

## **COSMOPOLITANS AS MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS**

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### *Abstract*

A growing number of individuals identify as cosmopolitans i.e. citizens of the world. They voluntarily move from country to country in pursuit of self-fulfilment in both life and work, and construct a cosmopolitan identity in the process. With the help of three entrepreneurial narratives we investigated how cosmopolitan disposition affects entrepreneurial behaviour. We found that cosmopolitan entrepreneurs share many common entrepreneurial characteristics, such as openness to opportunities, a need for achievement and the locus of control. However, they also challenge our understanding of entrepreneurship by downplaying the role of environment and interpreting success in an unconventional way. Our study demonstrates that this growing group of entrepreneurs deserve more attention from entrepreneurship scholars.

## *Introduction*

The number of cosmopolitans (i.e. individuals who identify as citizens of the world) has been increasing over the years (Watson, 2018). In the World Values Survey involving respondents from 57 countries, more than a third identified themselves as cosmopolitans (Bayram, 2015). Whether the underlying reason for this development is accelerated digitalisation, technological development and/or globalisation, it means that millions of people all over the world share a cosmopolitan disposition, which differentiates them from others. At the same time, digitalisation, technological development and globalisation gear the mindset of younger generations towards a cosmopolitan disposition, when anything and anyone can be connected over time and space.

We argue that cosmopolitans differ from other individuals in terms of their sense of place and time (see Brimm, 2010). The increase in cosmopolitan behaviour is due to the emergence of the *cosmoscape* (i.e. spaces, practices, objects and networks that make cosmopolitan engagement possible and enable the development of the cosmopolitan self) (Kendall et al., 2009). As a result, cosmopolitans see the world as one big, boundary-less space where geography, place, countries and other traditional location-based characteristics do not limit the way they perceive their opportunities to live, work, experience and learn. These individuals possess competences needed in the multicultural and constantly shape-shifting global playground, but they also pose new vantage points for entrepreneurship theories developed in and for the “old world”.

In this chapter, we examine the dynamics between entrepreneurial endeavours and a cosmopolitan life. Specifically, we are interested in finding out *how cosmopolitan disposition affects entrepreneurial behaviour*. We expect that the increasingly prevalent cosmopolitan disposition, the surrounding cosmoscape (Skrbiš & Woodward, 2013) and changing international labour markets play a role in entrepreneurship (Bögelhold et al., 2017; Pécoud, 2004), and particularly in the emergence of cosmopolitan entrepreneurs. The cosmoscape arguably provides the nascent cosmopolitan entrepreneurs an opportunity structure, the mega-meso-micro context where opportunities are approached (Kloosterman, 2010). In this context, we focus on the classic types of entrepreneurial behaviour: the identification, exploitation and transformation of entrepreneurial opportunities (Lindstrand & Mélen Hånell, 2017; Mainela et al., 2014; Venkataraman et al., 2012). We explore the kinds of opportunities that cosmopolitans value, how and where they identify opportunities and if and how they enact them. We expect the cosmopolitan life path to intertwine with the potential entrepreneurial path (cf. Davidsson & Honig, 2003), and believe cosmopolitanism will affect entrepreneurial proclivity, but are uncertain how the two parallel processes co-evolve in theory and practice.

To our knowledge, this study is the first to describe the co-evolution of the life course and the entrepreneurial path of cosmopolitan entrepreneurs. Additionally, as a response to calls for a better understanding of the entrepreneurial context, our study introduces a new type of context – the cosmoscape (Skrbiš & Woodward, 2013) – as an enabler of cosmopolitan entrepreneurship. The narratives presented bring us closer to the practiced cosmopolitanism as entrepreneurial activity. Furthermore, our research gives voice to a group of individuals who have been marginalised in earlier entrepreneurship research, thus providing a useful addition to the contemporary debate on diverse forms of migrant entrepreneurship (for a recent state-of-the-art review, see Dabic et al., 2020).

