national media, and through involvement in the forthcoming exit negotiations[581]. The discussion then quickly progressed to listing useful contacts: from trade union officers and local business executives, to the former mayor George Ferguson. At the same time the group, which did not include anyone with a background in law or immigration at that point, started mapping problems with the permanent residence scheme for EU citizens to identify which categories of applicants were at risk of being excluded from it, should the scheme become mandatory.

In August 2016, an independent inquiry into the status of EU migrant citizens in the UK after Brexit was convened by British Future, an influential think tank based in London. The inquiry, chaired by Gisela Stuart MP, had no representation from EU citizens, and so it became the first target of the3million's lobbying efforts. The group approached British Future and fed into the inquiry. In the early October, the group's representatives – Bohn, Donskoy and Hatton – met their MP, Debbonaire, to find out how to engage MPs across the main political parties with their concerns. Debbonaire suggested a cross-party

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[581] Research notes, 19 July 2016.

approach to get EU citizens the representation they "need and deserve[582]." She advised the group to research how the issue of citizens' rights and Brexit in general can be pitched to different Conservative MPs. She also endorsed the idea of organising a mass lobby of parliament by the group, which was indeed held within four months. Debbonaire also stressed how important it was for the3million to produce a simple ask for the Government to respond to: "the simpler, the better[583]." She suggested an argument should be clear and persuasive "for people who are sympathetic, and those who are not[584]."

By mid-October, the group was meeting in different venues across central Bristol: from the Hamilton House, which at that time was run by the countercultural collective Coexist, to an office borrowed from the former mayor Ferguson, and to private homes which included Hatton's house and later my own front room as well. Around that time the group was also joined by Kasia Bylok, a photographer and videographer, who helped to increase the3million's reach beyond Bristol through the use of online videos and broadcasts. By November the3million had substantial online presence with over 6,000 members of its closed Facebook forum. As Gaspard put it during one of the meetings, "that's how you get the numbers, by creating Facebook groups[585]." This strategy was deployed by the campaign to generate and mobilise its grassroots following.

As for political strategy, the3million carefully avoided taking a stance on Brexit as such and pursued a less divisive agenda of residence rights instead. As Hatton put it during one of the management meetings, "it won't help us to be political, which is hard, because this [Brexit] is political[586]." Nonetheless, and not without difficulty, the group maintained its neutrality on the issue of leaving the EU.

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[582] Research notes, 6 October 2016

[583] Ibidem.

[584] Ibidem.

[585] Research notes, 3 November 2016.

[586] Research notes, 5 January 2016.

By 2017 the3million was growing exponentially. On 23rd January it launched a campaign called "People are NOT Bargaining Chips", which was managed by Bylok. Through photos and videos, widely disseminated across its social media channels, the group sought to generate popular support across the country, get the attention of the national media, and enter the national political arena. The title of the campaign encapsulated the key ask of the3millon, which at that time was to ringfence citizens' rights issues from Brexit negotiations, and to guarantee the right to stay for all EU citizens through a separate and binding agreement between the UK and the EU.

The campaign engaged tens of thousands through the Facebook forum, which by the summer of 2017 grew to well over 35,000 members. It also mobilised thousands to take action directly, with over 2,000 followers turning up for mass lobbies of Parliament, and quickly attained media visibility as real stories of ordinary people being denied their residence rights gained prominence. It highlighted the vulnerability of EU migrant citizens and the anxieties they felt. After the assurances[587] of continuity of EU citizens' rights issued by the Vote Leave campaign did not become part of the UK government's initial offer[588] or the subsequent proposals of the settled status for EU migrant citizens[589], the3million turned these assurances into a powerful claim about rights being violated and

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[587] Michael Gove, Boris Johnson, Priti Patel, and Gisela Stuart, "Restoring public trust in immigration policy: A points-based non-discriminatory immigration system," accessed 22 November 2017 http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/restoring_public_trust_in_immigration_____policy_a_points_based_non_discriminatory_immigration_system.html.

[588] Department for Exiting the European Union, "Safeguarding the position of EU citizens living in the UK and UK nationals living in the EU: summary proposals," accessed 22 November 2017: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-the-position-of-eu-citizens-in-the-uk-and-uk-nationals-in-the-eu/the-united-kingdoms-exit-from-the-european-union-safeguarding-the-position-of-eu-citizens-living-in-the-uk-and-uk-nationals-living-in-the-eu.

[589] Home Office and Department for Exiting the European Union, "Technical note: citizens' rights, administrative procedures in the UK," accessed 22 November 2017: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/657694/TECHNICAL_NOTE_CITIZENS__RIGHTS_-_ADMINISTRATIVE_PROCEDURES_IN_THE_UK.pdf.

promises broken. At the same time, the3million sought to maintain impartiality on party politics and on the issue of Brexit itself to assertively argue for citizens' rights – not more, not less.

After the period of incubation in Bristol described above, the campaign started reaching far beyond the city. In January 2017 the3million gave evidence[590] at the Exiting the European Union Committee hearing at the House of Commons. The following month, and in partnership with Unison and New Europeans, the3million organised the mass lobby of parliament. After the Exiting the European Union Committee hearing the campaign also built an alliance with British in Europe[591], a coalition of grassroots groups of UK residents living in EU27 countries, which strengthened its claim to EU citizenship beyond national borders. In March 2017 representatives of the3million and British in Europe met the European Commission's negotiating team with its chief Michel Barnier in Brussels, and they jointly gave evidence to the European Parliament in May[592]. Although New Europeans and the3million parted ways following the mass lobby due to disagreements over campaign strategy and personal clashes, the partnership with Unison and British in Europe continued. Another mass lobby and a rally in London were held in October 2017.

The campaign also maintained its engagement with the European Commission and Parliament through regular meetings after each round of negotiations between the UK and EU27, including with Barnier's deputy Sabine Weyand, and then again with Barnier personally in November 2017. At the same time, it built a fragile working relationship

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[590] Exiting the European Union Committee, House of Commons, "Residency rights in Brexit negotiations examined, 17 January 2017," accessed 22 November 2017 http://www. parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/exiting-the-european-unio        n-committee/news-parliament-2015/negotiating-objectives-for-eu-withdrawal-8-evidence-16-17/.

[591] See https://britishineurope.org, accessed 22 November 2017.

[592] See http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/video/I138015/situation-rights-eu-citizens-uk-joint-hearing, accessed 22 November 2017.

with the Department for Exiting the European Union (DExEU) and the Home Office, although their repeated requests to meet their respective Secretaries of State David Davis and Amber Rudd were not granted. The issue of EU citizens' rights – both British abroad and EU residents living in Britain – was included in the top three priorities for the first stage of Brexit negotiations. In this sense the campaign seemed effective, albeit it had another important consequence which is more important to this analysis: as one of its first prominent advisors and supporters Sunder Katwala put it during one of the national meetings of its activists in London, "the3million gave people a sense of agency[593]."

Following the referendum this sense of agency was increasingly articulated through the notion of EU citizenship, despite it having been barely mentioned in the run up to the vote. Crucially, this language was present in the3million campaign from its very inception. In August 2016 I emailed Hatton, who by then formally became its co-chair alongside Anne-Laure Donskoy. I sought their written consent to regularly attend meetings of the campaign's executive team as a researcher, and as usual I included the participant information sheet with the title of my project. The research was originally designed with more focus on workers' rights and its original title referred to "EU migrant workers". I received a welcoming reply from Hatton to my email but the terminology I used was clearly an issue to him. His response stated:

> "I looked at your study brief and there's no problem about taking notes. The one thing I would say is that your terminology doesn't reflect our reality. As per the European constitution, all EU citizens have a right to travel and live in any member states.
>
> This means that we can enjoy our citizenship rights across Europe and therefore, the term migrant is erroneous as is implies some sort of migration. For people like me or Annie (21 years and over 40 years in the UK), the term migrant feels

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[593] Research notes, 28 April 2017.

unsuitable. To finish on this point, a migrant can only apply to a person who is migrating. So as soon as you've settled, the word migrant is redundant. This is why we're using the word EU citizen as it incorporates every EU citizens [sic], no matter how long they have been in the country[594]."

What were the circumstances that made people think of themselves as EU citizens, then? When I asked Hatton about it several months later, he thought it was the UK government's refusal to confirm citizens' rights within the weeks that followed the referendum.

"I think the refusal of the British government to grant Europeans the right to stay, that was the point, which it still is now. People felt togetherness because together they were refused that right to stay! And, as a result, it was not about being Polish or French or anything, it was very much all Europeans here, all European citizens – we can't guarantee your rights. So, there's this fact of you and them, or us and them[595]."

At one of the meetings organised by the3million in Bristol in autumn 2016 Sarah Sadek, an immigration solicitor from Avon and Bristol Law Centre, told participants that the struggle is "not about the rights you have, but how you use them[596]". The unfolding story of EU citizenship in Bristol and beyond illustrates extra-ordinary ways of using rights and shows the importance of civic mobilisation and everyday activism regardless of the rights of political participation. It is a story of people coming together because their rights are violated, and putting their time and skills to claim them back. It shows that recognition and articulation of vulnerability and anxiety were powerful catalysts for political mobilisation in the context of EU migrant citizens' rights and Brexit. The third and final part of this chapter shows more specifically how the concern about one's own subjective

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[594] Email correspondence with Hatton, 17 August 2017.

