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# Transnational Migrants in the Creative Knowledge Industries: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Dublin and Munich

*Heike Pethe, Sabine Hafner and Philip Lawton*

## Introduction

In the last decade, the European Union (EU) and European cities and countries have developed policies to attract foreign highly skilled professionals (OECD, 2001, 2005, 2007). Labour shortages in the information technology sector and in parts of service industries such as banking and the health sector have led many states to revise what had been restrictive policies towards immigration (OECD, 2007). In Tampere, 1999 EU countries agreed to develop a common framework to manage migration and after the Hague Programme of 2004 the EU commission stated that 'legal migration will play an important role in enhancing the knowledge-based economy in Europe, in advancing economic development' (European Commission, 2007, p. 2). Three years later, a proposal for a so-called Blue Card was introduced to the public which would allow highly skilled workers from non-EU countries to gain a working and residence permit for the EU (European Commission, 2007).

Against the background of the acknowledgement of the need for a policy on highly skilled migration, European regions do not appear to be very attractive for international migrants. 46 per cent of all highly skilled migrants in the OECD countries live in the USA (OECD, 2008, p. 81), whereas only 34 per cent of all tertiary educated international migrants reside in Europe.[1] Salt estimates that the foreign national population reside in European

[1] Calculated from http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/247177241125 (accessed 17 April 2009).

countries in 2004 or the nearest date available 'stood at around 25.5 million people. Foreign citizens thus appear to constitute some 4.5 per cent of the aggregate population of Europe' (Salt, 2006, p. 13). Compared with the USA, the population of Europe also appears rather immobile with Americans changing their residence up to five times more often than Europeans (Favell, 2003, p. 412). Favell argues 'Eurocities remain distinctive, variable environments at the international level, and one has to compete with all the in-built advantages of the local bourgeoisie. Only in rare cases is there a critical mass of foreign residents, such that the structure of the city itself is changed' (Favell, 2003, p. 422). Consequently, the attractiveness of European countries for international, highly skilled migrants is not as high as in the USA. The remaining differences between nation states, the incompatibility of pension schemes and social security systems and other hard factors and bureaucratic obstacles as well as soft factors still affect international labour migration.

This chapter analyses the attractiveness of four second-tier metropolitan regions in western Europe: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Dublin and Munich. All of these score high in international studies of the attractiveness of business locations (Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek Amsterdam, 2008, p. 644). The chapter presents research data on international migrants to these cities and discusses the results in the light of different theoretical frameworks.

## Conceptualising transnational migrants and the creative class

The longest established way of discussing the international migration of highly skilled workers is in terms of the 'brain drain' (BD). The macro-level economic differences between countries are seen as explaining a continuing migration of highly skilled persons from less developed to industrialised countries. Pull/push models or world system theory are often used to explain the emigration of the educated labour force from the South to the North. Macro-economic differences in economic performance (GPD, income, foreign direct investment (FDI), labour market), and differences in factors such as tax leverage, infrastructure and working conditions are also important for international migration (Schipulle, 1973). The literature further focuses on the effects of emigration on the sending regions.

A second approach imagines the international migration of the highly skilled as 'brain exchange' (BE). Economic globalisation has led transnational companies to expand their network of branches (Beaverstock, 1994) and a global labour market has been created within these organisations (Perlmutter, 1969; Beaverstock, 1996b; Wolter, 1997). The companies allocate their employees due to their needs. Highly skilled personnel is seconded from the headquarters in the industrialised countries to the new branches in the developing countries (Beaverstock, 1994; Beaverstock 1996a, c). The direction of migration was opposite to the pattern in the brain drain migration. Highly skilled experts were needed to control and command the global activities of companies (Beaverstock and Smith, 1996; Boyle , 1996). They either supervised new sales offices, marketing units or new production units. Thus, the flow of highly skilled migrants was related to FDI and international trade flows (Wolter, 1997). Because it is heavily tied to the globalisation of the economy, the flow of highly skilled migrants surges and decreases in relation to economic fluctuations (Beaverstock, 1994, 1996a, b, c; Beaverstock and Smith, 1996). This migration has a strong temporary nature, because expats typically stay between 3 and 5 years. The international organisational linkages within transnational companies at the level between states and individuals are pivotal for this type of migration (Findlay and Garrick, 1990). Brain exchange research has focuses on particular occupations including accountants and managers (Beaverstock, 1994, 1996a, b, c; Beaverstock and Smith, 1996). Expatriate managers, seconded to large international cities, became the epitomy of this type of migration flow of highly skilled workers.



Both brain exchange and brain drain migration are demand driven, i.e. highly skilled migrate to places where their work is needed. This narrow conception was only one factor leading to doubts about whether these two approaches can sufficiently represent current migration flows. For example, Conradson and Latham state 'Much of the literature has focused on the economic structures driving migration. Yet what is increasingly clear is that a significant proportion of these global population flows cannot be understood within a straightforward economic rubric' (2005, p. 287). A recent review of the research on highly skilled migration also criticises the treatment of the upper echelons. 'Academically speaking, there has been relatively little "human-level" research on the diverse avatars of globalisation in the skilled, educated or professional categories' (Favell et al., 2006, p. 3). This review emphasises the need for scholarly investigation of the popular image and suggests that the lives and experiences of frequent flying, fast lane, global elites 'are better known from editorial and marketing content of glossy magazines or corporate brochures than they are from solid social science research' (Favell et al., 2006, p. 2). Where there are recent research-based accounts, they show that even demand-driven labour movements are strongly affected by the activities, networks and judgements of individual migrants (Pethe, 2006, 2007).

The new approach considers international migration in terms of economic motivations and determinants, individual selfrealisation (Conradson and Latham, 2005; Favell, 2008), individual agency (Pethe, 2007) and the effects of social, not economic networks (Favell, 2003; Conradson and Latham, 2005). The perspective emerging recognises the importance of smaller social sub-units (Favell, 2003; Conradson and Latham, 2005; Scott, 2006; Pethe, 2007); and acknowledges that the motivation, duration of residence, means

of migration and migration process can differ enormously from those associated with popular version of the 'transnational capitalist class' (Castells, 2000; Sklair, 2001) whose existence is often questioned (Hartmann, 1999; Favell, 2003; Conradson and Latham, 2005; Hartmann, 2007). For example, the ability of middling transnational migrants to cope with local housing markets might be very different than that of privileged corporate movers (Favell, 2008).

Richard Florida's perspective is somewhat different from those outlined above. He starts from a view that 'The key factor of the global economy is no longer goods, services, or flows of capital, but the competition for people' (Florida, 2007, p. 16). He proposes that the constantly expanding creative class is a pivotal agent of urban change and that transnational migrants have been key to the development of the creative economy in the USA. Florida asserts that international migrants 'help build our scientific enterprises' (p. 95), account for 'a disproportionate share of most influential scientists' (p. 101), relieve the 'looming talent shortage' (p. 103), 'take American ideas and American relationships back home' (p. 110) and contribute to the entertainment industry (p. 125). In opposition to conventional theories of migration, Florida emphasises the importance of the quality of place as motivation for an international migration. He suggests that the creative class selects cosmopolitan centres with rich cultural amenities and a high quality of life, attractive living and working environments which are diverse, tolerant and open to new ideas. He describes diversity, tolerance and openness as pull-factors for migrants. The heterogeneity of ethnicity, sexuality and lifestyles in places is seen as a precondition for the inflow of new talent.