### *Who are cosmopolitans?*

For the purposes of this chapter, we have formulated a broad working definition of cosmopolitanism, where cosmopolitans are *individuals that voluntarily move from country to country in pursuit of self-fulfilment in both life and work, and construct a cosmopolitan identity in the process* (inspired by, for example, Pichler, 2008; Beck & Sznaider, 2006). With this, we embrace the multitude of ways cosmopolitanism can demonstrate itself in varying entrepreneurship contexts.

Our definition of a cosmopolitan overlaps a number of concepts used in management studies. For example, entrepreneurship scholars have differentiated between transnational entrepreneurs, international entrepreneurs, ethnic entrepreneurs and returnee entrepreneurs (Drori et al., 2009). The key characteristics related to these concepts are migration across countries and the cultural heritage of the country of origin. Transnational entrepreneurs are a heterogeneous group of individuals crossing national and cultural boundaries with varying motivations and experiences (Terjesen & Elam, 2009). Transnationalism as a social phenomenon has its roots in the increased interconnectivity between people and the decreasing significance of boundaries between nation states (Martin & Paasi, 2016). Transnational entrepreneurs act as boundary spanners between two or more social environments, building on the knowledge obtained (Drori et al., 2009), and are shaped by expectations, cultural values and patterns of human interaction originating from more than one social, economic and political system (Levitt, 2001). However, not all transnational entrepreneurs are necessarily immigrants (Terjesen & Elam, 2009).

In contrast, in the literature, the terms (im)migrant or ethnic entrepreneurs refer to the entrepreneurial activities of migrants or their descendants (Dheer, 2018; Ram et al., 2017) who distinctly represent a minority group in their current host country. The entrepreneurial activity of these individuals often relies on their cultural background, with them either using it as a distinctive advantage in their business or benefiting from the cultural embeddedness within a group from a similar ethnical background (Bonacich, 1973). In the past, migrant entrepreneurship was typically understood as self-employment and less innovative and only marginally profitable (Waldinger, 1996). Time and increasing empirical evidence of the phenomenon has added to our understanding, and recent research stresses that the features of this type of entrepreneurship relate more to the migrants' shared experiences than their ethnical background (Edwards et al., 2016). Interestingly, the concepts of transnational and migrant entrepreneur are starting to resemble each other, as migrant entrepreneurs are also found to be acting as boundary spanners and change agents (Figueira et al., 2016). A concrete demonstration of the amalgamation of the two concepts is the emergence of a third concept: transnational migrant entrepreneurship (Vershina et al., 2019).

Recent studies have started to stress the importance of time in classifying migrant entrepreneurs. For example, based on the time horizon and voluntariness of migration, Christensen et al. (2020) differentiate between exiles, sojourners, immigrants and refugees. The interest of management studies has been in voluntary migration, particularly in relation to career studies. Again, there is a strong link between the concepts involved. For example, returnee entrepreneurs (Gruenhagen et al., 2020; Drori et al., 2009) and expatpreneurs (Vance et al., 2016) are clearly sojourners in Christensen et al.'s (2020) classification, referring to individuals who decide to pursue an entrepreneurial career in their country of origin after spending time abroad.

Likewise, the cosmopolitans of this study are voluntary migrants and share some characteristics with sojourners, given that their commitment to a physical location is typically short-term. However, at least implicitly, the concept of a sojourner includes the aspect of a return to the home country. Although this is also possible for cosmopolitans, it is often not intended or even desirable. Geography, place, countries and other traditional location-based characteristics do not limit how cosmopolitans live, work, venture, experience and learn (Raitis et al., 2019). Besides having the identity of a world citizen, cosmopolitans feel strongly committed to the cosmopolitan lifestyle. This also affects how they view entrepreneurial opportunities.