[595] Interview with Hatton.

[596] Research notes, 27 October 2016.

status, or about the status of proximate others, was generative for the rights claims articulated by the3million. This analysis gives particular consideration to the practices of identifying the "distant others" that could be drawn within "close reach" to produce new constellations of power that, more or less successfully, were deployed to secure the rights of EU migrant citizens in the UK[597].

## From the three people to the3million

There is a noteworthy backstory to the abovementioned meeting on 10th July 2016 in Bradbury Hall Centre in Henleaze, a leafy suburb of north Bristol, from which the3million campaign emerged. The event was organised by Nicolas Hatton, helped by Christophe Gaspard, in response to a call from Olivier Cadic, a French senator from the centre-right Union of Democrats and Independents party. Cadic represents the country's overseas citizens in the national parliament[598] and shortly after the referendum he sought to organise meetings on Brexit for the French diaspora in London and other cities. Hatton knew Cadic through the French school, where he was a director and a parent at the time[599], and as an honorary consul of France in Bristol[600] he agreed to organise the meeting. He also had the relatively recent experience of organising a vigil for the victims of the attack on the Charlie Hebdo office in Paris, which gathered around 500 people in central Bristol on 11th January 2015 and was also attended by the then city mayor George Ferguson, Stephen Williams MP for Bristol West, and local Muslim leaders, amongst others. While

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[597] John Allen, "The whereabouts of power: politics, government and space," *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 86, no. 1 (2004): 19-32. Also see: Allen, *Topologies of Power*.

[598] See http://www.senat.fr/senateur/cadic_olivier14255u.html, accessed 5 December 2017.

[599] L'Ecole Française de Bristol, "Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the L'Ecole Française de Bristol (EFB) on Saturday 19 March 2016, at 1pm, at Henbury Village Hall," accessed 5 December 2017 http://www.ecolefrancaisedebristol.org/wp-content/uploads/ 2016/08/AGM-REPORT-2016.pdf.

[600] French Embassy in the UK, *Les Délégués Consulaires de la Circonscription de Londres*, accessed 5 December 2017 https://uk.ambafrance.org/Les-delegues-consulaires-de-la-circons cription-de-Londres.

organising this vigil he met Gaspard, who then became a founder member of the3million with Hatton[601]. Initially, their thinking about the Brexit event followed nationality lines:

"It was all about information for the French community in Bristol and Bath… I felt responsible because people… I was feeling… I was worried, and a lot of people were worried at the same time, so I created the event page. It was in French[602]."

However, it was clear Brexit concerns were not just French concerns, and that the anxiety felt by EU migrant citizens transcended nationality lines. Three days before the event was to take place, Hatton changed its title and translated his invitation into English.

"I had this eureka moment in which I thought: 'Well, it's not just us, it's all Europeans. It's Italians, Polish, Spanish, Germans.' So I changed it, I said to the speakers that they've got to speak English, not French[603]."

Aside from simply opening the event to others, in the run up to the event Hatton actively encouraged participation from non-French migrant citizens and personally invited several of them, including an EU migrant citizen who was prominent in the Stronger In campaign in Bristol. He also considered other implications of narrating the issue of citizens' rights beyond the national frame, including the ownership and legitimacy of any sustained initiatives that could possibly emerge in the longer term from this early work:

"I tried to invite as many Europeans as possible but that was very, very short notice because at first it was for the French… the expression was, like, we're in the same boat, so we should unite on this. And that hasn't changed. I think the idea definitely

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[601] Interviews with Hatton and Christophe Gaspard, both on 24th February 2017. Also see http://www.southwestbusiness.co.uk/news/12012015073725-hundreds-gather-in-bristol-city-cen tre-for-charlie-hebdo-vigil/, accessed 5 December 2017.

[602] Interview with Hatton.

[603] Ibidem.

got stronger and stronger. I felt very strongly that being French and being European, we had to lead something from our perspective, not to give the British the lead on this. Because they failed us, basically. That feeling, that they failed us, is still very much here because whatever we do we seem to be led on quite easily by the British who could have – you know, most of them have good intentions, they just don't understand. And I think it's still true, up to now, that they still don't understand the issues and the worries and the anxiety, and they definitely didn't back then. So that idea that we need to fight for our rights ourselves, that was central."

Two points stand out here, one relating to the role of personal experience of Brexit, and another to the framing of the EU citizenship as non-British. The first point shows that both the legitimacy and authority of post-Brexit initiatives hinge upon people's personal experience of the emotional harm generated by Brexit anxieties. It links with the argument that, since the ultimate outcomes of the Brexit process would not be known for years after the referendum, the anxiety and vulnerability in itself are the only commonalities that can form a basis from which a campaign to protect migrant citizens' rights can possibly unfold. It is the kind of politics where the personal is political in the original meaning of the phrase, popularised by Carol Hanisch. Writing in the late 1960s, she objected against the practice of calling women support groups "therapeutic" and argued that participating women consider their meetings "political." She claimed that "personal problems are political problems. There are no personal solutions at this time. There is only collective action for a collective solution[604]." She also argued in favour of affectedness, or the significance of personal experience of, and stake in, those contested political matters. In the essay, she confessed: "I am getting a gut understanding of everything as opposed to the esoteric, intellectual understandings and *noblesse oblige* feelings I had in 'other

[604] Carol Hanisch, "The personal is political," in *Radical Feminism: A Documentary Reader*, ed. Barbara A. Crow (New York and London: New York University Press, 2000): 114.

people's' struggles[605]." This conjures up the notion of affectedness as the source of both rights claims and legitimation[606].

In short, the first point to make about the early stages of the campaign is that the recognition of anxiety became the main concern animating political imaginations of migrant citizens at that time, and the articulation of this anxiety in a way that would resonate beyond those directly affected by it was paramount to produce an alliance broad enough to affect the course of political events. This leads on to the second point arising from Hatton's framing of the3million initiative as a consciously led by non-British citizens. While it quickly sought to transcend the national frame to construct affected interests and articulate their subject – the 3 million of EU migrant citizens in the UK – such interests were inevitably described as non-British. This brings up the paradox of the inability to escape national frames of reference altogether[607] in a context when one acts vis-à-vis the nation state. It shows that even where claims to post-national belonging are being made, the national frame is still present as a residual category at best, or as a category that does all the heavy lifting in defining what it is exactly that any specific post-national subject claims to represent – for the3million is a post-national campaign only in so far as it centres on the interests of, and seeks to represent, 27 nationalities and not just a single one.

The meeting on 10th July organised by Hatton with support from Gaspard was well attended and certainly much larger than most of the campaign events I observed in the run up to the referendum. For comparison, a well-publicised debate with local MEPs, MPs and Bristol's mayor organised two weeks before the referendum by Friends of the

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[605] Ibidem.

[606] Barnett, Clive (2013). Political agency between urban and transnational spaces. In: *Contemporary Political Agency: Theory and Practice*, ed. by Bice Maiguashca and Raffaele Marchetti. Routledge: Abingdon, pp. 31–51.

[607] Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?*

Earth attracted just about 50 participants[608]. Only a one-off event put on by Another Europe is Possible with a line-up of well-known speakers including the Guardian's columnist and activist Owen Jones and Green MP Caroline Lucas, and with Kerry McCarthy MP and Nigel Costley also participating from the local Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress respectively, attracted numbers of participants similar to Hatton's meeting, so close to 200 people[609]. Against the backdrop of these referendum campaign events, the first meeting of the3million was much less party-political. There were two politicians amongst the speakers: Olivier Cadic and Barbara Janke, the former Liberal Democrat mayor of Bristol and now a baroness in the House of Lords, but other speakers were not party-political. They included Patricia Connell, a French-British consular delegate who helped Cadic organise the initial meeting for the French citizens in London and then in Bristol, Leeds and Edinburgh, and Natasha Gya Williams, a solicitor from Gya Williams Immigration practice[610].

In one of the most striking moments that set the tone of this meeting, at least in terms of the ongoing tension between migration and citizenship inherent in European rights of free movement, Connell asked people for a show of hands to gauge the length of residence in the UK of those present in the room. She started with five years, which is the period required for earning the rights of permanent residence under the EU citizenship directive. Hands went up and mostly stayed there as she shouted out numbers at five-year increments. Around 15 they started going down, but this ritual did not stop until Connell called out 50. One hand was still in the air, from an elderly widow living in Wales, and now that her husband passed away and her country voted to leave, she suddenly found herself concerned about her immigration status when she had never been before.

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[608] Research notes, 10 June 2016.

[609] Research notes, 31 May 2016.

[610] Research notes, 10th July 2016.

Connell then asked how many of those present were also British citizens and these were very few. She then said of the referendum: "I'm sure you pay your taxes, as I do… You must have been really frustrated to not have had a say[611]!" The meeting then moved to legal questions, which there were plenty of. In the opening legal statement, Williams said it was "beautiful" that EU migrant citizens did not need any specific documentation prior to the referendum but opined that was about to change, and urged everyone to start collecting and collating their old bank and mortgage statements, council tax and utility bills, payslips, tax statements, and anything else that could be used to certify their residence past and present. After she said it, participants started asking specific questions about their own cases, each different to one another, but every single one underwritten by the familiar sense of anxiety about the future in Brexitland.