Florida (2005) sees an increasing danger that American cities lose the ability to attract and to retain talent and that American regions are losing their top position to European agglomerations. European countries and cities like the Netherlands and Amsterdam often surpass the USA. Ireland and the Netherlands have large creative workforces (Florida, 2007, p. 136) and Dublin, for example, is seen as one of the 'New Global Austins' and described as a model for a successful development of an open and cosmopolitan high-tech city (Florida, 2007, p. 176).

While Florida dwells on the importance of soft factors such as tolerance, openness and diversity, he hardly mentions hard factors. He briefly mentions the importance of economic networks for the migration of highly skilled workers but does not elaborate on this. Florida also lumps together 30 per cent of the workforce into one 'creative class' and does not distinguish between different groups of highly skilled migrants. While the brain exchange literature emphasises the strong influence of the global economy, international trade, investment relations and international networks on the migration of the highly skilled Florida emphasise the agency and judgement of the urban environment by the individual creative worker: he neglects people who are seconded or transferred or who respond to the needs of their employers. He neglects the elements highlighted in the brain exchange literature.



Given these different perspectives, this chapter considers the drivers behind the decisions of transnational creative knowledge migrants to settle in European metropolitan regions. What attracts creative knowledge migrants to European cities?

This chapter refers to four metropolitan regions and the factors shaping the flow of transnational migrants. The analysis starts with an account of the relative importance of transnational creative and knowledge workers and other immigrants and then discusses various aspects emerging as important in the migration decisions of workers in creative knowledge industry.

## Places and potentials

The analysis in this chapter draws on 100 semi-structured interviews with creative knowledge workers, conducted in 2008 in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Dublin and Munich (25 interviews in each). Secondary data was also used to identify the numbers of immigrants and to profile the economy. These cities have different attributes that are relevant for migration. Amsterdam is an old globally oriented city with a tradition of attracting foreign companies through tax incentives, an excellent international traffic infrastructure and a diverse international community. The attractiveness of Barcelona is more likely to relate to its environment, weather and cultural amenities. The new 'Celtic Tiger' Dublin has been one of the fastest growing economies in Europe and has attracted foreign companies through low corporate taxes, excellent technological infrastructure, an educated labour force and an English-speaking environment (Boyle, 2006). Since Ireland had been an emigration country for the last two centuries, dense social networks with diaspora communities also exist. Munich hosts the headquarters of important global companies, but the international network and international communities are smaller than in the other cities (cf. Taylor et al., 2002) and English is rarely spoken outside academic and work-related contexts. Neither immigration laws nor tax regulations favour the settlement of international companies or employees. Before we map out how transnational creative knowledge migrants evaluate these cities, we describe the international linkages that exist in each of them. How does the migration of highly skilled migrants relate to their global linkages? How important are their economies in explaining migration and do other linkages such as family networks drive migration?

### *Amsterdam*

Amsterdam has had a tradition of trading and international investment since the seventeenth century. Since this early period, Amsterdam has been

a centre of international finance and trading. The Netherlands had colonies in various continents: most importantly Surinam in South America and Indonesia in Asia. Although international investments and immigration declined during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Amsterdam and the Netherlands remained interwoven with the economies of neighbouring Western countries. Investment from abroad increased in the 1960s, first from the USA and western European countries and later from Japan. American investment later declined and Asian and European investment grew (Stec Groep, 2005; CBS, 2007). The Netherlands is one of the most open economies in the OECD with a high ratio of trade exposure and FDI flows per GPD (Hogenbirk, 2005; OECD, 2006), although these economic activities are not all related to creative knowledge industries (OECD, 2006, p. 103). Industrial sectors profited from the inflow of overseas investments in the 1960s (Smidt and Kemper, 1980; Smidt 1985) when the port function of Amsterdam declined in favour of Rotterdam which was faster to re-build and extend its harbour after the World War II (Bosscher, 2007). Logistics and trade remain important sectors of the Dutch economy, but investment has slowly shifted from the industrial (2004: 35 per cent; 2006: 28.7 per cent) to the service sector with increased investment in banking, ICT and producer services (2004: 42, 4 per cent; 2006: 48.5 per cent) (CBS, 2007, p. 38). Government regulations supported the development of regional headquarters of multinational companies: foreign workers who bring additional expertise qualify for tax reductions and corporate tax is comparatively low.[2] In addition, the high level of language proficiency in English, French and German made the Netherlands attractive for foreign companies. While these measures attracted many highly skilled migrants to the Netherlands, other immigration flows mainly comprising low skilled labour were more important. After decolonisation, immigrants from former colonies settled in two major waves in the 1950s from Indonesia and in the late 1970s from Suriname. A major movement of 'guest workers' from Turkey and Morocco entered the Netherlands in the 1960s and early 1970s. Due to a continuing family migration, the migration flows from those countries remained high. GPD growth was largely related to the increased labour supply and less related to a productivity growth (OECD, 2006, p. 32). The weak international R&D investments, low share of science and engineering graduates and foreign students as well as the high turnover of international employees and the brain drain of Dutch citizens underline the demand for foreign highly skilled labour in the future (OECD, 2004, p. 16; OECD, 2006, pp. 103–126).

Although the Netherlands previously had an open and liberal attitude towards immigration, political tension arose around the turn of the millennium. It was felt that problems associated with control and integration of

[2] http://www.nfia.nl/Reasons_to_invest.html



the large numbers of former guest workers had been ignored. In 2000, a conservative government began to limit immigration. A language test and proofs of marital status and ancestry were demanded by public authorities for all incoming immigrants. The new procedures made it difficult for multinational and Dutch companies to cope with a rising labour shortage, and protests from private business and research institutions led to the introduction of a separate immigration scheme for knowledge workers in 2004. This was further changed in 2006. Although the importance of highly skilled migration was gradually recognised, immigration lawyers still regard the Dutch immigration procedure as one of the most demanding in Europe (expert interview). This legal situation contrasts with the rich social infrastructure at the local level created by private initiatives and often supported by local government and foreign investment agencies.

In 2000, 9 per cent of the workforce and 7 per cent of immigrants in the Netherlands were highly skilled (OECD). The majority of highly skilled immigrants come from non-European countries, and only 26 per cent were born in western industrialised countries including the USA, Japan, Germany and Great Britain. More important for the inflow of highly skilled workers are old immigration linkages to the former colonies or guest worker countries. Thirty-one per cent of the highly skilled workers originate from Surinam or Indonesia, another 8 per cent are first and second generation immigrants from Morocco and Turkey. Last, but not least immigration from countries with civil unrest accounted for 8 per cent of the inflow of highly educated migrants. This involves refugees from countries including Iran, Iraq, Post-Yugoslavia and Somalia. In other words, although the Dutch economy is very open and attracts international investment, international business linkages play a minor role in explaining the inflow of highly skilled migrants.

