This edited collection contributes to studies of intra-EU migration and mobility, welfare, and European social citizenship by focusing on transnational labour movements from new to the old EU member states (Hungary–Austria, Bulgaria–Germany, Poland–UK and Estonia–Sweden).

The volume provides a comparative analysis of formal organization and mobile individuals’ use of European social security coordination, which involves mobile Europeans’ access to and portability of social security rights from the sending to the receiving country (and back). The book discloses the selectivity criteria of welfare provision in four areas (unemployment, family benefits, health insurance, and pensions) that lay at heart of European cross-border social security governance. It also identifies specific discourses of belonging (gendered, ethnicized/racialized and class-related images of ‘Us’ and ‘Them’) that frame the institutional selectivity by constructing images of mobile EU citizens’ ‘deserving’ or ‘non-deserving’ social membership.

The collection offers a detailed examination of inequality experiences mobile EU citizens from the new EU countries encounter while accessing and porting social security rights across borders. It will be of interest to a wide range of social science and interdisciplinary researchers, students, and practitioners as well as those interested in intra-EU migration and mobility, social security, European social citizenship, and transnational studies.

Anna Amelina is a Professor for Intercultural Studies at Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg and UNESCO Chair for Heritage Studies. Her research areas are transnational migration studies, cultural sociology, gender and intersectionality, cross-border social inequalities, and European studies. Her recent publication is Gender and Migration: Transnational and Intersectional Prospects (with Helma Lutz, Routledge 2019).

Emma Carmel investigates how social and political order is imagined, produced, and contested in a range of empirical contexts. Her recent empirical work has been on EU and UK migration governance, and her latest book is Governance Analysis: Critical Enquiry at the Intersection of Politics, Policy and Society (Edward Elgar 2019).

Ann Runfors is an ethnologist and holds the position of Associate Professor at the School of Historical and Contemporary Studies at Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden. Her fields of research are migration, education, welfare, transnationalism, youth, and ethnographic approaches. Her recent publication is Welfare Negotiations among Estonians Working in Sweden: Experiences, Barriers and Narrated Coping Strategies (with Maarja Saar and Florence Fröhlig, working paper, University of Södertörn 2018).

Elisabeth Scheibelhofer is an Associate Professor in Sociology at University of Vienna, working on migration and qualitative methods. Her recent publication is Shifting Aspirations in Migratory Projects: Biographic Reconstructions in the Context of a Multi-scaled Second Modernity (Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 2018).
264  **Citizenship in the Latin American Upper and Middle Classes**  
Ethnographic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Consumption  
*Edited by Fabian Cannizzo and Nick Osbaldiston*

265  **Youth and the Politics of the Present**  
Constructing the Future  
*Edited by Enzo Colombo and Paola Rebughini*

266  **Trade Unions and European Integration**  
A Question of Optimism and Pessimism?  
*Edited by Johannes M. Kiess and Martin Seeliger*

267  **Globalization, Modernity and the Rise of Religious Fundamentalism**  
The Challenge of Religious Resurgence against the  
“End of History” (A Dialectical Kaleidoscopic Analysis)  
*Dimitrios Methenitis*

268  **Urban Environments for Healthy Ageing**  
A Global Perspective  
*Edited by Anna P. Lane*

269  **Conflict and the Social Bond**  
Peace in Modern Societies  
*Micahelis Lianos*

270  **Boundaries of European Social Citizenship**  
EU Citizens’ Transnational Social Security in Regulations, Discourses, and Experiences  
*Edited by Anna Amelina, Emma Carmel, Ann Runfors, and Elisabeth Scheibelhofer*

For more information about this series, please visit:  
Boundaries of European Social Citizenship

EU Citizens’ Transnational Social Security in Regulations, Discourses, and Experiences

Edited by Anna Amelina, Emma Carmel, Ann Runfors and Elisabeth Scheibelhofer
Contents

List of tables vii
List of contributors viii
Acknowledgements ix

1 European welfare between complex regulatory frameworks and mobile Europeans’ experiences of social (in)security 1
ANNA AMELINA

2 Theorizing European social citizenship: governance, discourses, and experiences of transnational social security 19
ANNA AMELINA

3 Beyond the rights-bearing mobile EU citizen: governing inequality and privilege in European Union social security 46
EMMA CARMEL, BOŻENA SOJKA, AND KINGA PAPIEŻ

4 Discourses of belonging in the context of EU enlargements: a comparative analysis of policy discourses specifying EU welfare access 73
ANN RUNFORS AND FLORENCE FRÖHLIG

5 Navigating the labyrinths of transnational social security: experiences and meaning-making processes of EU migrants when accessing and porting social rights 91
ELISABETH SCHEIBELHOFER, CLARA HOLZINGER, AND NóRA REGŐS