This sense of sudden change was only disrupted once when Yulia, a young woman originally from Bulgaria, remarked that the anxiety created by the rhetoric of xenophobia and fear directed at EU migrant citizens was nothing new. She had experienced it just over two years earlier, when the UK was required to waive employment restrictions for the citizens of Romania and Bulgaria, which joined the EU in 2007 but were subject to a seven-year transition period on free movement of people. The difference was, however, that while only some of EU migrant citizens were affected by that scaremongering, this time it was about everyone, regardless of their length of residence in the UK. Thus, it quickly became clear that there are no easy personal solutions to their questions, and that the only feasible solution must be collective, and it must be political.

The meeting ended up with Hatton announcing another would take place in September, after the holiday season. But the follow up happened much sooner, thanks to Anne-Laure Donskoy, a researcher and campaigner for human rights in mental health. Just like Hatton and Gaspard, the two organisers of the meeting, Donskoy was also based in Bristol. She recalls:

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[611] Ibidem.

"When I first heard about the French organising meetings, first of all it was in London, it was too late for me to go. Then, a friend of mine who went to those meetings in London pushed for them to do meetings outside of London because, you know, London is not the centre of the universe. And then she said that she'd noticed the first one would be in Bristol, so I went to that[612]."

I asked whether she knew who and how organised the meetings.

"It was a French senator who contacted the local consular delegate and that was Nicolas Hatton, and they brought in, as well, somebody else to speak, and that was Patricia Connell and Marie, a French lawyer, an immigration lawyer, who happened to be in Bristol. And then at the end of the meeting they said, Nicolas said: 'OK, let's meet back in September.' Which is a very French thing to say, you know, summer doesn't – nothing happens in summer in France. Well, that's not really strictly true these days, but… So, I wasn't happy with that at all, I thought 'You can't wait.' My instinct told me things would move fast and they did, and I was right. So, I tracked down Nicolas who – I really didn't know him, because I had very little to do with the French community. I tracked him down, harassed him, as it were, for something to happen before September and the rest is history. We had the first meeting in July, in a local pub[613]."

Hatton, as the main organiser of the initial meeting in the pub, immediately became the natural leader of the initiative. As Donskoy points out:

"Nicolas was… appeared like the main person straight away, because he was the one who organised the pub meeting, after I chased him, and harassed him, and after

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[612] Interview with Anne-Laure Donskoy, 17 May 2017.

[613] Ibidem.

giving him hell… People kind of looked up to him – it often happens in organisations, they look at the man – so I said 'we need a co-chair.' And considering the efforts I've made into getting this organised in July rather than wait for September, I think I've kind of earned my stripes, as it were. And it's nice to see a bloody woman as well, being in charge."

Maike Bohn, the only person at the first operational meeting of the3million who was not originally from France also recalls the encounter as a coincidence of sorts. Like Hatton, she was active in the unsuccessful campaign of George Ferguson who sought re-election as Bristol mayor in May 2016, and yet she still came across the3million by chance.

"A friend of mine who is an activist, she's been active with the Greens and Greenpeace… and I worked with her in Bristol Big Green Week[614], she emailed me and said 'You must meet Nicolas because both of you want to do something and he is someone I rate.' And I realised Nicolas campaigned for George Ferguson and so we must have crossed paths quite a few times in meetings… But I don't remember meeting him, he doesn't remember meeting me… She said 'You should talk to Nicolas' and, because she'd copied him in, I sent him an email saying 'Hello' and he then said 'We're meeting next Wednesday in the Clyde Arms' and it was this… There was never any doubt that I would do something, but at that stage I didn't know what this was. Was it anti-Brexit? Because there already was Bristol for Europe springing up slowly… So, I went to the meeting at the Clyde Arms and it was weird because I didn't know who were these people! A handful of people, did they kind of know each other? And I felt – I really wasn't sure what I was coming to. There was this woman Anne Laure, who seemed to know about research... Then there was the lovely Polish man who was writing a PhD, I think!

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[614] An annual ecological festival organised in Bristol by the University of the West of England. See https://www1.uwe.ac.uk/whatson/biggreenweek.aspx, accessed on 18th November 2017.

Nicolas I didn't know, and Christophe… Just weird, there was just a very disparate group[615]!"

Bristol for Europe, which became one of the first and largest of local, city-based groups that emerged shortly after the EU referendum across the UK to oppose Brexit, was a grassroots campaign which drew support from the city's activists and members of liberal, environmental, or left parties and groups. However, the3million quickly developed its neutral stance on Brexit as a political process – it was the effect on EU migrant citizens that the campaign focussed on, without challenging the referendum result in itself – and so Bristol for Europe never became a close partner, despite multiple personal ties between the two campaigns. Bohn also quickly decided to concentrate her efforts on the3million, and this had as much to do with its cause as with the way the group operated.

"I went with the3million and that's partly, I think, two thirds is the strength of who Nicolas is. We immediately clicked, there was a good personal fit, which is crucial… I've thought a lot about it, because I had experience from Bristol Big Green Week. Volunteering is really tricky, because there's no hierarchy, even if someone has the idea and is leading it, but it's very hard to create hierarchy. You're not paying people and you need to be remunerating them through praise, but sometimes you need to criticise what they do. So, volunteering's really tricky and I think it's the sheer force of Nicolas' personality that held the3million together as long. We have a lot of trust, even when we're criticised, we trust him[616]."

This operating mode consolidated in the summer of 2016. At that time it was not yet clear what the campaign was supposed to do, so there was time to reflect on how to do things, given disparate personalities and skills in the initial group. Hatton recalls:

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[615] Interview with Maike Bohn, 10 November 2017.

[616] Ibidem.

"After the first meeting, the first public meeting… I think it was Anne-Laure who was the most outspoken about this, 'we need to do something now'. And she reminded me recently that I did say 'let's wait till September, nothing's going to happen in the summer' and she disagreed. She said 'No, let's meet much sooner,' so we agreed to meet the following week. At the same time I was going to the Bristol for Europe meetings and they were much more advanced. It was interesting for me to see how they were organising themselves and also what their campaigned objectives were. Although I feel very pro-European, I do have reservations about the EU like most people with a brain would have. But overall, if I could have voted I would have voted to stay, definitely. But I could see that their themes were very different from the themes that mattered to EU citizens or Europeans, which were much more centred around civil rights, whereas their themes were much more political[617]."

This informal organisational structure was also naturally collaborative. Strategic decisions were taken jointly with Hatton, Donskoy and Bohn being the leads, while Gaspard focussed on the fast-growing Facebook forum which within a year reached over 35,000 users. This growth enabled the campaign to attain prominence very quickly but also rendered it more strategic and affected its direction, as it generated a sense of responsibility and accountability, as much as is possible in a group that formally is responsible for, and accountable to, no one. In October 2016, a week after the Guardian became the first major news outlet to write about the3million campaign[618], Donskoy penned an opinion piece for the newspaper. It linked to the campaign's Facebook forum and Twitter feed, and gave a very personal account of a migrant citizen's struggles in Brexitland. The campaign stated growing at breakneck speed.

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[617] Interview with Hatton.

[618] Lisa O'Carroll, "EU citizens living in UK lobby for post-Brexit residency law," *The Guardian*, accessed 6 December 2017: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/oct/10/eu-citizens-living -in-uk-lobby-for-post-brexit-residency-law.

"We were approached by the Guardian to write something, and I wrote that article. From then on we got media attention, and from getting media attention things started to change because we were on the media's radar. We started to have this kind of pressure, in a way, to do stuff, the forum started to take off about then, so there was even more interest. You know… how far can we go, what can we do, you know, what can we do better, what are the links that we absolutely need to make, you know, all of these strategic decisions have to be made. So, they were constantly made all of the time[619]."

Throughout the summer, the small group of organisers learnt about the key issues affecting EU migrant citizens, in particular the unwieldy permanent residence process through which one confirms the right to reside in the UK under EU law, and the associated issue of comprehensive sickness insurance. They developed an understanding of Theresa May's infamous hostile environment policy, which for the first time was spelled out in her interview with *The Telegraph* newspaper[620] and sought to put all resources of the government's disposal at the forefront of combating illegal migration from within the state. As a result of it, since 2011 the Home Office was making it increasingly difficult for EU migrant citizens to obtain permanent residence cards, and at the same time accelerated enforced removals of those who were deemed to abuse free movement[621].

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[619] Interview with Donskoy.

[620] James Kirkup and Robert Winnett "Theresa May interview: We're going to give illegal migrants a really hostile reception," *The Telegraph*, accessed 7 December 2017 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/9291483/Theresa-May-interview-Were-going-to-give-illegal-migrants-a-really-hostile-reception.html. Also see: Colin Yeo, "The hostile environment: what is it and who does it affect?" *Free Movement Blogs*, accessed 7 December 2017 https://www.freemovement.org.uk/hostile-environment-affect/.

[621] Kuba Jablonowski, "Nothing is agreed until everything is lost? European citizens in Brexit negotiations," *The Progressive Post Blog*, accessed 7 December 2017 https://progressivepost .eu/spotlights/nothing-agreed-everything-lost-european-citizens-brexit-negotiations.