### *Barcelona*

Immigration is a recent phenomenon in Spain. During the nineteenth century, large parts of the Spanish population left for Latin America and in the Franco period the movement came to an entire stop. After 1960, western European retirement migrants headed to the coastal areas in Spain for the good quality of life (Gonzalez, 2008). With the opening of the country and the ascendance to the EU, Spain attracted international foreign investments, first from the USA, later from other north European countries, and highly skilled migrants accompanied those investment flows (Wolter, 1997; Pareja-Eastaway et al., 2009). In 1998, only half a million foreign persons had settled in the country. A decade later, there were 5 million foreign nationals who mostly came from Latin America (33.2 per cent), Europe (West, 20.8 per cent; East, 23.3 per cent) and neighbouring African countries (17.2 per cent) (Pareja-Eastaway et al., 2009, p. 45).

Opportunities for migration within the EU, economic opportunities and the social and economic linkages with Latin American countries made Spain an attractive destination for the mostly low or unskilled migrants in the last decade. The legal situation was finally adjusted with several laws after 1999 which first secured rights and legalised immigration and then took a more controlling approach to regulate the labour market. The attraction of highly skilled talent mainly aimed to reverse the ongoing brain drain of Spanish scientists to the USA. The *Ramón y Cajal* programme opened access for international researchers to strengthen higher educational institutions, because the level of R&D activities in Spain was still too low for an advanced, future-oriented knowledge economy. However, other legal efforts to support highly skilled migration failed and an EU directive which requested member countries to create a visa programme for researchers was never ratified by the Spanish parliament (Pareja-Eastaway et al., 2009). This uncoordinated legal situation was hardly a stimulus for highly skilled migration.

The unclear legal situation was mirrored by the absence of statistics on highly skilled migration. The EU countries are still the main source of highly skilled migration to Spain. EU immigrants are more highly educated than the Spanish population (40:23 per cent), and only 14 per cent of other nationals had a tertiary degree in 2006 (Pareja-Eastaway et al., 2009, p. 51). Western European and North American migrants are more often active as entrepreneurs and self-employed than other groups and account for 24 per cent of single person companies. Both groups are also overrepresented in highly qualified occupations including engineering (Gonzalez, 2008).

The Barcelona Metropolitan Region (BMR) has not profited from this inflow of highly skilled migrants to the same extent as the capital, Madrid. The share of highly skilled immigrants is lower than average in Spain and the share of entrepreneurs from EU countries or North America is also lower (Pareja-Eastaway et al., 2009). This might be caused by the strong industrial profile of BMR in contrast to the more service-oriented (banking and ICT) economic structure of the capital region. Although the share is lower in BMR, the role of European self-employed persons and engineers is striking. In the province Barcelona, western European workers are important in the education, software and financial sectors and eastern European migrants are slightly overrepresented in the ICT industry (Gonzalez, 2008). In the creative industry, foreigners are still rare although in 2008 25 per cent of the members of a well-known creative organisation in Barcelona (FAD) indicated that their parents came from abroad (Pareja-Eastaway et al., 2009).

Given the lack information, it might be too early to give a full account of immigration to the BMR. In the last decade, Spain shifted from a traditional emigration country to an immigration destination. The new inflow hardly increased labour productivity, although Latin American immigrants became increasingly important in higher educational institutions.



Currently two developments seem to be crucial. First, the migration of creative knowledge workers is influenced by the investment of mostly European and US companies which have established production branches in the region. Second, there is a high number of self-employed entrepreneurs from Western countries who appear to have located in the BMR because of the excellent quality of life and environment.

### *Dublin*

Ireland's economy has undergone a dramatic turnabout, emerging from the depression of the 1980s to the booming 'Celtic tiger' economy of the 1990s and early 2000s (Boyle, 2006). Much of this boom followed actions by the Irish government designed to attract foreign direct investment and promote a knowledge-based economy (see Chapter 16). The knock-on effect in terms of employment has been to reverse the outward flow of migration (Boyle, 2006). Throughout much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Ireland was associated with high levels of outward migration, especially to the UK and USA. In recent years, however, there has been a dramatic shift with Ireland becoming a destination country for migrants. While there has been a range of reasons for this, economic growth and associated demand for labour has resulted in a high level of immigration. Gilmartin (2007) identifies three broad groups in recent migration. Initially, immigration was marked by a return of Irish migrants who had left during the 1980s and early 1990s. Second, there was a marked increase in the numbers of migrants from countries described as 'Rest of World' (e.g. Africa, Asia and eastern Europe prior to 2004). While the USA had traditionally been a source of migration to Ireland, by 2007 the number of migrants from the rest of the world outstripped that of the USA by a factor of 10. Third, following the accession of new states to the EU in 2004, the majority of recent migration has been from countries in the European Economic Area (EEA) – 25 member states along with Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein (Gilmartin, 2007, p. 227). From a policy perspective, the period of sustained economic growth over the last decade was marked by the promotion of labour-orientated migration (NESDO, 2006). Prior to the joining of the EU by the 10 accession states in 2004, work permits were the most common means of legal entry for employment by non-EEA nationals (NESDO, 2006, p. 11). However, from 2004 onwards, there was a significant reduction in the numbers of work permits issued, and a steady rise in migration from the new member states until 2008.

The last two decades witnessed a rapid growth in creative industries in Ireland. The numbers employed in creative industries grew by 32 per cent between 2002 and 2004 (Lawton et al., 2009, p. 12). With statistics suggesting that the Dublin region accounts for over 40 per cent of the national economy, it is possible to estimate that somewhere between 40 and 55 per cent

of employees in the creative-knowledge economy are located in the Dublin region. Data limitations make it difficult to determine the exact numbers of transnational migrant workers involved in the creative-knowledge economy. However, on a broader scale, the migrant labour market is diversified according to region and country of origin. For example, in 2008, 17 per cent of migrants from the 10 EU accession states are involved in the construction industry (CSO, 2008); 17 per cent of migrants from outside of the EU (non-USA) were employed in the health sector (CSO, 2008); and migrant workers accounted for 16 per cent of people working in the financial and business sector.

### *Munich*

Germany has been one of the most important European destinations for immigrants since the mid-1950s. However, immigration and integration have only recently become important and fiercely contested topics in German policy discussions. Since 1998 there have been important developments in immigration policy with the reform of the Nationality Act, the adoption of the Immigration Act and political measures concerning the integration of the immigration population and their descendants.