6 When vicinity divides: transnational social security in the cross-border region of Hungary and Austria 113
NÓRA REGŐS, CLARA HOLZINGER, AND ELISABETH SCHEIBELHOFER
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>From subordination to empowerment? Mobile Europeans’ access to and portability of social security rights between Bulgaria and Germany</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JANA FINGAROVA AND ANNA AMELINA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Inequalities, insecurities, and informalities: making sense of migrants’ experiences of social security between Poland and the UK</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EMMA CARMEL, BOŻENA SOJKA AND KINGA PAPIEŻ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Business contract meets social contract: Estonians in Sweden and their transnational welfare opportunities</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FLORENCE FRÖHLIG, MAARJA SAAR, AND ANN RUNFORS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Labyrinths of European social citizenship: variations in and levels of comparison</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANNA AMELINA, EMMA CARMEL, ANN RUNFORS, AND ELISABETH SCHEIBELHOFER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Index 213
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>The national citizenship model, transnationally oriented approaches to (social) citizenship, and the concept of European social citizenship</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Key regulatory conditions governing access to and portability of selected cash benefits for unemployed individuals in the four EU transnational country pairs</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Key conditions governing portability of selected family benefits in the four EU transnational country pairs</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Key regulatory conditions governing access to and portability of sickness and health insurance in the four EU transnational country pairs</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Key regulatory conditions governing portability of selected old age public pensions in the four EU transnational country pairs</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contributors

Anna Amelina, University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg
Emma Carmel, University of Bath
Jana Fingarova, University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg
Florence Fröhlig, Södertörn University
Clara Holzinger, University of Vienna
Kinga Papież, University of Oxford
 Nóra Regös, German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer
Ann Runfors, Södertörn University
Maarja Saar, University of Bristol
Elisabeth Scheibelhofer, University of Vienna
Božena Sojka, University of Wolverhampton
This volume is the product of an intense, three-year research process (2015–2018) that brought together scholars from various European countries. First, as the editors, we want to thank the team members who collaborated with us on the project TRANSWEL over the years. Without the many experts who agreed to participate in interviews and workshops, as well as the mobile EU citizens who gave us insights into their mobility trajectories, this book would not exist as it appears today. We would also like to thank the NORFACE team of the transnational research programme Welfare State Futures for their support, especially Ellen Immergut and Thomas Wosnitza, who always replied promptly when we voiced any needs during the research process.

Special acknowledgements are due to the national funding institutions that collaboratively supported the empirical research of TRANSWEL: the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Swedish Research Council, the UK Research Council, and the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) (AT-project number I 2025-G16, led by E. Scheibelhofer).

Anna Amelina, University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg
Emma Carmel, University of Bath
Ann Runfors, Södertörn University
Elisabeth Scheibelhofer, University of Vienna

September 2019
Introduction: setting the agenda of this volume

‘United in Diversity’, the official motto of the European Union, signifies the cosmopolitan foundations of this political community and emphasizes a positive image of the various forms of diversity that characterize it (Beck 2007). Defining human movements within the EU as ‘mobility’ rather than as ‘migration’, the EU rhetoric suggests that there should be no conflict between the freedom of movement and the mobility of welfare within the EU (EC 2010). While the free movement of workers is defined as one of the constitutive elements of this supranational formation (Boswell and Geddes 2011), access to social security rights for mobile Europeans is structured according to the principle of non-discrimination in accessing formal welfare (Kogan, Gebel, and Noelke 2008). This principle of equal treatment is implemented in the form of one of the most advanced and complex systems of access to and portability of social security rights for mobile EU nationals – the European social security coordination system (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010; Cantillon, Verschuuren, and Ploscar 2012). With the exception of the right to social assistance, this system is designed to protect most of the social security rights of EU citizens who move within the EU (Carmel, Sojka, and Papież 2016). However, the premise of equal treatment of mobile EU citizens in the context of European social security coordination is not uncontested. Public debates in the old EU member states have problematized the socioeconomic asymmetries among the member states of the European Union (Kymlicka 2015). Articulating voices of welfare chauvinism, these debates have addressed intra-EU movements as a major concern for the national welfare systems of the old member states (Bruzelius, Chase, and Seeleib-Kaiser 2016; Mewes and Mau 2013).

The central aim of this edited volume is to disentangle the nexus between intra-EU mobility and welfare in the enlarged EU, which currently is articulated by the two above-mentioned positions – European cosmopolitanism and the opposite notion of welfare chauvinism. This book contributes to the social scientific study of intra-EU mobility and migration by providing a comprehensive analysis of relevant regulations and discourses, as well as of mobile Europeans’
experiences of the European social security coordination system. It builds on the empirical results of an international large-scale research project concerning European labour mobility/migration and access to/portability of social security rights in respect to four pairs of countries: Hungary–Austria, Bulgaria–Germany, Sweden–Estonia, and Poland–United Kingdom. Its focus on labour mobility/migration goes back to the significant increase in labour movements from the new to the old EU member states in the context of recent EU enlargements (see Engbersen et al. 2013). Using a transnational lens (Amelina and Faist 2012; Amelina 2017), the volume examines how the interplay between patterns of migration/mobility (temporary and permanent) and patterns of movers’ employment (ranging from regular to irregular) impacts on mobile Europeans’ welfare opportunities. More specifically, the aim of this book is to offer a comparative analysis of mobile EU citizens’ access to and portability of social security rights within the framework of European social coordination in fields such as unemployment, family-related benefits, health insurance, and retirement benefits.