Changes introduced in August 2011 required students and self-sufficient persons – so homemakers, for example – applying for the card to present evidence of holding comprehensive sickness insurance [622] during the qualifying period of five years of residence in Britain. The European Commission deemed this change unlawful and in April 2012 it launched an infringement procedure[623], but no enforcement followed. The dubious requirement remained in place and confined thousands of EU citizens to an administrative nightmare of being unable to prove their lawful residence in Britain – and so became one of the early targets of the3million campaign.

However, it was not just dry legal analyses but the personal story of Monique Hawkins, which was publicised by the Guardian[624], which put the3million campaign in the national spotlight. Hawkins, a Dutch citizen who had lived in the UK for 24 years at the time of the EU referendum and had two British children with her British husband, applied for naturalisation due to anxiety over her future status – only to be told in a letter from the Home Office she did not qualify for UK citizenship and as such should make preparations to leave the country. Bohn, the3million's PR coordinator, explains the impact of the story, published on 28th December 2016, a time where often nothing much happens politically.

"People are in a family mood and there's that photo of Monique, this nice smiling woman… I remember that, I remember seeing that photo and thinking 'Oh my god, that could be me', it's a factor. It was the first bit that could be me because the

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[622] European Operational Policy Team, *"EEA nationals requiring comprehensive sickness insurance (including transitional arrangements for students)*,*"* accessed 7 December 2017 https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/370845/response/904120/attach/4/Annex%20A%20Notice%2007%2011%20Comprehensive%20sickness%20insurance%20revised%20REDACTE....pdf.

[623] European Commission, "Free movement: Commission asks the UK to uphold EU citizens' rights," accessed 7 December 2017 http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-417_EN.htm.

[624] Lisa O'Carroll, "Dutch woman with two British children told to leave UK after 24 years." *The Guardian*, accessed 12 September 2017 https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/dec/28/ dutch-woman-with-two-british-children-told-to-leave-uk-after-24-years.

other portraits, there was a feature about Nicolas as a campaigner and Anne-Laure's account, but actually that one was very much all of us… And a mother! And the deportation, what? Are they going to send this mother home? I mean, everybody up to Monique wrote about what they were worried about, but that was the first one that said 'I've had a letter, it's happening'[625]."

Hatton was quick to reach out to Hawkins, the first of the core group of the3million campaigners who was not from Bristol but a London commuter town, and she joined the campaign at the start of 2017, quite unexpectedly for herself. She begun working closely with Donskoy despite no prior involvement in activism. As Donskoy recalls:

"Our friend Monique, she does say now 'I'm somebody who didn't have a political bone in me' and this happened, and she was kind of forced. That side of her she thought she didn't have, it was actually there and waiting to be tickled, in a way. And now she's full on[626]."

There were two major effects of Hawkins' involvement in the campaign. Firstly, it changed the group's media outreach strategy and shifted the focus to identifying personal stories of EU migrant citizens who were not anxious about Brexit but already affected by it, as it forced long-term residents to confront the realities of the hostile environment policy[627]. A number of high-profile cases followed, sourced and fact-checked by the group and passed on to the media.

Shortly after the Hawkins story broke, and on behalf of the3million, Hatton and Donskoy gave evidence to the House of Commons' Select Committee for Exiting the European

[625] Interview with Bohn.

[626] Interview with Donskoy.

[627] Interview with Bohn and subsequent email communication including a database of media features about the3million.

Union. The three met there, and Bohn was also present. The Select Committee, for which the3million – mainly Donskoy – wrote the campaign's first position paper[628] outlining the problems with the interpretation of EU migrant citizens' rights in the UK and the process of permanent residence application, was the last moment when the group's focus was solely on the British government. Asked by Peter Lilley MP, a Conservative and a Brexiteer who retired at the 2017 election, whether the3million "put any pressure on [their] own Governments", Hatton replied "We live in the UK. Our Government are the British Government. I pay taxes here[629]." Then Donskoy, who provided evidence alongside Hatton during the hearing, was asked about the groups' claims about the unreasonably complex procedure of applying for Permanent Residence Cards, which evidence EU migrant citizens' rights of residence in Britain. In response, she produced a massive pile of documents from her wheelie suitcase saying:

"There is an unreasonable burden of evidence put on the applicant. I am just going to show you – it's one of those 'I made one of these earlier' moments – part of my own application. It is about three to four kilograms at the moment and represents, I would say, just over half of what it will be like at the end of the day[630]."

But as it was getting increasingly clear the UK government was going to trigger Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, and citizens' rights would be subject to negotiations between

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[628] the3million "Guaranteeing the Rights of EU Citizens Living in the UK Post Brexit: An Alternative White Paper," accessed 18 November 2017 https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/0d3854_861a1394f575497b89c37415aad8e066.pdf.

[629] Field notes, 18 January 2017, supplemented by Exiting the European Union Committee, House of Commons "Oral evidence: The UK's negotiating objectives for withdrawal from EU, HC 1072, Wednesday 18th January 2017, Q614" accessed 12 September 2017 http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/exiting-the-european-union-committee/the-uks-negotiating-objectives-for-its-withdrawal-from-the-eu/oral/45498.pdf.

[630] Field notes, 18 January 2017.

London and Brussels, Hawkins and Donskoy wrote a letter to Michel Barnier, the chief negotiator from the European Commission. They outlined their concerns and anxieties over citizens' rights. They also invited British in Europe campaigners to join them at a subsequent meeting with Barnier and this started a very close partnership which continued throughout 2017 and 2018, and resulted in cooperation on policy positions, London and Brussels lobby strategy, and a number of joint press releases and media appearances.

At the same time EU27 outreach group was formed within the3million to coordinate the lobby through EU institutions and capitals. The group was initially chaired by Hawkins, who retained a prominent role there until December 2017, and later its work was coordinated by Costanza de Toma, an environmental campaigner with prior experience of lobbying EU institutions. Ever since March 2017 the campaign has been reaching out through London and Brussels, two sites where Brexit power is most intense, to lobby both the UK Parliament and Government, and the European Commission and Parliament in tandem with the campaign of British in Europe. This responded to the advice given by Sunder Katwala, the aforementioned supporter of the3million and director of the think-tank British Future. He stressed the campaign has to be as broad and include all EU migrant citizens most affected by Brexit. With a clear reference to the British in Europe, he advised activists in spring 2017: "Don't be the three million! Be the four, the five million[631]!" Understanding and acting on that was a process of learning to be affected that started with the mundane and intimate, and constant seeking of new modes of political participation that transcended the rights of political membership.

## Conclusion: Below and beyond the national

This chapter, exploring the case study of political campaigning, focussed on French, German, Polish and Dutch activists who, as the only group amongst the three strands of

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[631] Research notes, 28 April 2017.

this research, consistently self-identified as Europeans and as EU citizens. This self-identification, however, served to leverage cosmopolitan Europeanness to reassert belonging in place, and in the UK. Specifically, the activists described here leveraged their Europeanness to resist the sudden shift of the borderscape that took place at the 2016 referendum and campaigned to retain their rights in the UK. This process of campaigning was also a process of learning to be affected, and it unfolded as evaluative action: activists were tracking down the specific sources of anxiety brought about by the referendum result, and they were tracking down sites of intensive power relations where they could influence political processes that affected their lives.

This case had a different spatial trajectory to the case studies of transnational voting from Chapter 3 and community and labour organising from Chapter 4, given it spilled outside Bristol. Initially it reached out to London, where the fate of European migrant citizens was being decided prior to the Article 50 notification on 29 March 2017. Once the wheels of Brexit were truly in motion and the two-year period for negotiating the UK's withdrawal agreement with the EU started, political activism traced through this case study started reaching out to Brussels and, through Brussels, to several national capitals. These processes of learning to be affected, and of exercising spatial reach to act politically, run in parallel.

This case, more than others, brings into question the notion of national membership as a criterion of democratic inclusion, and shifts it towards affected interests. In Chapter 3, Polish voters made a claim to affectedness partly based on national membership – albeit their narratives of national belonging were typically propped up by more mundane narratives of affectedness. On the one hand, these narratives pivoted from enduring impact of Polish politics on migrant citizens' lives through relatives and friends, or property owned in Poland. On the other hand, they relied on a future-oriented connection to Poland articulated through tentative narratives of return. Ultimately, it is this process of hedging one's bets in a place of origin and residency and of claims to concurrent political belonging in two territories that denotes external voting as a cosmopolitan practice – how can such an expressly transnational life be anything but? In Chapter 4, the case of labour and community organisers provided a much more lucid claim to affected

interests. Specifically, the narratives of organisers pivoted from a view that the very participation of migrant citizens in the workplace and the neighbourhood earned them associated rights, which they then helped them claim. Affectedness here is the function of performing a certain social role – of a worker or a resident, in this case – irrespective of national membership. Nationality matters insofar as it is a vector of broadening the scope of democratic concern, and of organised inclusion. In this chapter, the case for affected interests as a criterion of inclusion was the clearest. Through the acts of campaigning, activists learned about their common concerns and shared interests, and about the way in which various Brexit scenarios will impact them. They leveraged their Europeanness in order to mitigate undesirable outcomes and retain their connection to place – Bristol and Britain – in a form as closely resembling their status before the referendum as possible. In doing so, however, they inevitably transformed the political landscape as they publicly articulated narratives of injustice precipitated by the vote that profoundly affected them, but actively excluded their voices.