Although foreigners are underrepresented in occupations which require skill and university degrees in Munich, the proportion of foreigners with secondary and tertiary education is one of the highest of German cities (Steinhardt et al., 2008). This relatively high number of highly skilled foreign people reflects the development of Munich economy. Although there is no data available on the internationalisation of Munich's economy, a strong positive correlation between international ownerships and the employment of foreigners from developed countries can be assumed (for the case of Frankfurt see Freund, 2001). Being a German centre of the ICT industry, Munich hosts numerous firms with global activities, including Microsoft, Siemens and O2. Alongside the ICT industry, the automotive industry in particular shows a high degree of internationalisation. Munich hosts many multinationals, and BMW and MAN are both global players in this sector. Furthermore, Munich is Germany's second most important banking centre and the number one location for insurance companies. Almost 80 insurance companies have their national or international headquarters in Munich, including global players such as Allianz, Munich Re or Swiss Re. Munich also has a high concentration of firms in business-related services.

Immigration has always been important in the demographic development of the Munich region. After World War II, about 2 million refugees and displaced persons came to Bavaria (Kramer, 2008). The Munich region profited greatly from the immigration of approximately 150,000 often highly qualified ethnic German repatriates and refugees, and firms in Munich could rely on an ample and qualified labour pool (Fritsche and Kreipl, 2003).



After the integration of these German repatriates had almost come to an end, the recruitment of foreign workers from Yugoslavia and Turkey started in the 1960s. In the late 1960s, there was high demand for guest workers in Munich, as the infrastructure had to be developed in the run-up to the Olympic Games in 1972 (Fassmann and Reeger, 1999). In the middle of the 1970s, when the German economy slowed down and fewer workers were needed, further official recruitment of labour was stopped. As a consequence of stricter management of both labour migration and asylum for refugees, immigration declined in the mid-1990s and settled at a lower level (Fassmann and Reeger, 1999).

In contrast to other EU member states including Ireland and the Netherlands, Germany has no special programmes to recruit and facilitate the entry of foreign highly skilled workers. As the national legal framework strongly regulates the inflow of highly skilled migrants at the regional and local level, foreigners are underrepresented in highly skilled occupations. In the Munich region in 2007, foreigners represented 13.6 per cent of all employees subject to social security contributions, and in the city of Munich 15 per cent. When compared with other German cities, Munich has one of the highest proportions of highly skilled workers. Thirty-three per cent of all employees in the region, and 35.8 per cent in the city, are in highly skilled occupations. The proportion of foreigners employed in highly skilled occupations was 7.8 per cent in the region and 5.8 per cent in the city of Munich in 2007. In the Munich region, the proportion of foreign employees with university degrees increased from 6.9 per cent of all employees in 1999 to 10.9 per cent in 2007, and from 7.0 to 10.5 per cent in the city of Munich (Federal Ministry of Labour).

Most highly skilled foreigners in the region of Munich come from the EU countries: Austria, France, Italy and the UK. However, between 1999 and 2007, the proportion of citizens of the UK, the US, Turkey and Austria rose by only 10–30 per cent, whereas the proportion of citizens of the Russian Federation almost tripled, and Polish and Chinese citizens more than doubled. Remarkably, there are more highly skilled employees from China in the Munich region than from Turkey, albeit the Chinese population accounts for only a very small share of the whole population (calculated from Federal Ministry of Labour).

Scientific and student mobility plays an important role in the migration of the highly skilled in Munich: 1337 foreign scientists were working at one of the universities in Munich in 2006. So 15.3 per cent of the academic staff do not have a German passport. Most of the scientists employed at one of the universities of Munich come from EU countries. Additionally, the 25 public and semi-public research establishments draw foreign scientists to Munich and the European Patent Office appointed 3478 foreign workers mainly from France, the UK, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands (European Patent Office, 2009). In the academic year 2007/2008, 13,112 foreign students

were enrolled at Munich's universities (15.3 per cent). The highest proportions of foreign students are seen in those institutions that specialise in the creative fields.

## The attractiveness of European metropolitan regions

Florida asserts that 'talent is mobile, and people can and do pick where they want to go' (Florida, 2007, p. 20). However, the migration of creative knowledge workers cannot be reduced to one single factor. In Amsterdam, Barcelona and Dublin, it is evident that international investment relations have affected the migration flow of highly skilled migrants and in Munich, the headquarters of internationally important companies and research institutions draw migrants into the city. Labour shortages which are caused by the strong high-tech orientation in Munich and Dublin, lack of graduates coming from the national universities (Munich and Amsterdam) and a low wage policy (Amsterdam) also impact on the demand for highly skilled migrants. Social ties are also relevant in all cases with Dublin most prominent in this respect. Ireland has attracted return migrants from its large diaspora while the exchange between Latin America and Barcelona, between the former territories of the Soviet empire and Munich in the case of German repatriates ('Aussiedler') and between the former Dutch colonies and the Netherlands are further examples which underline how important historical ties are to explain the inflow of talent. Moreover, the political context also shapes the immigration flow. The acceptance of refugees can be recognised in Amsterdam, Munich and Barcelona. The role of supranational organisations such as the EU is another factor which affects the migration in each city (cf. Soysal, 1994; Favell, 2008). Many EU nationals find it easier to change their place of residence and are less limited by immigration procedures than other nationals; they may be most likely to behave in a Florida fashion and 'vote with their feet' (Florida, 2007, p. 240).

Although the economic, social and political context in each city is able to explain parts of the immigration flow, it is not possible to identify a single factor which is responsible for the migration movement. Nor is it possible to reject Florida's view that individuals are able to select the most convenient destination, although they might be embedded in those economic, social and political environments. Against this background we can, however, consider how individual migrants have made decisions and what factors they identify as attracting them to different metropolitan regions. What weight do individuals attach to the economic profile of each region, to hard and soft factors, international, social and professional networks and the housing market? How were these factors in the end evaluated by the creative knowledge migrants who came to the four metropolitan regions?



### *Amsterdam*

Amsterdam is a long established international gateway with a remarkably high level of internationalisation. Since the end of 1980s, the Dutch economy has exceeded the performance of other European countries. Unemployment is a negligible problem and labour shortages represent a greater challenge for companies (Hogenbirk, 2005) in the context of the low wage policy and the high level of utilisation of the comparatively cheap labour force (OECD, 2006; Terhorst, 2008). In international business surveys, the Amsterdam region tends to score in the top 10. The high quality of life, a convenient economic climate and the availability of qualified labour create a favourable business climate (Hogenbirk, 2005; Ernst and Young, 2006; Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek Amsterdam, 2008, p.632). Tax rates for foreign employees and employers are kept low. The level of internationalisation is high due to its ability to attract international branches of multinational corporations to the region (Stec Groep, 2005; Boston Consulting Group, 2008) and Amsterdam is one of the nodes of the international network of global cities (Taylor and Aranya, 2008). The public transport infrastructure is excellent. The Amsterdam airport ranks five by passenger turnover in Europe (Dienst Onderzoek en Statistiek Amsterdam, 2008, p. 645).

The Dutch describe themselves as an open and tolerant society and English can be used as a lingua franca in everyday situations. According to a recent survey, the Netherlands has the highest acceptance of gay culture in Europe (Keuzenkamp and Bos, 2007).