### *Cosmopolitans and entrepreneurship*

Entrepreneurship scholars have been interested in the societal dimensions of entrepreneurship, including migrant, immigrant and diaspora entrepreneurship (Drori et al., 2010; Riddle, Hrivnak & Nielsen, 2010; Elo, 2016; Elo, Täube & Volovelsky, 2019), transnational entrepreneurs (Portes et al., 2002), sojourn entrepreneurs (Vance et al., 2016), expatpreneurs (Vance et al., 2016), self-initiated expatriates (Rodriguez & Scurry, 2014), new argonauts (Saxenian, 2007), ethnic entrepreneurs (Zhou, 2004), returnee entrepreneurs (Gruenhagen et al., 2020) and middlemen minorities (Bonacich, 1973). This research has particularly focused on how entrepreneurs as change agents, innovators and risk-takers can change societies (Kent, Sexton & Vesper, 1982), and how entrepreneurs can via networking create new opportunities and market places and bring people closer together globally (Lee & Tsang, 2001; Saxenian, 2007; Ellis, 2011; Vance et al., 2016).

To this debate, knowledge of the entrepreneurial behaviour of cosmopolitans (Bögenhold et al., 2017; Woodward et al., 2008), and in particular the effect of cosmopolitan disposition on entrepreneurial opportunity structure and international entrepreneurial ecosystem creation (Acs, Stam, Audretsch & O'Connor, 2017; Sussan & Acs, 2017), is a welcome addition. Here, cosmopolitan disposition refers to entrepreneurs that do not limit their opportunity processes to a specific geographical area, such as the native country, but instead “look across national boundaries” (Marotta, 2010, p. 109) and are open to and engage with opportunities outside the conventional sphere (Vertovec & Cohen, 2003).

Cosmopolitans can be entrepreneurs seeking opportunities and venturing without geographical boundaries (Bögenhold et al., 2017; Woodward et al., 2008), globetrotters in search of their place in different contexts (Bonacich, 1973; Portes et al., 2002; Zhou, 2004; Drori et al., 2010; Elo et al., 2018; Elo & Servais, 2018), international nomads constantly moving to fulfil their goals (Rodriguez & Scurry, 2014; Vance et al., 2016) or individuals learning, developing careers and gaining experience irrespective of time and place or geographical and national boundaries (Saxenian, 2007; Harikkala-Laihininen et al., 2019; Raitis et al., 2019). Cosmopolitans have been seen to change the international business environment by diluting the meaning of distance, transferring knowledge globally, connecting remote areas to the metropolises and creating identities and worldviews that connect, network and embed people across country, linguistic and cultural boundaries (Saxenian, 2007; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018).

Entrepreneurs with a cosmopolitan disposition (Bögenhold et al., 2017; Woodward et al., 2008) seem to share some characteristics with other types of entrepreneurial behaviour identified in earlier research. For example, De Beukelaer (2012) found that in the creative industries, cosmopolitan cultural entrepreneurs act as hybrid agents, negotiating both spatially and temporally. Nicolopoulou et al. (2016) also found that a cosmopolitan disposition favours new

venture creation, particularly in cosmopolitan cities such as Dubai. However, studies on cosmopolitan entrepreneurs are very rare, and our knowledge of these individuals remains limited.

Supposedly, these individuals possess competences needed in the multicultural and constantly shape-shifting global playground, but they also challenge the traditional ways of organising work (i.e. cosmopolitanism affects the forms and ways of working as well as the preferred content of work). Though digitalisation has made many positions virtual and detached from place and time, some of them are still expected to be filled on the spot. In these instances, social aspects such as adjustment, acculturation, security and acceptance of a place still matter, but the geographical location per se is decreasing in meaning. The globe is getting smaller, but its multifariousness continues to be indisputable and adaptability is required from individuals, companies and societies. These changes in people and their behaviour, as well as in companies and work, will evidently also affect the landscape of international business as a whole (e.g. Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010). However, to start exploring the emergence and influence of the phenomena in the international business context, we also need to take micro- and meso-level perspectives to focus on the individuals and their behaviour, and on their communities and networks.