This research project was driven by an interest in experiential, improvised, and mundane enactments of EU migrant citizenship in the UK. It engaged with literatures on geographies of citizenship, acts of citizenship, and on transnational, post-national and supranational citizenship more specifically, to put these literatures into a productive dialogue with findings from the three empirical case studies. These case studies were focussed on distinct political devices – that is voting, organising, and campaigning – through which EU citizenship was enacted at local scales, and through which it could reach out to national and supranational institutions. As shown in previous chapters, these devices are socially organised forms of political action – "games of conduct[632]," as Engin Isin calls them – that allow *individuals* to assert identity and claim rights *collectively* through alienating, agonistic, and solidaristic modes of political action. This means that such enactments enable citizens construct relations of exclusion, disassociation, conflict,

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[632] Isin, *Being Political*, 36.

tension, affiliation, identification, solidarity, and so on[633]. While these devices did not overwrite the scope of political concern and action by migrant citizens, they delineated the kinds of citizenship that could be articulated through them.

My empirically grounded analysis thus far has demonstrated how the politics of European migrant citizenship operates in the UK, and what political resources it has at its disposal. It showed that in spite of limited political rights, which circumscribe political participation of mobile Europeans, there is still a significant scope for political action on the back of free movement. At the same time, discussion presented here, and in this chapter in particular, reiterated the overarching research question about the politically transformative potential of EU citizenship. Given the political action discussed here unfolded through conventional devices – migrant citizens engaged in diasporic politics, organised across workplaces and neighbourhoods, and mobilised through political campaigns when necessary – then where exactly lies the transformative potential of EU citizenship, and what is the trajectory of any such transformations?

When discussing denationalised imaginations of freely moving citizens in *Eurostars and Eurocities*, Adrian Favell observes that they operate in new, unchartered socio-political fields where hierarchies of the old become refashioned by a desire for "freedom from the nation-state, a denationalized freedom[634]". In the empirical analysis presented here, this desire was as often silent and implicit as vocal and explicit. Nation and ethnicity were most often destabilised by silencing, and by treating them as a tool and not an end of political action. They were being phased out rather than confronted, and that is why I argue here that EU citizenship moves us towards denationalised futures *iteratively*. It does not have to confront national identities – it can slowly but surely sidestep them.

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[633] Ibidem, 1-53.

[634] Favell, *Eurostars and Eurocities*.

Similarly to Favell, Rosi Braidotti argues that "the project of developing a new kind of post-nationalist identity is related to the process of dis-identification from established, nation-bound identities[635]" but she is conscious this in fact translates into two distinct processes. First, some EU citizens may intentionally deploy various strategies to alienate themselves from national ties and construct new identities, as it is shown in this chapter. Second, and more prosaically, the process of dis-identification can also take place through the gradual erosion or decline of national ties, and through silencing on nation-bound narratives. Favell's push towards "denationalized freedom" is a two-fold process too, given that denationalized imaginations may animate it or they may be its outcome. The end product of this process cannot at this stage be assumed to emerge as a coherent whole, but both Braidotti and Favell argue it already shows a distinctly denationalised tinge. Further, because of its indeterminacy, politics emerging from EU citizenship are characterised by a strong degree of cultural openness in general, which is shaped and conducted by free movement. It is this internal differentiation and plurality of Europeanness which Etienne Balibar, too, identifies as the site from which hybrid forms of cultural and civic participation can, and do, develop[636]. All these arguments suggest that given the indeterminacy and iterability of EU citizenship, its futures are characterised by political plurality. But despite this openness, which means there is no singular politics that emerges from EU citizenship, it does display a specific political trajectory.

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[635] Braidotti, "On becoming Europeans," 38.

[636] Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?*

## Conclusion | Citizenly iterations

The three empirically informed chapters have shown that citizenship is continuously refashioned through rights claims, and so political transformation is all but hardwired into it. They also have shown that any such transformation can be generated through different modes of claiming rights, and so it can give rise to traditionalist and progressive politics just as well. Finally, aside from theatrical performances of Europeanness for political effect, as shown in Chapter 5, the nation state emerged as the main referent of much of the political action generated through migrant citizenship. And yet, while political transformations of EU citizenship were neither inherently progressive nor necessarily denationalised, and while they could be mobilised for enactments of reactionary nationalism, most often they were shown as conductive of open and cosmopolitan politics. This exhibits the significant transformative and cosmopolitan potential of EU citizenship. Not a destiny, but a likely outcome of a socio-political process that is steered by an institutional design of denationalised citizenship on the one hand, and by culturally open political orientations that animate this institutional design on the other. This open-ended design of EU citizenship, and citizenship more broadly, partly stems from its iterability which transforms its scope and meaning[637].

The focus on experiential modes of enacting citizenship in this research did not attempt to prioritise them over legal and policy regimes of citizenship, or its formal aspects. Rather, it aimed to bring up the unevenness and differentiation inherent in citizenship processes by studying claims of electoral, socioeconomic, and residence rights. The study mobilised interdisciplinary literatures on the formal construction of EU citizenship and

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[637] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 47.

put them into dialogue with critical and geographic perspectives on experiential and enacted citizenship. It then explored how transnational, supranational, and post-national political processes are enmeshed in place and how rights are claimed in understated ways, so that the boundary between rupture and reproduction is hard to trace[638]. In doing so, it generated an account of EU citizenship as a dialogic process whereby migrant citizens make sense of their life experience and draw on it to claim their rights.

The chapters opened three windows onto EU citizenship through the study of voting, organising, and campaigning practices in Bristol. The resulting work traced how migrants act along, across, and beyond national frames to claim their rights, derived from the formal construction of EU citizenship. While many of these enactments could be described as routine practices of political participation, I argue they are iterative, and therefore transformative. This is so because these enactments affect individuals and institutions – that is organisational forms, social networks, and legal frameworks – which they interact with. This has been shown through the analysis of individual experiences and individual narratives of research participants, who either claim rights on behalf of others, or claim their individual rights – but inevitably with others.

In this way, external voting of migrants – which can only take place because activists volunteer to organise it – turns out to be a complex process of negotiating one's attachment to two different places at once. A distinct sense of displacement from the country of origin emerges from the voters' narratives, and voting helps them navigate through this displacement. Similarly, organising practices in the workplace and in the community are claims to redress socioeconomic vulnerabilities and injustices. Labour and community organisers were shown to claim equal pay, or housing rights, or access to mental health, and they were also becoming politicised through this action. This process had the effect of integrating them into workplaces and communities too, reflecting the logics of rights claims across national frames. And finally, campaigning practices of

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[638] Bassel and Lloyd, "Rupture or reproduction?"

the3million activists illustrate how they mobilised EU citizens in response to the vulnerability generated by Brexit. This chapter also shows how activists engaged in relatively routine actions of media and political outreach, but concurrently developed a distinct style of cosmopolitan politics and, ultimately, created a representative organisation for a European minority that was largely unacknowledged before the EU referendum.

This process was shown to involve acquiring and processing new emotions and knowledge through developing frames of evaluation, reasoning with emotions, and articulating shared concerns. In this sense, enactments of EU citizenship were shown to be inherently generative of new politics, because of their iterability. Political change manifests here as a process of dissonance, mediation and conciliation, that is, a dialogic call-and-response process. Each act of democracy – each democratic iteration, as Seyla Benhabib put it, drawing on Jacques Derrida's work on iterability[639] – is simultaneously constitutive of this very democracy. Such political enactments articulate those "forms of political agency and subjectivity that anticipate new modalities of political citizenship [640]". Their inherent novelty, according to Benhabib, stems from the jurisgenerative qualities of politics that occur when universal norms are mediated democratically in particular contexts. Democratic iterations are not teleological or inherently progressive processes. Rather, such new forms of subjectivity and citizenship can and do emerge in the public sphere at those – jurisgenerative – moments "when principles and norms that undergird democratic will become permeable and fluid to new semantic contexts[641]."

This means that citizenly iterations do not simply lead to more democracy, or to a more inclusive democracy. Rather, they lead to another democracy, an altered democracy. To

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[639] Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, 45-82.

[640] Ibidem, 47.

[641] Ibidem, 50.

Derrida, iterability – which he wrote about when engaging with John L. Austin's work on performative utterances – was primarily explained through alteration. As he argued, "*iter…* probably comes from *itara*, *other* in Sanskrit, and everything that follows can be read as the working out of the logic that ties repetition to alterity[642]." If one crucial lesson from Austin's work on performatives is that they are neither true nor false, but instead constitute action rather than description, then "the most troubling consequence of iterability may be that nothing is simply authentic. Everything is also theatrical: every utterance, a performance; every action, acting[643]." Democratic iterations are therefore moments through which we can glean not so much what democracy is, but how its principles are variably enacted. This is also what Engin Isin is getting at when he argues, as shown in Chapter 1, that is it not simple dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, or othering, what animates citizenship. Instead, citizenship is driven by "the logics of alterity" where borders still exist but are hazy and permeable, thus opening up spaces of political action[644].