In the interviews carried out for this study, transnational knowledge migrants underlined the importance of working conditions for their decision to come to the Amsterdam metropolitan region and their evaluation of the attractiveness of the city. The migrants state that they were poorly informed about the hard and soft factors in the city. Their image of the city was based on its international importance, its historical cityscape and its size. Their migration to Amsterdam was driven by their working situation, family links and education. Self-employed creative knowledge workers often refer to family linkages as a motivation to move to the Netherlands, but expats who are seconded by their companies to the city do not have family bonds with the country although they may have undertaken parts of the education in Europe and this appears to be a positive dimension from the employers' perspective. The environment in terms of working conditions, work content and the prospect of valuable experience emerged as more important than income expectations. Job search had been uncomplicated. Nobody reported having been unemployed although some had changed their jobs for better positions. Migrants working in sectors with a strong international reputation such as design or architecture were the most enthusiastic about the ability to acquire special skills in the

Netherlands. Self-employed migrants described the ease with which they were able to set up their own company and saw this as a major advantage.

> 'There are many projects going on at the moment. Because I'm a very multidisciplinary designer, this is really perfect for me. It gives me the opportunity to take advantage of my profile. In this case – that my profile is broad – is a big plus, while in some other cases a broad profile is a minus. This is very good about Amsterdam' (Slovenian designer).

Labour market and education opportunities were important factors for settling in the Netherlands. However, later on, these opportunities were also important for staying in the Netherlands and not moving on. Here again a special Dutch profile which offered migrants a unique chance to learn special techniques was more important than internationally top rank programmes. Seconded expats with children were the most eager to discuss the education prospects for children. Although the general level of satisfaction about the working environment was very high, few reported discontent. Family migrants were the first to report difficulties in this respect. Intercultural differences in the organisation of the work and differences in the education profile were other issues of concern.

Other factors such as transport conditions or the tax regime were not seen as a motivation to move or to stay in the Amsterdam region, because their importance was seen as relatively low. Although the transport network allows frequent trips to neighbouring countries, this was not a decisive factor. The immigration procedure, however, was seen as a major barrier for non-European nationals from developing countries and it is not aligned with the international orientation of the Dutch investment policy and the importance of immigration for the future creative knowledge society.

The judgement of the soft conditions or amenities was rather divided. Although it was stated that Amsterdam offers many cultural amenities for a city of its size, the quality of many amenities was seen as insufficient. This is particularly true for restaurants, retail and personal services which did not meet the quality and the price expectations of the interviewed. A similar ambivalence was stated concerning the attitude of the Dutch towards foreigners. Many migrants underlined the international atmosphere of the city which they appreciated very much. The importance of bilingualism of the population in the AMA was, of course, put to the fore.

> 'They don't force us to talk in their language. But if you try to talk, they are very happy and try to help you. I think it's maybe the easiest country to live as a foreigner' (Turkish banker).

In terms of openness and tolerance, the answers were rather reserved. First, many observed that the attitude of the population in Amsterdam



does not differ positively in terms of openness and acceptance of diversity from other countries. Compared with the working environment in which Dutch people were ready to listen and accept new ideas, they were rather reserved in the private realm. Second, immigrants often faced resentments in their endeavour to dive into the Dutch culture. Due to the pillarisation of the Dutch society, it is seen as rather inward looking and this presents problems for outsiders. Unsurprisingly many migrants refer to living in the international community rather than with Dutch citizens. Last, but not least, many challenged the need for openness and tolerance and claimed that they do not conceive this as important condition.

An issue of real concern however was the situation of the housing market. Migrants face problems in finding adequate accommodation because of the limited numbers of properties in the unregulated rental sector, the ban on short stay renting in Amsterdam (Dienst Wonen Amsterdam, 2007) and the large number of small dwellings. Seconded expats were in the most privileged position in relation to housing because their companies supported them or arranged their accommodation. However, the willingness of companies to contribute to the costs and assist in the search for accommodation appears to have decreased when compared with earlier studies (Glebe, 1986; White, 1998; White and Hurdley, 2003). In particular, multinationals from the new Asian economies do not any longer conceive this service as obligatory. Family migrants were also better able to deal with housing because they were able to move into the property of their spouse, but they were often discontented at a later stage by the limited opportunities to develop a housing career within the region. In particular, persons in creative occupations with a medium income saw their housing situation as one of the reasons for leaving even when they had settled and established themselves in Amsterdam for a long time.

In conclusion, the attractiveness of Amsterdam is not so much associated with soft conditions such as tolerance and openness but rather derives from the labour market and working conditions. Family migrants report more problems in developing their careers and immigration procedures for non-European nationals and housing present the most serious problems.

### *Barcelona*

Although Barcelona has been an important historical Mediterranean trading centre, the internationalisation of the economy and society is relatively recent and surged after Spain joined the EU in 1986. Spain received the majority of FDI from European countries and these also became the most important trading partners. Barcelona became one of the key decision and management centres in Spain outside Madrid and 21 per cent of foreign multinational companies opened branches in the BMR. Following deregulation, large multinational companies which invested in Latin America were created and

the Spanish economy became very open with Spain having 'higher FDI and more foreign subsidiaries than EC countries such as Germany and Italy, as well as the USA and Japan' (Pareja-Eastaway et al., 2009, p. 29). In other words, the economic networks of companies in Spain are likely to attract transnational migrants from the EU, the USA and Latin America who manage and control these in- and outbound investment streams. The BMR still has a strong industrial profile and profits from the allocation of industrial production plants by international investors. Increasingly knowledge-intensive units are run in the BMR, whereas labour-intensive production units are transferred to low wage countries. In this way, some previously important industrial sectors such as textile production contribute to the strength of the creative sector because they have been transformed into design-oriented companies. Other creative sectors have built international reputations. Performing arts, culture and in particular architecture have a long tradition but other sectors, such as the ICT, have only recently emerged.

International business surveys tend to indicate that the BMR has location advantages for international companies because of agglomeration economies, the high level of human capital, the low wage costs (hard factors) and the high quality of life (soft factors). Disadvantages are high transport costs, high real estate prices and the absence of tax reductions for foreign companies and the fact that Spanish instead of English is used as the most common business language (Pareja-Eastaway et al., 2009, p. 36). Apart from these economic factors, transnational migrants might be also attracted due to the strong historical link of the Spanish and Catalonian population to Latin America and Italy.

The interviews carried out in Barcelona underline the importance of soft factors for the attractiveness of the city region. Migrants in the creative knowledge industry identified the high quality of life and cultural amenities as the strongest assets of the BMR. Beautiful weather, the human size of the city, the surrounding landscape with the sea and mountains nearby contribute to the high quality of life along with the historical architecture and urban regeneration in inner city neighbourhoods. The private and public cultural offer also impressed migrants and they emphasised its variety and dynamism. Barcelona does not only have a culture-led image which is branded by regional tourist board and other private–public business organisations. It offers various opportunities through large commercial events and also hosts grassroots networks of creatives that newcomers can easily share and participate in. In addition, the expertise found in sectors such as design and architecture attracts movement to the city.