#### *Narrative study on cosmopolitan entrepreneurs*

The empirical part of our study is a micro-level investigation of three cosmopolitan entrepreneurs selected from a dataset of 25 interviewed cosmopolitans. In the selection process, we sought variety in terms of gender, age, marital status and the cosmopolitan entrepreneur disposition.<sup>1</sup> Using purposeful sampling, we were looking for information-rich cases for an in-depth study (Patton, 2014), and the variation of cases provided us the possibility to demonstrate both diversity and common patterns among cosmopolitan entrepreneurs (Fletcher & Plakoyanniki, 2011). However, this cross-generational research setting also created some challenges, as the cosmopolitan life in the 1990s differed greatly from what it was in the 2010s. We are aware that this change in temporal context might have influenced the cosmopolitanisation of our entrepreneurs and their interpretation of the process, and thus we endeavoured to take this into consideration when analysing the findings.

We present the narratives of the life courses and the entrepreneurial history of the cosmopolitan entrepreneurs as they offer us both retrospective and real-time self-reflective autobiographical data to build our understanding about cosmopolitanism (cf. Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000; Gough, 2008; Riessman, 2011). The retrospective aspect enabled us to discover the early phases of the interviewees' cosmopolitan lives (Scurry et al., 2013), whereas the real-time aspect focused on the cosmopolitan disposition in the now, how cosmopolitanism is practiced in the present cosmoscape and on the vistas related to the future. The chosen method allowed us to capture in a storied form both the development of cosmopolitan self and practiced cosmopolitanism over time, and their connection to the entrepreneurial opportunity recognition and exploitation of these individuals (Kartch, 2017).

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<sup>1</sup> In terms of socio-demographic characteristics of cosmopolitans, the findings from previous research are mixed. For example, according to Pichler (2009), socio-demographic variables do not differentiate cosmopolitans very much from other Europeans. On the other hand, the same scholar found in a later study (Pichler, 2012) based on the World Values Survey statistically significant differences between cosmopolitans and other members of the population in terms of education, occupation, place of living and religion. Cosmopolitan orientation was higher among female informants, Muslims, people with higher education and inhabitants of larger cities.

The interviewees were found from newspaper stories, blogs and social media communities, based on their own description of being cosmopolitans. They also met the working definition of how we understand cosmopolitans as *individuals that voluntarily move from country to country in pursuit of self-fulfilment in both life and work, and construct a cosmopolitan identity in the process*. The interviews were conducted virtually via Skype and lasted from one to three hours. They were recorded with the interviewees' permission and then transcribed verbatim immediately afterwards. The narratives are presented here in an anonymised form.

### **Oliver, 26 years**

*"The whole world is open to me. Wherever I go I will find a home. I can adapt to anywhere, to different cultures."*

Oliver was born in Finland into a middle-class Finnish family. After completing high school, at the age of 18 he moved abroad for the first time to Sydney, Australia. He spent a year there and then continued to Asia where he spent six months backpacking, also starting his own travel blog. Returning to Finland for a couple of months confirmed to him that staying in his home country was no longer an option. He decided to study digital media and communications in London. After graduating, he and his partner decided to move again, this time to Hong Kong. Both he and his partner – who shares the same values and indefinite interest in and curiosity about the world – are entrepreneurs whose work is not location-bound, so this was an easy choice to make. They were settled in Hong Kong, but as the political situation started to escalate they moved again, this time to Poland. Oliver has been working as an entrepreneur since the age of 19 and he established his own company while studying in London. The company, which consults businesses on their digital visibility and strategies, is built around carefully selected freelancers who help Oliver to create value for his customers in Europe and Asia. However, his partner's work requires a functional infrastructure, which affects their choice of location. Oliver describes his attitude towards work as follows:

*"I have never been afraid of uncertainty; I have never been interested in a career in a single company in which I would work for eternity. I have always tried to create my own work so that it allows me to travel and live freely and would not be bound to a location. I have always considered the whole world as an alternative where to be, different areas. ... I like to go to a place where I know nobody and nothing, just go there and try if that would be the place for me to be."*

### **Emily, 40 years**

*"I never wanted to become an entrepreneur because my parents were entrepreneurs and I thought that this is not something I want to do. Especially, I did not want location-bound entrepreneurship – it sucks – because you need to be present all the time. ... I became an entrepreneur by accident. ... At a friend's Christmas party, I happened to sit next to a man and we started talking about market research. He knew a lot of that business and had new ideas, which we started developing together."*