In his reflection *On Cosmopolitanism* Derrida discusses the laws of hospitality and asylum to draw out a difference between foreigners, guests, and fellow citizens. He argues this is fundamental for understanding cosmopolitanism[645], which operates through the tension between unconditional and conditional hospitality. Rather than impede political action, however, this tension is enables it and hence is a productive force. In Derrida's words:

> "It is a question of knowing how to transform and improve the law, and of knowing
> if this improvement is possible within an historical space which takes place
> *between* the Law of an unconditional hospitality, offered *a priori* to every other, to

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[642] Derrida, "Signature event context," 7.

[643] Bearn, "Derrida dry," 23.

[644] Isin, *Being Political*: 30.

[645] Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness – Thinking in Action* (London: Routledge, 2001): 19.

all newcomers, *whoever they may be*, and *the* conditional laws of a right to hospitality, without which *The* unconditional Law of hospitality would be in danger of remaining a pious and irresponsible desire, without form and without potency, and of even being perverted at any moment[646]."

He goes on to argue the question of what is possible can only be addressed through constant experimentation. "*Experience and experimentation[647]*" allow a reflection on the questions of hospitality, of recognising the rights of others, and for new orders of citizenship and democracy to emerge. Here lies the importance of democratic iterations and acts of citizenship performed by migrant citizens.

Enactments of citizenship performed by migrants are transformative, even if they are not revolutionary. I draw on the concept of iterability to argue that these actions are meaningful because they follow the logics of alterity, where performance is inevitably read as variation. This thesis shows how migrant citizens claim rights through enacting established political practices, and that such enactments matter because they re-signify the meaning of these practices. In what follows, citizenly iterations are politically consequential and therefore transformative. This is demonstrated here with regards to EU rights, although the thesis has implications to the study of citizenship in general.

All citizenship is precarious, but some of its designs and formations are more precarious than others. This is evident in the case of EU citizenship which, though often put on a pedestal and cherished as the world's first truly supranational regime, is shown throughout this thesis as being riddled with tensions between fundamental and complementary rights, between cooperating and countering regimes of governance, and between various scales and modes of political action. This results in its unevenness and

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[646] Ibidem, 22-23.

[647] Ibidem.

instability, which is productive, but also in the precarity of those who enact their right to free movement.

My study began with an idea to expose these blemishes of EU citizenship, and with an expectation that this would further substantiate federalist and cosmopolitan demands for universal suffrage rights across member states. What the study revealed, however, is a more complex story that does not easily lend itself to any singular reading or any singular legal, political, or social fix. As I have argued throughout the thesis, the inherent precarity of EU citizenship is also a source of political mobilisation. Hence, it is best understood as an emergent field where injustices are identified and articulated, where rights are claimed, and where solidarities are generated through collective action on individual, yet shared, concerns. These processes enable citizens to learn and enact their politics.

The chapter on voting predominantly focussed on the narratives of Polish citizens mobilising along national frames to participate in external elections. Their voting over distance was shown as a creative process which articulated a sense of care and responsibility for the country imagined through ethnic and nationalist frames, but articulated through emotional proximity to families and friends that migrant citizens had left behind. In other words, it was shown as a political performance of proximity to the distant homeland and of drawing the distant homeland into closer reach – but it also typically expressed discontent with the voters' own status as emigrants and their feeling of being displaced out of Poland by corrupt liberal forces. Ethnicity emerged here as an aspect of socio-cultural identity as well as a political device, insofar as it enabled otherwise disenfranchised migrant citizens – living in a new place, lacking full political rights – to establish themselves as political subjects and participate in a political process. This process was creative and transformative in several ways, insofar as its effects reconfigured distance and territory, and the figure of citizen itself, through political enactments.

Concerns of migrant voters problematise the notion of distance, which in migration studies is understood mainly in terms of absolute space. Emotional distance and proximity emerged as a distinct trope which was related to a profound sense of care that migrant

citizens had for their distant country of origin and for their fellow nationals in their place of residence. The other set of concerns challenged temporal registers of writing on migration, which is preoccupied with the present, and the presence. Some of migrants' concerns were future-oriented and were related to the possibility of return and of seeking a better future for the physically distant country, which might plausibly become the home country again one day. Others were past-oriented and referred to the sense of social injustice suffered by those who reluctantly chose emigration as their only chance for a good life, relative wellbeing and welfare. To navigate similar contradictions in his study of the citizenship struggles of Polish workers in Peterborough, Ben Rogaly captures the fluid and contingent meaning of the homeland in migrants' politics. In the context of the forthcoming Brexit he problematises the possibility of migrants returning to their country of origin because "which country or countries they feel are theirs is indeed, […] a work in progress[648]". His in-depth work in Peterborough raises the fundamental question of the national: to what degree homeland is a country, and to what degree a signifier in the discourse of migrant politics.

Most notably, research participants whose narratives are explored in Chapter 3 attempted to navigate the tension between their own status and their anti-immigrant voting preferences by unsettling the figure of a migrant. They articulated their identity through the dialectic tension between immigrants, whom they typically othered, and of emigrants, whom they typically identified with. This racialised distinction – for immigrants were always the unnamed, but obvious, others – emerged as a clear and distinct trope in the process of data analysis, but it could be studied further to better understand the phenomenon of anti-immigrant sentiment and activism amongst migrants.

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[648] Ben Rogaly, "Re-scaling citizenship struggles in provincial urban England," Paper at the session on *Rescaling migration, citizenship and rights: urban and transnational citizenship.* Boston: Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, 2017.

To explain this apparent paradox for the purposes of my study, Engin Isin's theorisation of citizenship as alterity is particularly illuminating. Isin argues that "in the formation of groups, narrative strategies value certain attributes and devalue others[649]" to construct shared identities, which is the same process as the emergence of "communities of value" in the analytical terms proposed by Bridget Anderson[650]. However, while we accept that majority groups regularly generate such valuing narratives, unfortunate as they might be, we are somehow surprised or at least disappointed if minority groups do so[651]. But rather than simply conclude that minorities, even those who are discriminated against – or especially the ones that are discriminated against – can discriminate against others, it is worth reflecting on what it tells us about citizenship in general, and EU citizenship specifically.

Here, it is important to maintain the crucial distinction between citizenship as a device of socio-political inclusion and exclusion, which is the dominant perspective within socio-legal citizenship studies, and as *alterity*, which is implicit in much of critical citizenship studies. Let's go back to a particularly striking formulation of alterity proposed by Isin, who argues:

> "the logics of alterity assume overlapping, fluid, contingent, dynamic and reversible boundaries and positions, where agents engage in solidaristic strategies such as recognition and affiliation, agonistic strategies such as domination and authorization, or alienating strategies such as disbarment across various positions *within* social space[652]."

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[649] Isin, *Being Political*, 30.

[650] Anderson, *Us and Them*, 29-47.

[651] Fox and Mogilnicka, "Pathological integration."

[652] Isin, *Being Political*, 30.

Alienation takes place *within* because, as opposed to the logics of citizenship as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion, in the logics of alterity all possible subject positions are dialogical. In what follows, none of them is ever fully outside – insofar as without the co-constitutive outside, the inside is bound to collapse. By developing the narrative of themselves as emigrants from Poland, rather than immigrants in the UK, external voters were not so much shoring up their identity, as following the path of identity formation with an undetermined outcome.

External voting was marked by further spatiotemporal tensions: it was a means of evaluating one's past and future, of triangulating one's place in the world, and of constructing one's sense of belonging. Migrant citizens were making sense of their experience and evaluating plans for their future through the vote, but what is important is that they sought to navigate those individual concerns collectively. The options on the ballot paper organised their notions of belonging, place, and identity – and while most attempted to hang on to identities defined in terms of the past, they articulated their identities in a language of the future and drew on their inescapably transnational lives. The notions of return were as common as ideas for onward migration, and what is particularly striking, the return was not meant to be to Poland as it used to be, but as it should be: to a Poland working as well as the somewhat romanticised UK. This, as shown in Chapter 3, was expressed through desires for better quality of life, stronger connection between people and place, higher standards of political culture, a state more accountable to its citizens, and so on.

In this way, free movement has refashioned political imaginations of migrant citizens, even if this is not the kind of Europeanness[653], or European public debate[654], that

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[653] Michael Bruter, *Citizens of Europe? The Emergence of a Mass European Identity* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

[654] Ruud Koopmans, "Who inhabits the European public sphere? Winners and losers, supporters and opponents in Europeanised political debates," *European Journal of Political Research* 46 (2007): 183–210.

literatures on Europeanisation most commonly explore. It also serves as a reminder that geographically theorised Europeanisation emerges as a process whereby:

> "Historically and geographically determined 'EUropean' values are continually juxtaposed with identities held at individual, organisational, community and territorial scales to promote socialisation and learning opportunities, with accompanying politics arising from reappraisal or entrenchment of attitudes, visions and values held by actors[655]."

External voting relied on diasporic networks, but at the same time politically transformed the place where it was performed and, by further embedding diasporic networks within this place, strengthened its transnational credentials. It also opened up a new site for enacting transnational politics, which reached out across territorial boundaries – but unfolded along national frames. External voting in Bristol opened up a space for enactments of reactionary, but somehow worldly and strangely European, politics in the city.