In contrast to these soft factors, the situation of the economy and the labour market are of minor importance. 'You can earn more money there [England]. But money doesn't matter, if I'm earning enough. I don't want a very good salary only to feel good. I won't go back for that reason' (Chilean



architect). Migrants accept challenging working conditions or low pay or they circumvent the labour market by establishing their own business in order to live in an environment which guarantees this high standard of living and culture. This is not to say that international networks of companies and the high expertise of production and organisation in certain sectors were unimportant in the BMR. In particular, knowledge migrants came because of their companies' networks. They were often seconded by their European headquarters to command and control the branches in the BMR or to improve their knowledge in the headquarters or at related universities in Spain. Creative workers, however, often organised the international move themselves, using their private networks. Although private and professional networks were more interwoven for creative workers, private linkages were more important in their decision to migrate. Hard factors appear overall to have less importance in explaining the international attractiveness of Barcelona. The public transport system in the BMR received approval, but the level of bureaucracy which is related to immigration, entrepreneurship and the welfare state was more an object of concern.

'[In the UK] it is easy to start a business [...] and it is possible to have an income without making a big investment at the beginning. Here [Barcelona], people are discouraged from creating' (Scottish media worker).

The views expressed depended on the origin of the migrants. Whereas north Europeans were surprised by the low level of red tape, Latin American immigrants were challenged to overcome migration procedures and developed various strategies, such as enrolling in higher education, to escape immigration controls. The availability and price of housing was the largest obstacle for movement.

All of this indicates that the creative class in Barcelona cannot be seen as a unified entity – large differences exist between creative and knowledge workers, and between Latin American and European/North American immigrants. Another difference should be drawn between the use of cultural amenities and everyday culture. Barcelona is situated in Catalonia which has a distinctive culture and language from the rest of Spain. This was a surprise for many migrants. Catalonians were seen as more closed than other persons of Latin descent. The cultural difference has unexpected advantages in allowing incomers to maintain their identity and interact with a diversity of cultures.

The situation in the BMR supports Florida's view that soft factors are increasingly important to attract workers from abroad, although this statement should also be treated with caution. International economic, social and historical linkages to South America and other OECD countries also influence immigration. Finally, some doubts exist over the extent to which soft factors can boost the economy. The focus on soft factors alone bears the risk that the talent of incoming migrants is scattered and that poor working conditions do not foster the transfer of knowledge.

*Dublin*

Florida (2002, 2007) regards Dublin as an emerging centre of software, and other creative industries and as boasting a 'thriving artistic and cultural scene' (Florida, p. 176). This introduces an expectation that certain 'hard' factors related to the attraction of industry and labour and there is also an expectation of a 'lifestyle' in Dublin which is open to a diverse range of activities and cultural groups. Much of this transformation has been directly associated with the impact of government interventions, such as low corporation tax rates, that have boosted FDI (Boyle, 2006). Despite the existence of a highly skilled workforce, and a focus on the connection between higher education and emerging knowledge industries (Murphy and Redmond, 2008) along with a low level of unemployment, the demand for labour has outstripped availability (Boyle, 2006). As such, recent years have witnessed a high level of inward migration. Although it is not possible to determine the exact role of migrants within the creative knowledge economy in Dublin, they have formed a large portion of the financial services sector, which has become a key element of Dublin's economy with the Irish Financial Services Centre in Dublin's docklands being particularly important in promoting and attracting inward investment (see Chapters 5 and 16). However, while there is often a perception of Dublin as a booming city in both economic and social terms, recent research has indicated frustration with the general infrastructure, including transport network and broadband availability (Murphy and Redmond, 2008; Lawton et al., 2009).

The Dublin interviews demonstrated that the role of 'hard' and 'soft' factors varied according to individual trajectories. Broadly speaking, these factors could also be further divided between the initial decision to come to Dublin and factors related to experiencing the city in everyday life. While the various soft factors were seen as important, it was the hard factors which were dominant in terms of moving to Dublin. Although family networks, or the family connections of a spouse/partner, were also a dominant factor, the wide availability of employment in recent years was the predominant reason for a movement to Dublin.[3] For example, one respondent, an Indian man in his mid-fifties, described the decision to choose Dublin as follows: *'It was always going to be Dublin ... Dublin seemed to be the place to be for the simple reason that there were a large number of jobs here on the services side'*. The fact that Dublin is an English-speaking country was a secondary consideration after family and employment-related decisions.

The 'softer' factors in choosing Dublin were more often related to issues of scale. Many respondents preferred the fact that Dublin was a smaller city

[3]Between 2002 and 2006, the numbers in employment in the Dublin region increased by 70,000. Moreover, much of this increase was in the services sector, with a levelling out of labour within the manufacturing sector (CSO, 2006).



than cities such as London. For example, for one respondent, an American woman in her late twenties:

> 'England was kind of out for me just because I didn't really like the busyness of London – because London's a huge design hub – it was too big for me. So then I started looking at Edinburgh and I started looking at Dublin, simply because they are about the same size as Portland where I'm from. Visiting here previously, I just loved it. I loved Dublin in general, the atmosphere was very laid-back and was just a nice place ...'

Amongst the respondents, the issue of scale was important in terms of overall quality of life. For those living in the city centre, the compact nature of the city meant it was easy to walk around and access various amenities. For those choosing suburban areas, ease of access to the sea or mountains for various leisure pursuits was seen as a positive aspect of living in Dublin. Despite these factors, the role of hard factors was of primary importance in selecting where to live within the city. Of particular importance were considerations related to housing costs (see below) and ease of accessibility to place of employment. This was directly influenced by a wide-ranging dissatisfaction with the overall transport infrastructure of the city amongst the respondents. One respondent, a Scottish woman in her late twenties, succinctly summarised the general experience of road-based transport as follows: 'I've been on shoots and we've been driving you know for two hours when you could have walked it in twenty minutes ...'. This was related to both road-traffic congestion and the poor availability or access to hard-infrastructure systems such as rail or tram transport. Accordingly, many chose to live in proximity to the more reliable transport systems such as the Dart or the Luas, or within walking distance of their place of employment.[4]

One of the more significant 'hard' factors in Dublin was the costs associated with renting, and accessing the housing market. The housing market has played a significant role in the Irish economy in recent years. For example, in 2007, the construction sector accounted for up to 40 per cent of GDP (Lawton et al., 2009, p. 6). Throughout the era of the so-called Celtic Tiger, house prices increased at a rate of 11.4 per cent annual increase in real terms. However, in the global financial crisis, house values fell by 17.9 per cent in 2008 alone (Lawton et al., 2009, p. 6). The recent downturn combined with the current surplus of rental accommodation is seen as a positive factor by many employers in attracting mobile talent in the longer term. This was particularly evident in the emerging

[4]The Dart system is a commuter rail system running around the coast of Dublin. The Luas is a light rail system which was opened in 2004. At present it has two lines which run to suburbs in the South and West of the city.

computer games industry, where young single workers are looking for city centre rental accommodation. However, for many of the migrants, the high price of buying property in Ireland was a deterrent in terms of settling for a longer period of time. One respondent commented 'the housing market has been cheating people of a lot of happiness ... that's not how I want to live ... if I am not able to afford a house here I will not stay'.