Emily was born into an entrepreneurial family in Finland. Her parents died when she was in her twenties, and that was the main trigger for her moving abroad. She first went on a student exchange to the UK, and after completing her studies at a business school in Finland she moved

there with the intention of living there permanently. However, after 15 years of being based in Britain she moved to the Netherlands, and has been living there for three years. Despite always having a base to which she could return, Emily has never stayed long-term in the same location. Instead, over the years she has participated in a number of work- and charity-related projects all over the world, in locations ranging from Latin America to Africa.

With two university degrees, it has always been relatively easy for Emily to get a job, but the first ones did not allow her to travel in the way she wished. Therefore, she and her business partner established a market research company serving global markets. As a result, the amount she had to travel increased greatly, and she took up to 60–70 flights per year. After a burnout, she decided to sell her business and work as a freelancer. This lifestyle change was combined with the move to the Netherlands, as she and her current partner thought that life in Britain after Brexit was not an option for them.

The entrepreneurial disposition has been with her throughout her life; she observes things, such as the lack of a discussion forum for like-minded hobbyists of a specific rare breed of dog. As she notices that demand for such a forum exists, and nobody seems to be doing anything about it or seizing the opportunity, she decides to get it up and running herself, as no one else will.

Emily has always felt that she does not ‘fit’ in Finland. She felt different from other people of her age, and when studying at business school in particular she thought that Finland was too small of a ‘pond’ for interesting job opportunities, and thus decided to seek opportunities elsewhere. Moving to new places has not become easier over time, and she still feels like an outsider at the outset in a new location. However, now she knows that the feeling is temporary, and that it takes perhaps a year to learn how the society and life works in a new place.

*“I remember thinking that my idea of success would be that I would know so much of something that someone would fly me to the other side of the globe just for my expertise. I did not make career choices with that in mind, but it was my measure for success. And then, at the age of 25, I realised that I was speaking at a conference in Peru and in Australia, and I did not feel successful at all. The life behind it was not what I had imagined.”*

### **Karin, 55 years**

*“My next growth challenge can be almost anywhere on the map. Then I go and I have the skills to build the contacts and existence almost anywhere. It is a combination of skills and experience which I utilise, but also a mindset – I see mankind very universally, and national boundaries are not very important.”*

Karin was born in Finland into a lower-class Finnish family. While still at school, she went to Paris as an au pair at the age of 16, and as an exchange student to an American high school when she was 17. After graduating from a Finnish high school, she studied at a business school in Finland, where she also met her husband. After graduation, the couple moved first to Munich, then to Paris and next to Seoul as freelance journalists. The journalist career continued for some years in Brussels, and then while employed by a broadcasting company. The next step was a move to the public sector, where Karin worked for a Finnish ministry and the whole family moved to the US. During the past 20 years she has lived ‘a transatlantic life’, as she and her family have moved between Finland and the US several times due to work-related opportunities either in the private or public sectors or in NGOs.

Work is very important for Karin, and she describes herself as work-centric; her social network is also very much based on business relationships. She has always been very ambitious, and has had high aspirations since her youth:

*“I have always had the urge to see the top, how the best in the world do things. I remember when I was an au pair in Paris, I just went to see the National Theatre. I did not have the money to go and see the performance, but I just wanted to be near it, just to watch and breathe the air. ... Somehow I was always afraid that if I benchmarked myself as too small in the Finnish context, I might be cheating myself. I need to find where the top of the world is and see what they do and how they cope in that environment.”*

Karin describes herself as an entrepreneurial person. During her professional career, Karin and her husband have always been able to combine work, travel and parenthood – their only child is now an adult and no longer lives at home. This has required proactiveness, innovativeness and risk-taking – in other words, entrepreneurial behaviour.