In the chapter on organising I analysed narratives and practices of labour and community organisers. Their concerns were typically animated by a sense of socioeconomic injustice, insecurity, or marginalisation. These mundane struggles are nonetheless shown to be political, insofar as they emerge through making personal or person-centred concerns – over labour or community issues – a matter of public concern. In this way, they operate as a device for turning the personal into the political by broadening the scope of concern, and by incorporating emergent political actors. In the course of the latter process, migrant citizens who got involved in labour or community organising were shown to be further politicised by the institutional structures and networks they operated within, thus showing

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[655] Julian Clark and Alun Jones, "The spatialities of Europeanisation: territory, government and power in 'EUrope'," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33, no. 3 (2008): 313.

the transformative effects of civic iteration manifest in individuals as well as in socio-political formations they are part of.

Organising work was shown to operate across ethnic lines, and to unfold as evaluative action. It creatively leveraged ethnicity to identify and address concerns that were grounded in mundane action in the social field, but which were not straightforwardly related to national identity. Most often, these concerns were classified as "a migrant's fate[656]" type issues by research participants and included a myriad of welfare and wellbeing concerns: from deskilling upon arrival, through exploitative employment landscape and confusing social landscape, to a strong desire to make the most of the migration experience. The latter linked with an unshaken sense of agency, which in the case of activists participating in this research turned into practical political action oriented towards equity and inclusion. This action unfolded through learning to be affected – that is, through identifying political processes that perpetuated the exclusion and marginalisation of migrant citizens and acting against them through community and labour organising.

Ultimately then, the narratives of labour and community organisers defused the tension between the universalism of cosmopolitan concern and particularism of citizenship processes. Enactments of industrial and neighbourhood citizenship, which they narrated, facilitated subtle political transformations that had progressive political trajectories and effects, in that they advanced political agendas organised by notions of equity and inclusion. They opened spaces for political participation of migrant citizens and strengthened their representations by incorporating diversity.

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[656] Interview with Iza.

Theoretical framings of post-national citizenship – once hinged upon the problematic narrative of the hollowing out of nation states[657] – have been evolving to problematise the national and to make sense of its ongoing enactments in a world that is meant to be moving beyond it. On the contemporary post-national thinking "identities proliferate and become more and more expressive, authorizing ethnic nationalism and particularistic group claims[658]." Yasemin Nuhoğlu Soysal argues that identity, theorised in this way, "emerges as a pervasive discourse of participation and is enacted as a symbolic (and organizational) tool for creating group solidarities and mobilizing claims[659]".

Post-national citizenship therefore marks not so much the demise, or even hollowing out of the nation state, as the divorcing of rights, which become increasingly universalistic, from identities, which become increasingly particularistic. This framing is in tune with Saskia Sassen's writing on citizenship beyond national belonging, where she has argued that "a focus on experiences of identity emerges as crucial to post-national citizenship[660]." In so saying, she specifically refers to the crucial distinction between the concepts of post-national and denationalised citizenship. While the latter assumes a demise of the national frame, the former can account for practices and articulations that still rely on the national frame, but which in this process alter its meaning. But what does it mean for citizenship and European citizenship in particular, the go-to example of "citizenship outside the confines of the national state[661]" for writers such as Sassen? After all, despite its transnational functions, it still operates through mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion[662]. Human rights claims embody universalistic trends but citizenship claims, even transnational, are still bounded by the rules of membership.

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[657] Yasemin N. Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

[658] Soysal, "Post-national citizenship," 386.

[659] Ibidem.

[660] Sassen, "Towards Post-National Citizenship," 281.

[661] Ibidem, 277.

[662] Shaw, *The Transformation of Citizenship in the European Union*.

The chapter on campaigning focussed on the practices and narratives of activists who, as the only group amongst research participants, were keen to self-identify as EU citizens and explicitly made claims to belonging beyond national frames. However, these activists were in fact also leveraging their cosmopolitan Europeanness to reassert belonging in place, and in the UK. Just as the migrant citizens from Chapter 3 leveraged their Europeanness to leave Poland despite not feeling particularly European, the migrant citizens from Chapter 5 leveraged their Europeanness to resist the sudden shift of the borderscape that took place at the 2016 referendum, and to retain their rights in the UK – and Bristol specifically. This was also a process of learning to be affected, and it unfolded as evaluative action. Campaigners tracked specific sources of anxiety brought about by the referendum result, and traced sites of intensive power relations where through their enactments they could try and influence the outcome of political processes that affected their lives – without asking their consent. This case had a different spatial trajectory given it spilled outside Bristol. Initially it reached out to London, where the fate of European migrant citizens was being decided prior to the Article 50 notification on 29 March 2017. Once the wheels of Brexit were truly in motion and the two-year period for negotiating the UK's withdrawal agreement with the EU started, their activities started reaching out to Brussels and, through Brussels, to several national capitals including Berlin, Paris, Madrid and others. These processes of learning to be affected and exercising spatial reach run in parallel.

This third case, more than others, puts into question the notion of national membership as a criterion of democratic inclusion, and shifts it towards affected interests. In Chapter 3, diasporic voters made a claim to affectedness partly based on national membership – albeit their narratives of national belonging were typically propped up by more mundane narratives of emotional proximity that resulted in affectedness at a distance. These narratives pivoted from an enduring impact of Polish politics on migrant citizens' lives through relatives and friends, or property owned in Poland. On the other hand, they also relied on a future-oriented connection to Poland articulated through tentative and hazy narratives of possible return. Ultimately, such affectedness emerged as a process of hedging one's bets in a place of origin and residency, of claims to concurrent political

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belonging in two territories, that denotes external voting as a cosmopolitan practice – how can such an expressly transnational life be anything but?

In Chapter 4, the case of labour and community organisers provided a much more lucid, if still somewhat muted, claim to affected interests. Specifically, the narratives of organisers pivoted from a view that the very participation of migrant citizens in the workplace and the neighbourhood earned them associated rights, which they then helped them claim. Affectedness here is then the function of performing a certain social role – of a worker or a resident, in this case – irrespective of national membership. Nationality matters insofar as it is a vector of broadening the scope of democratic concern, and of organised inclusion.

In Chapter 5, the case for affected interests as a criterion of inclusion was the most articulate, and the loudest. Through the acts of campaigning, activists learned about their common vulnerabilities and interests, and about the way in which various Brexit scenarios will impact them. To act on these concerns they leveraged their Europeanness in order to mitigate undesirable outcomes and retain their connection to place – Bristol and Britain – in a form as closely resembling their status before the referendum as possible. In doing so, however, they inevitably transformed the political landscape as they publicly articulated narratives of injustice precipitated by the vote that profoundly affected them, but actively excluded their voices.

These different registers of narrating political belonging articulated along, across, or beyond national frames are all forms of citizenly iterations. Drawing on this concept and building on discussion of cosmopolitanism presented in Chapter 1, I show that the transformative potential of migrant citizenship stems from variation and diversity that comes with iterability, and from restructuring the boundaries of belonging that separates citizens and non-citizens. Acts of citizenship, understood in this way, are not so much transformative of democracy because new subjects are included into it – when individuals assert themselves as citizens – but because the criteria of inclusion and exclusion become visible through enactments and, almost automatically, contested.

The thesis shows that the experience of migration restructures gendered, racialised, and classed modes of rights claims. The thesis engaged with those themes mostly by analysing the practices of othering and the notions of politics enacted and articulated by migrant citizens. It also explored the intersectional identities of activists who took part in this study – and who most often were women endowed with substantial cultural and social capital. Still, the intersection of race, gender, and class offers a fertile ground for further research on migrant citizenship, and research designs more strongly oriented towards participant anonymity would enable further exploration of these themes.

This thesis argues that precarity is not a glitch in citizenship. It is a feature. As case studies presented in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 illustrate, the precarious construction of EU citizenship taps into social and political vulnerabilities and allows their articulation in ways that facilitate mobilisation along, across, and beyond national frames. It therefore has an intrinsic emancipatory potential and generates new modes and spaces of political action. The politics emerging from it is multiple and complex, but precisely here lies the democratic promise of citizenship: it is what citizens make it to be. At the same time, the open design and inclusive logic that characterises EU citizenship specifically – which has to be hardwired in any supranational citizenship regime – seems to be particularly conductive of political articulations and civic actions that question exclusion and injustice, which is most strongly shown in Chapter 5. By design, the gaze of supranational citizenship is being drawn towards the horizon of inclusion and its logic asks: what lies beyond it?

The first chapter of the thesis presented the debate between communitarian and cosmopolitan perspectives on EU citizenship, and showed it is chiefly organised by questions of the source of legitimacy in democratic communities: is it principally to do with consent of majorities in bounded polities, or with protection of minorities resident within them? I was sympathetic to the latter perspective. And yet my analysis points to a third possibility, that the legitimacy of EU citizenship may well come from public recognition of demands by those who enact it, when the rights of *others* dissolve in the foggy field of *our* rights and when foreigners become guests, and guests – citizens. Legitimacy here is decoupled from specific territories and regimes, and resides in the

spatiotemporal act of recognition. In other words, citizenship has the potential to rewrite discursive practices of democracy exactly because it is precarious.