The role of social networks primarily related to those of family and friends that had been made since arriving in Ireland. Many of the respondents had moved to Dublin with a spouse or partner who was from Ireland. In this regard, social networks were primarily influenced through existing contacts. Furthermore, many commented on the extent to which they had formed strong ties with people from within work. A Spanish male in his early twenties commented:

> 'This company is as well full of really young people you know, very friendly as well, like to do things together go to the cinema and go to the bar do different things. So I do think [the social] environment is important.'

However, other respondents commented on how difficult it was to build new friendships or bonds with Irish people. While people would be pleasant and courteous to a point, it was perceived that it was hard to get to know Irish people well. While some of the older or more settled respondents had strong connections through their spouse or partner, some of the younger or single respondents had built up a network amongst other transnational migrant workers living in Dublin.

As discussed above, much of the initial attraction to move to Dublin was based on a combination of family-related decisions and availability of employment. Although various soft factors, such as the scale and laid-back atmosphere of the city, along with access to various natural amenities were seen in a positive light, 'hard' factors, such as public transport, were seen as being overwhelmingly negative. However, throughout the interviews, decisions about remaining in Dublin for a long period of time varied amongst the respondents. For example, many of the younger or single respondents commented on how they would probably move in the coming years. This was particularly evident amongst those employed in the computer games and electronic publishing sector. Those who had a family or had arrived here with a partner/spouse had little intention of leaving unless the jobs market became a difficulty. This was driven by concerns that go beyond the dichotomy of 'hard' and 'soft' factors, and was more related to a desire to settle down in the same place for a number of years.

### *Munich*

Munich is a strong economic business location with a diverse economic structure and mixture of global players and SMEs. This modern and balanced



economic structure is often referred to as the 'Munich Mix' (Münchner Mischung) which is expected to absorb greater economic dislocations. Another part of Munich's success can be attributed to the existence of numerous technology-intensive and creative branches like biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry, medical technology, environmental technology, ICT, aerospace, the media and business services and insurances. Supported by numerous state and semi-state research institutions and commercialisation protagonists, the enterprises in these knowledge-intensive and creative branches form the innovative growth poles of the city region. The positive economic situation of Munich compared with other German cities is reflected in a dynamic labour market, low unemployment rates, a dynamic service sector, high purchasing power and demographic growth. The positive development of Munich's economy has been supported by a technology and innovation policy by the Free State of Bavaria since the 1950s (Hafner et al., 2007). According to the fact that the demand for labour cannot be met locally, Munich is dependent on highly skilled transnational migrants. But is Munich an attractive location for highly skilled migrants? And how satisfied are such migrants with their living and working environments?

The two groups – knowledge workers and creative workers – evaluate the job opportunities and the conditions to work and live in Munich completely differently. All interviewees in the *knowledge sector* – including researchers, employees in big firms and in the European Patent Office as well as self-employed migrants in technology- and service-orientated branches – appreciate the diverse labour market in Munich. Researches are attracted by the high quality of the diverse research facilities. Knowledge migrants can rely on an international network of business and scientific contacts. These networks can also be seen as important mobility triggers, as the following quote illustrates:

> 'As a researcher, you go where the research takes you. The methodology I use for my PhD thesis is based on a classification system that the World Health Organization uses and there is a World Health Organization research branch in Munich at the university. And I met someone at a conference who is sort of a leader in that area and wanted to learn more about the methodology from them, and first they said why don't you come to Munich?' (Canadian knowledge worker).

The transnational knowledge workers also enjoy privileges like an English-speaking work environment. Moreover, Munich's diverse labour market offers possibilities for dual-career couples. The self-employed migrants interviewed in the ICT and consulting sectors benefit from the technology-orientated atmosphere in the city, the high rate of venture capitalists, the good infrastructure, the supportive entrepreneurial thinking and the proximity to other European countries. In addition to these positive

factors, the self-employed migrants criticised the heavy taxation and the inflexibility of government officials.

In contrast to the knowledge workers who were able to maintain or improve their social and economic status through migration to Munich, some discussion partners in the *creative sectors* stress their problems. For workers in the creative sectors access to the labour market is very difficult. Problems arise when the knowledge of the German language is not sufficient or the foreign creative workers do not get to know the right people in the field they are working in. These problems can be traced back to the fact that many activities in the cultural industries are regulated only to a limited extent through certification. Contacts to new clients come about mainly through recommendations and previous collaboration. Reputation consequently represents an important resource for self-employed creative workers and artists (von Streit, 2010). For creative workers, a wide network seems to be of pivotal importance to gain access to the market. Furthermore, the market for selling cultural products has a strong local orientation and is limited regionally. The creative industries account only for 4 per cent of exports (CBC, KWF and Prognos AG, 2009, p. 60). So, it is in the nature of things, that transnational migrants in the cultural industries cannot have an adequate business network due to the (short) duration of their stay. This might also be a possible explanation why the German creative workers are not so hyper-mobile as Richard Florida states for the American creative workers. Moving away means giving up indispensable business networks.

Although knowledge and creative workers evaluate the labour market of Munich differently, they agree on their assessment of soft factors. Most of them stress the high quality of life in the Munich region in respect of leisure and cultural opportunities. For some of them Munich is a human-scale city, the public transport system is very well developed and it is possible to get around on foot or by bike. Security and cleanliness are both emphasised by the migrants. The two international schools in Munich are of pivotal importance for them, too, because many parents regard an international education in English as fundamental for the future career of their children. But the lack of full-time childcare, which is especially important for working couples, is criticised by the migrants. Concerning the question of whether Munich is an open and tolerant city, the statements of the discussion partners were contradictory. Some describe Munich as an open and tolerant place which is more international than other German cities and where they easily made friends. But ethnic minorities in particular have experienced some different treatment in contrast to the white population: An Indian is constantly checked by the police and landlords still very often prefer Germans and discriminate against foreigners whose access to the housing market is consequently very difficult.

The accessibility of the Munich housing market is problematic for creative knowledge workers with limited economic capital. Young researchers who are at the beginning of their careers and finance their sojourns often through scholarships, or creative workers with low incomes, find that affordable housing is unavailable in the Munich city region. They often describe the search for an affordable flat or house in Munich as a 'nightmare'. In contrast to these groups of migrants, migrants with high social and economic capital have seldom reported problems. They are often supported by relocation services. To get acquainted with the German and Munich housing market, the available size as well as the layout of flats and houses is a 'learning process' for many expatriates. Many of the respondents had contacts with people or a partner who helped them find a flat or a job in Munich. Especially for those migrants who followed their partners to Munich, contacts via social networks proved to be the most important resource to find a job in the new city. But the majority of the interviewed persons in the knowledge sector did not come because of family relations; they came because of the job opportunities the city offers them.



To conclude the evaluation of Munich by the migrants: Hard factors such as jobs, and personal trajectories such as a partner in Munich, draw transnational migrants to Munich, while soft factors such as the high quality of life make them stay.