*“I have always had this strong entrepreneurial gene. I have always wanted to introduce entrepreneurial spirit, and therefore I think I have accomplished so much. ... I have always found my own place, I have been able to combine things in a non-traditional way, and that has brought value added to many. I think that I can act as a middleman or fill in a gap which is clearly there or which is not well covered.”*

### *Discussion*

The narratives above portray three life courses of cosmopolitans that share some features but also differ in some respects. All of the informants have a strong cosmopolitan disposition; Karin’s expression “*I see mankind very universally and national boundaries are not very important*” perfectly fits the description of a cosmopolitan put forward by Marotta (2010). The narratives also confirm the notion that a person is not born as a cosmopolitan, but instead gradually becomes one through the process of cosmopolitanisation, during which his/her identity is reconstructed through lived experience (Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018; Daskalaki, 2012). The resulting translocal identity is often characterised by liminal experiences (i.e. states of being in-between, and of neither being part of there nor here) (Daskalaki et al., 2016).

In line with earlier research (e.g. Szerszynski & Urry, 2006), we found openness to be a striking characteristic of cosmopolitans. They all consider themselves as *open to the world and the opportunities it may provide for them*. They are also quite future-oriented and have a high uncertainty tolerance and strong desire for freedom. Our cosmopolitans like to experiment and try new things, but are also able to abandon their plans quite quickly if they do not seem to work out. They are also ready to take the initiative and materialise opportunities, which, in our data, they mostly discover but also create (cf. Alvarez & Barney, 2007), and take risks in the form of stepping into the unknown to see how one manages. Overall, it seems that the cosmopolitans of our study share some traits that are traditionally considered entrepreneurial, such as the locus of control (e.g. Brockhaus, 1982), proactiveness (e.g. Miller, 1983), risk-taking (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996) and a need for achievement (McClelland, 1965).



The high need for achievement is clear in Karin's quote in which she expresses her desire to "find where the top of the world is and see what they do and how they cope in that environment". However, the combination of a cosmopolitan disposition and a high need for achievement is not always a bed of roses. Emily's experiences illustrate what happens when unrealistic expectations are not met. Disappointment when the dream lifestyle does not bring the expected satisfaction can lead to illness and the abandonment of the cosmopolitan lifestyle, at least temporarily.

The cosmopolitans of our study are extremely *mobile*, but their mobility is not due to securing, maintaining or improving their professional and/or economic position, as it often is for artists and academics (Loacker & Sliwa, 2016). Instead, for them mobility is an elementary part of the cosmopolitan life, something they find attractive and interesting because it stimulates them. In a way, they consider the ability of travel as their right (cf. Szerszynski & Urry, 2006). The lived dynamics of translocality (Daskalaki et al., 2016) provide them with highly valued experiences, which they would not have otherwise. All the entrepreneurs were attracted to international mobility from their early years, but this has required more effort for the older entrepreneurs (Emily and particularly Karin) than for Oliver because over time the search for information and the identification of opportunities has become much easier due to digitalisation and increased interconnectivity.

The *cosmoscape* – spaces, practices, objects and networks facilitating cosmopolitan life (Kendall et al., 2009) – downplays national affiliations and cultural differences (Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018). The mobility of cosmopolitan entrepreneurs is not haphazard but rather based on a thorough search for information and the analysis of alternatives. Cosmopolitans are particularly attracted to global cities, such as New York, London, Tokyo, Hong Kong or Shanghai, or other translocalities (i.e. spaces where life, human relations, work and leisure bring together cosmopolitans and selected groups of locals) (Appadurai, 1996). The transnational individuals enjoy the cosmopolitan atmosphere of these cities, but they are also actively involved in the creation of such a transnational urban space (Yamamura, 2018); thus, the city would not be the same without these people. The narratives of our cosmopolitans support the magnetism of the global cities, but they also stress the importance of the virtual cosmoscape, which has emerged through the transnational online communities to which cosmopolitans may belong. Furthermore, as our findings highlight, all spaces are socially constructed based on the agency of individuals (Rodman, 1992), and it seems that our cosmopolitans are able to construct a home for themselves in multiple places at the same time, and are thus multilocal. Therefore, we can assume that for cosmopolitan entrepreneurs the ties to the physical cosmoscapes are no longer as strong as they were, as relationships can also be nurtured virtually and independent of location.