Migrant citizens bring about change, but not revolution. Claiming and recognising rights is an iterative process that operates through dialogic *alterity*. Its essence resides neither in the dynamic of inclusion and exclusion as such, nor in new forms of social belonging that emerge on the back of human mobility, but in constantly remaking the conditions and criterions of inclusion, exclusion, and belonging – by enacting them. Rather than dissolving the boundary between *us* and *them*, scholarship on citizenship needs to retain its focus on what is at stake in the dialogic production of *us* and *them*. Only then is social science capable of detecting the incremental transformations – the "feeble" signals – of citizenship that, taken together, can amount to significant political change. The power of citizenship is that it endows individuals with capacities and infrastructures to collectively learn, question, and rebel – to identify matters of concern, to identify sties of intensive relations of power, and to articulate interests and take action – and these acts transform the society.

# Appendices

Appendix A: Research information flyer

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

**Kuba Jablonowski** - PhD Candidate in Geography
College of Life and Environmental Sciences
University of Exeter, D385 Amory Building
Rennes Drive, Exeter EX4 4RJ
Tel:+44 (0) 7706 125860
Email: jj325@exeter.ac.uk

**Precarious citizenship, cosmopolitan labour:**
**Political agency of migrant workers from the EU in Britain**
*Research project information sheet*

**What are the aims of this project?**
My research explores social practices that enable EU migrant workers to be political in Britain. I want to find out how migrants claim their rights, and what is the relationship between their right to move freely in Europe and the realities of living and working in Britain more broadly.

**What am I doing today?**
Today I am conducting ethnographic observation and short interviews to find out what migrant workers think of, and how they are affected by the EU referendum. Do people know there is a referendum? Do they think they should be able to vote, or that their voices matter in it?

**Confidentiality and consent**
I will record my findings in a notebook. Information about event participants is anonymised, and I will not record their names or any other details that could identify them. If you are a keynote speaker at a public event, or its organiser, I may approach you to seek your consent to record your name.

**Interviews...**
I am also conducting interviews for my project. If you would like to be involved, please get in touch and I will provide more information about it. An interview can be organised at a time and place that suits you.

**How will my work be presented?**
Information I gather is going to be used for my PhD thesis. I may also write reports, articles, blog posts, and deliver talks and presentations. If you want me to visit your group to speak about my work, please get in touch!

My project is **funded by** the University of Exeter and **supervised by**
Professor Clive Barnett: C.Barnett@exeter.ac.uk / 01392 725395 and
Dr Sean Carter: S.Carter@exeter.ac.uk / 01392 724473

Appendix B: Research information sheet and consent form

Each participant was handed two copies, one to sign and return for filing and another one to keep for their record. With the exception of the first in-depth interview, participants received the form by email ahead of the interview.

UNIVERSITY OF
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**Precarious citizenship:**
**Political agency of EU migrant citizens in the UK**

Research project information sheet and consent form

**What are the aims of the project?**

My research explores citizenship as a social practice that enables European residents to be political in Britain. In particular, I want to understand how nationals from the European Union living in Britain claim their rights, and analyse the relationship between citizens' right to move freely in Europe and their political rights.

My research questions is: how do European residents act politically in Britain, and what are the results of these actions?

This breaks down into two sub-questions: how European residents claim their personal and collective rights; and how social networks are mobilised in that process.

**Who can be involved?**

European residents and people who work with them. This includes policymakers and political campaigners, local authority and statutory services employees, trade union organisers, community sector workers, and representatives of community and faith groups.

**Interviews…**

An interview can then be arranged in order to discuss your experiences of, or opinions on, the above issues. This can take place in person or by telephone, at a time and place that suits you.

**How will my work be presented?**

Information that you are going to share with me is going to be used for my PhD thesis. In addition, I may use my research findings to write reports, articles, blog posts, and for talks and presentations.

**Confidentiality and ethical issues**

• Participation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to be involved, and you can withdraw your consent at any point prior to the publication of my research findings.

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- You can participate on the condition of full <u>anonymity</u> in published materials. Alternatively, you can allow your name, job title and/or organisation to be mentioned. You can specify how you would like to be referred to. Note: if you permit reference to your organisation to be used, it is possible that you could be identified, especially if it is a small organisation.

- If you are happy for your interview to be <u>audio-recorded</u> on a smartphone, the recording will only be heard by the researcher and / or a professional transcription service. If you prefer, you can be interviewed without being recorded.

- All research <u>data files are stored securely</u> and in accordance with data protection regulations of the University of Exeter. Only the researcher will have access to them.

**Consent. Please select:**

I confirm that I understand the above information and consent to my information being used in the manner and for the purposes described above, on the basis that:

All identifying information is removed so that I remain completely anonymous ☐

<u>Or:</u>

You may identify my comments in publications with:
My name ☐
My organisation ☐

Name: …………………………………………………………………………………………………

Contact details…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Signature:…………………………………………. Date: ………………………………….

If you have any concerns, or wish to discuss any aspect of the project, please contact the researcher Kuba Jablonowski at jj325@exeter.ac.uk or 077061 25860.

My supervisors are:
Professor Clive Barnett: C.Barnett@exeter.ac.uk / 01392 725395
Dr Sean Carter: S.Carter@exeter.ac.uk / 01392 724473

The project is funded by the University of Exeter.

**Appendix C: Typical topic guide for semi-structured interviews**

About you:

1. Can you tell me about your background?
   - Where did you grow up?
   - Why did you move to Britain?

2. Do you have British citizenship?
   - Why and when did you obtain British citizenship?
   - Did it change how you identify?
   - Does it help you belong in Britain?

3. Are you a member of a trade union, or a political party?
   - When did you join? Why?
   - Are you an active member?

4. Do you belong to any other associations?
   - About your work / activism?

5. How did you become part of (organisation / group / union / campaign)?
   - When did you start?
   - Why did you apply?
   - What motivated you initially, and what motivates you now?

6. What is your role within (organisation / group / union / campaign)?

About people you engage with:

7. How do migrant citizens engage with (organisation / group / union / campaign)?
   - Why do they join?
   - How actively do they participate?

- What are the barriers for deeper or more extensive engagement?
- Does it give them a political voice (representation / participation)?

8. Do you see solidarity emerging between migrant citizens and others?
    - Are there synergies / tensions between migrant and non-migrant members?
    - Do you have links with non-migrant groups?
    - What are the specific circumstances that generate synergies and solidarities?

9. Does your work / activism play a role in political education of migrant workers?

Engagement strategies:

10. Does (organisation / group / union / campaign) have particular approaches or strategies for engaging migrant workers?
- What are they?
- How effective are they?

Migration and EU citizenship:

11. What are the opportunities and obstacles for political participation of EU migrant citizens?
    - Do you identify as an EU citizen?
12. Do you see your work as, in any way, political?
    - Are some aspects more political than others?

**Appendix D: Retrospective citation consent request**



Sunder Katwala
@sundersays

i would be nterested to know about your research too ... i am on sunder@britishfuture.org

5/2/18, 17:45

Have just send you a super-long email, hope at least some of it is of interest... :-)

5/2/18, 18:50 ✓

thanks..looks interesting. will read attachments. anonymous or attributed quote absolutely fine

5/2/18, 19:10

Will attribute it then!

5/2/18, 19:17 ✓

sure.

5/2/18, 19:18

Start a message

# Appendix E: Mapping the field

**PRECARIOUS CITIZENSHIP: MAPPING THE FIELD**

**Interview nodes (blue):**

- DAMIAN (POLISH ACTIVIST, RUN AN INTERNET FORUM)
- KRZYSZTOF (POLISH COMMUNITY ACTIVIST)
- LIDIA (CASEWORKER AT SARI - STAND UP AGAINST RACISM AND INEQUALITY)
- ALICJA (CAB - CITIZEN ADVICE BUREAU WELFARE ADVICE WORKER)
- BASIA (ENERGY ADVICE WORKER)
- IAN (RETIRED SENIOR COUNCIL OFFICER FOR COMMUNITY COHESION)
- GEORGE (MAYORAL CANDIDATE)
- MARVIN (MAYORAL CANDIDATE)
- TONY (MAYORAL CANDIDATE)
- OLA (ENVIRONMENTAL AND PARTY ACTIVIST & RESEARCH STUDENT)
- AGNIESZKA (TRADE UNION OFFICER)
- SEB (TRADE UNION ACTIVIST)
- ASIA (TRADE UNION ACTIVIST)
- MAGDA (COMMUNITY ACTIVIST & COUNCIL WORKER)
- ANIA (COMMUNITY ACTIVIST & WELLBEING WORKER)
- SEBASTIAN (COMMUNITY ACTIVIST & PSYCHOLOGIST)
- MIRELA (INTEGRATIVE SCHOOL PARENT & VOLUNTEER)
- ROSANNA (INTEGRATIVE SCHOOL DIRECTOR)
- MALGORZATA (INTEGRATIVE SCHOOL PARENT)

**Observation nodes (grey):**

- Observational research: elections and voting
- EU referendum
- Bristol local elections
- Polish local elections
- Polish national elections
- Observational research: Polish & Central / Eastern European Women Support Group
- Observational research: Polish & Central / Eastern European Community Workers Meetings
- Observational research: Integrative Saturday Polish School Bristol

**Selected label text:**

- 9 short interviews total: 5 in notes and 4 recorded
- 8 short interviews (recordings)
- 2 interviews (notes)
- Short interviews, Location: Polish / Central & Eastern European shops, TBC.
- Data collection: notes and audio recording.
- Data collection: notes.
- Theory/readings: transnational political practices, flexible citizenship, ethnic networks.

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