## Conclusion

Richard Florida emphasises the importance of the individual agency of migrants for current migration flows. He gives an account of why and where creative knowledge migrants move. In his opinion, metropolitan regions can only take advantage from the inflow of creative talent, if they offer an attractive urban environment and a tolerant, open and diverse social climate. Thus, he highlights the pull-factors of the destination regions. If we compare his approach with other conceptions, the limits of his contribution are evident. First, he fails to inform his audience about which members of the creative class are involved in the international migration process and how they are able to migrate. Second, he is silent about the economic, social and political context which facilitate or constrain migration flows. Older accounts in terms of the international brain drain or brain exchange emphasised the influence of the economic situation in the sending and receiving countries or regions. The brain exchange literature recognised the impact of international linkages for the migration process. Although the linkages between transnational companies received most attention, reference was also made to historical, political and personal networks between source and host region. Third, other factors are underrated: the geographical position of a metropolitan region in the urban system, or national or international policy on migration. Hard factors like state regulation of immigration and taxes are given hardly any attention compared with soft factors like

tolerance, diversity and openness. While Florida stresses the micro- and meso-level, he neglects the differences at the macro-level. While he underlines the pull-factors, he appears to be unaware of the push-factors.

Although all those shortcomings exist in Florida's portrayal of the international migration process, his merits should also be mentioned. The older literature was strongly demand oriented and focused too much on the economic rationales behind the migration process. Recent literature points out how important the 'human dimension' is but goes beyond Florida's preoccupation with tolerance, openness and diversity. The importance of cultural diversity in terms of language proficiency and the influence of personal networks is hardly mentioned in Florida's discussion of the soft factors. Although Florida makes a valuable contribution by underlining the influence of soft factors, his approach takes a backward step by failing to incorporate existing explanations for international highly skilled migration. This chapter has highlighted four different dimensions associated with the attractiveness of metropolitan regions for transnational creative knowledge workers: economy and labour market, hard and soft factors, social and professional networks and the housing market.

The analysis of the migration flows to each of the selected regions shows how diverse the transnational migrants in the creative knowledge industry are. Apart from the typical expats who have little choice over the country they are seconded to, the highly skilled labour pool also includes family migrants who follow their spouse, return migrants or repatriates, students who finally join the host labour market after graduation and refugees who involuntarily leave their countries of origin. The importance of each group differed in each city and labour-related migrants are also often outnumbered by others. The influence of international trade and investment activities became clear in all city regions, although Florida is right to suggest that this investment-related labour flow is complemented by other streams. One group of migrants who most seem to fulfil the characteristics of Florida's creative knowledge migrants were EU nationals with the privilege to move freely between the EU countries.

The demand for international labour is strong in Dublin and Amsterdam, because both countries have developed a policy with welcomes international foreign investment and they cannot cover the demand of highly skilled labour. This was indicated by the interviews with the transnational labour migrants who were steered to these regions due to labour-related reasons. In the case of Munich, investment-related migration was less relevant, because the German government did not support international companies with favourable tax breaks or immigration schemes. Frankfurt or Dusseldorf have developed a more international profile in Germany and are typically chosen as locations for regional branches in Germany. In Munich, various knowledge-related transnational corporations and research institutions attract international migrants to their headquarters



or to their suppliers. In other words, not only international investment or trade, but also the presence of international headquarters can influence the attractiveness of urban regions for international migrants. In general, work-related reasons are still the most important drivers for transnational migrants to select a certain location.

Although it was expected that soft factors would score high in Amsterdam, and Dublin due to high proficiency of English and the high quality of cultural amenities, the interviewees did not confirm this. Their judgement of soft factors was often ambivalent and they were never the sole motivation for individual migrants to change their place of residence. In Barcelona, in contrast, the influence of soft factors on the migration process was visible and associated with the cultural scene and the high quality of life. Barcelona respondents reported that they accepted lower incomes in order to take advantage of the soft factors. This was more true for creative workers, as knowledge workers often chose the region for career-related reasons.

The history of Ireland as an emigration country and the linkages to English-speaking countries by the Irish Diaspora were important for the ability of Dublin to attract so many creative knowledge workers in such a short time. The historical and cultural linkages between the analysed regions and traditional source countries affected the migration in the other regions in a similar fashion. It was strongest in Barcelona due to the historical and cultural linkages to Latin America, but it was still relevant in Munich in the case of German repatriates and in Amsterdam which had received many highly skilled migrants from former colonies.

The housing market was conceived a pivotal barrier in all selected regions. In some regions, other inconveniences such as strict immigration procedures (Amsterdam) and the poor quality of the transport system (Dublin) were reported.

In conclusion, Florida's perspective on how metropolitan regions attract transnational migrants is rather incomplete and only works in very selective cases. Instead of focusing on soft factors alone, other factors are crucial for evaluating the international attractiveness of metropolitan regions in Europe.

First, the situation of the regional economy and labour market are far more important than Florida's soft factors. Second, hard factors such as national immigration and tax policy have a considerable impact in European regions. Although the EU as a supranational organisation aims to reduce the national regulations and wants to level out the differences in the international migration and economic policy, the differences are still pronounced when compared with the USA which consists of a unified national market. Third, family networks and traditional migration networks between countries or regions strongly contribute to the inflow of highly skilled migrants. Fourth, soft factors do have an influence on the

attractiveness, but it is rather limited. Only in Mediterranean Barcelona were soft factors strong enough to attract migrants and to compensate for missing labour market opportunities.

In addition, our research demonstrates that the attractiveness of metropolitan regions depends on the different stages of the migration process. Whereas the labour market is more important to motivate immigrants to move to another place, the quality of the soft factors more often decides over the length of their stay. When transnational migrants had settled in a region, and they, as well as their employers, had invested a considerable amount of effort and capital in their new living environment and their career, soft factors are pivotal for their decision to extend their stay. In other words, local governments should not only be willing to think about ways to attract transnational knowledge migrants, but also about policies to retain them.

Furthermore, differences between subgroups are important. The creative and knowledge workers in Barcelona, Dublin and Munich used different approaches to evaluate prospective destinations. Whereas creative migrants often came under their own steam and analysed the quality of the soft factors first, knowledge migrants were more often motivated by labour-related reasons. Our research also indicates that creative migrants are not per se more mobile than knowledge workers. Often the professional network of creative workers is rooted in the local social relations at their current place of residence. If they move to other regions, they often loose those pivotal contacts. This limits their mobility. In addition, the recognition of educational credentials, and previous working experience in a foreign country, is often problematic so that some migrants end up working below their qualifications and their abilities. Instead of contributing to the regional economy as a brain gain, they suffer brain waste.

Nearly all cities experience an outmigration of skilled home nationals (Amsterdam, Barcelona and Munich) and national government implemented programmes to reverse the brain drain. In other words, the attractiveness of metropolitan regions can not only be addressed towards foreign nationals, but the needs of the 'home nationals' must be taken into account as well. It is clear that the factors involved in transnational migration and the strengths and weaknesses of cities in relation to this are complex and varied. Policy makers should be aware of such differences, if they are to develop sustainable policies.

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