The aspect of *time* is a dominant presence in all of the narratives. Our cosmopolitans are footloose, and they do not seem to stay very long in one location; thus, they resemble sojourners (Christensen et al., 2020). However, the key difference between the two groups is that the cosmopolitans do not consider the constant moving as a temporary arrangement. On the contrary, they think that this dynamic lifestyle is preferable and do not view a return to Finland as desirable. However, here our cosmopolitans differ. Karin describes her life as "transatlantic" as for a decade she has been moving between the US and Finland and could think of returning back home. On the other hand, the youngest of our cosmopolitans, Oliver, thinks that he might return to Finland someday but does not consider it a very likely option. In contrast, Emily does not consider a return to Finland as an option for her, but she admits that over the years the

values she grew up with in her childhood have started to become more essential to her and have influenced the choice of her current country of residence.

The *tie to the home country*, Finland, varies. Whereas Emily has always felt an outsider in Finland and claims that citizenship for her is just a formality, Karin proclaims everywhere that she is a Finn and proud of it; she even uses a lot of her time to promote her home country when abroad. Oliver also feels that he has a dual identity, being both cosmopolitan and Finnish. It is noticeable that whereas Emily mainly disconnects herself from other Finns, both Karin and Oliver are active members of the virtual communities of Finns living abroad. However, none of them has used their country of origin and its cultural heritage as a springboard for their work and career; thus, they do not fit the definition of transnational migrant entrepreneurs (see e.g. Portes et al., 2002; Vershinina et al., 2019). All of the interviewees have demonstrated independence in their choices of moving from country to country, which reflects entrepreneurs' wish for autonomy (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). The sense of freedom is important for them in their work. Among the interviewees there is also speculation regarding whether they would have become entrepreneurs if they had not moved abroad. It seems that starting a business was a much more likely and natural occurrence for the interviewees after they had moved abroad than it would have been in their native country.

The *sense of time and place* of our cosmopolitans has an impact of how they see work and career. The cosmospace allows all of them to work independent of their physical location, but the physical location itself does not seem to be of major importance providing the infrastructure works. On the other hand, all of them seem to prefer project-type work, having no desire for a tenured position in a single company that would tie them down, bind and anchor them in any specific place. Opportunities come around, and they seem to be very attentive in observing them. Additionally, they are also able to create opportunities themselves, especially if this guarantees them the chance to maintain the cosmopolitan lifestyle they have adopted.

### *Conclusions*

Our study focusing on the cosmopolitanisation of individuals and the emergence of a cosmopolitan identity ties in well with ongoing debates. As a form of transnationalism (Vertovec, 2009), cosmopolitanism as a phenomenon is growing globally and is thus of increasing importance. It has been studied across numerous disciplines and fields, including anthropology, citizenship studies, philosophy, political science and sociology, but so far it has been relatively neglected in business studies. Building on the existing research, applying the key concepts and extending the research into new social contexts (in line with Whetten et al., 2009), we aim to introduce the phenomenon to a new field of research, in this case entrepreneurship. By studying cosmopolitanism from the viewpoint of entrepreneurship and taking a more nuanced outlook and a micro-level perspective, we can complement our knowledge with a new perspective and offer new insights to traditional fields of cosmopolitan study such as sociology, where so far only a few survey-based cross-country studies have studied cosmopolitan individuals (Pichler, 2012). In this chapter, we wanted to extend the view on cosmopolitans beyond the demographics and understand the microprocesses underlying the life courses, identity formation, cosmopolitan behaviour and work. We believe this is important because the current discourse in entrepreneurship studies is highly business focused, and we would like to contribute to a human-centred understanding of entrepreneurship business and shift the focus of the discourse accordingly.

Entrepreneurship scholars have been interested in the societal dimensions of entrepreneurship, including migrant and diaspora entrepreneurship. To this debate, knowledge of the entrepreneurial behaviour of cosmopolitans, and in particular the effect of the cosmopolitan disposition on their entrepreneurial opportunity structure, is a welcome addition. Our narratives feature cosmopolitan entrepreneurs as non-location-bound individuals with a translocational identity. This is reflected in their lives, work and entrepreneurial orientation. Their business or work is designed to be mobile to support the cosmopolitan life. Their entrepreneurial behaviour is based on a calling, a personal need for achievement that bypasses pure economic needs (cf. Kirzner, 1973; Churchill & Bygrave, 1989), and they engage in running their own businesses as long as it offers them the ability to learn, develop and enjoy, supporting the entrepreneurial cornerstone of creativity (cf. Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). If the business starts to limit the cosmopolitan in terms of time and space, the cosmopolitan might make the decision to end the business and move on. On the other hand, if the business leads the cosmopolitan to explore new places, s/he might more easily say yes to the opportunity. If we look at the issue from the cosmopolitan identity perspective, in turn, the best entrepreneurial activities are those that respect and value the cosmopolitan disposition and leave adequate room for it to roam around. Overall, it seems that the relationship between cosmopolitan disposition and entrepreneurship is reciprocal; the cosmopolitan disposition supports the international entrepreneurial behaviour and vice versa. In a way, it resembles a hen vs. egg scenario, in that it is difficult to distinguish which one existed first.

Our study shows that cosmopolitan entrepreneurs deserve further investigation as they challenge existing entrepreneurship theories in multiple ways. For example, cosmopolitans downplay the role of environment; they can recognise, create or exploit opportunities anywhere. What are the implications of this kind of mindset for existing theories, which are more or less location-bound? It also seems that cosmopolitan entrepreneurs do not evaluate success in a traditional way. Objective performance measures do not apply; instead, we need to apply more subjective measures, which also include the fulfilment of personal expectations. In terms of mindset, there seems to be a resemblance to social entrepreneurship, where profit-making is also of less importance than values such as well-being, societal impact and novel experiences.

The application of a micro-level perspective proved useful in this study, and we encourage scholars to take a similar perspective in future studies. Even with a small number of narratives, we were able to demonstrate that cosmopolitans differ greatly from what is expected of them. Cosmopolitans are typically labelled as elites with deep pockets, traveling the world with a jet-set lifestyle (see Szerszynski & Urry, 2006). Our cosmopolitans are far from that description and therefore, when first confronted with such descriptions, they do not always recognise themselves as cosmopolitans. It would be very interesting to study this group of individuals further to find out more about them.

Understanding the life course and behaviour of cosmopolitans is valuable not only from the perspective of learning more about this special group of people, but also because of what we can learn about our contemporary society in which this phenomenon is embedded. In the modern era of increasing voluntary migration, brain drain and related phenomena are becoming major tolls on national societies' ability to achieve innovation and renewal. Through understanding the cosmopolitan life course better, policy makers can enable the societal structures that would attract rather than push away these highly talented individuals. For example, identifying the potential geographical clusters or voids of cosmopolitans may reveal insights about what types of factors influence the appeal of specific geographical locations. As

the cosmopolitans are by definition free to roam the globe as they wish, why do they choose to make (even temporary) homes where they do? Understanding these external pulling and pushing forces provides information to policy makers interested in quenching the “brain drain”, and insights about the potential developmental trajectories of diverse geographic sites.

On the other hand, focusing on the individual level of cosmopolitans, including their values and beliefs, may reveal insights that have economic implications given that the cosmopolitans have specific features as a workforce. Learning to identify and harness the capabilities emerging from the cosmopolitan disposition enables firms to capture the value potential of the globalising business environment better. Understanding the motivational factors of cosmopolitans may additionally contribute even more widely to the increasing discussions about management in the era of the knowledge society. Industrial-era management procedures have been proven to be insufficient, and it is essential to learn to manage creative and idiosyncratic individuals in ways that nurture value creation and capture their innovations.

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