In the context of the EU’s social coordination system, the term ‘portability’ indicates that economically active EU citizens (and their family members) have the formal right to transfer the social security claims they have in the fields mentioned from their sending to their receiving country, and vice versa. This may take the form of recognition of ‘previous periods of insurance, work or residence’ accumulated in the sending country, which gives entitlement in the receiving country (e.g. unemployment benefits, pensions); or, if a mobile individual is entitled ‘to cash benefits from one country’, that individual ‘can receive them even if living in another country’ (e.g. family benefits) (EC 2010: 8ff.). The social security coordination system, first established in the 1970s (Reg. 1408/71), has been transformed in the contexts of EU enlargements to ensure equal treatment of mobile and immobile EU citizens in terms of access to social security rights (see esp. Reg. 883/2004 and 987/2009; see also Chapter 3 of this volume).

In order to understand the relevant regulations and discourses, as well as the mobile Europeans’ experiences of cross-border social security and social rights portability, this volume uses the conceptual lens of social citizenship theory (Marshall 1950; Hansen and Hager 2010; Powell 2002), thereby addressing European social security coordination as a paradigmatic example of European social citizenship. Within this conceptual framework, the notion of social citizenship refers to social membership (e.g. mobile Europeans’ access to and portability of social security rights) in the context of mobility within a supranational community. This particular type of social membership has a multiscalar quality, in that access to social security rights is organized at different scales of social security governance – namely, the supranational, the national, and the transnational scales (with the transnational scale referring to the regulatory framework between the sending and receiving states). This type of social membership definitely extends the territorial boundaries of individual nation states (Bauböck 1994, 2017; Hansen 2000; Schierup, Hansen, and Castles 2006). In other words, the study of European cross-border security and social rights
portability makes it possible to understand both the institutional frameworks and the mobile Europeans’ experiences of social membership in the contemporary European Union while also considering asymmetries between the sending and receiving states.

Before I describe the aims of this volume and the conceptual basis in more detail, I will first give a brief overview of the state of the art in the research on the nexus between intra-EU migration/mobility, welfare, and portability of social security rights.

**Beyond the notion of welfare magnet: insights from the research on European migration, welfare, and portability of social security rights**

In addressing the nexus between intra-EU migration/mobility and welfare, economists tend to refer to the ‘welfare magnet’ hypothesis, which suggests a relationship between individual movers’ decisions to migrate and the welfare state expenditures of their receiving states (Borjas 1999). The welfare magnet hypothesis has never been confirmed by empirical research (Razin and Wahba 2012; Giulietti 2014), but it became very powerful in public debates on intra-EU movements (and beyond). Most importantly, it reifies two other assumptions that are just as problematic. One is that intra-EU movements are one-time movements from a sending to a receiving country. This view neglects the changing quality of intra-EU movements and the role of migrants’ transnational linkages between their sending and receiving states. The other problematic assumption concerns the structuration and organization of welfare systems, which are presented as closed national welfare ‘containers’, access to which should only be given to citizens of the respective nation state. This viewpoint overlooks already existing supranational forms of European social security, such as the European social security coordination system, the aim of which is to recognize mobile EU citizens’ rights to access and port social security rights in the areas of unemployment, family benefits, health insurance, and pensions.

To overcome these oversimplified assumptions, it is necessary to take a closer look at the three bodies of literature that are relevant in this context – namely, the literature on (1) intra-EU migration/mobility, (2) on European welfare, and (3) on portability of social security rights.

(1) In their seminal book *A Continent Moving West?*, first published in 2010, editors Richard Black, Godfried Engbersen, Marek Okólski, and Christina Pantiru argue that human movements within the European Union have been undergoing fundamental changes in the wake of recent EU enlargements. These changes are linked to the direction of movements (from ‘Eastern’ to ‘Western’ Europe, and back) and to the institutional frameworks involved. Along with the free movement of goods, services, and capital, the freedom of movement for workers, introduced with the 2004, 2007, and 2014 enlargements, became one of the essential institutional premises of the European Union, and EU citizens’ movements within the EU became officially ladled as ‘mobility’ (Engbersen *et al.* 2017). The fundamental
changes in the patterns of human movements have been reflected in current studies of intra-European migration/mobility (e.g. Verwiebe, Wiesböck, and Teitzer 2014), which show that intra-EU movements are not just one-directional movements from a country of origin to a country of destination; rather, they may exhibit different patterns that shape mobile EU citizens’ practices of accessing and porting social security rights. Engbersen et al. (2013) presented interesting empirical findings on how mobile EU citizens’ attachment to their countries of origin and destination shape patterns of movement, generating four categories of mobile EU citizens: (i) circular migrants (e.g. seasonal workers), who often have a weak attachment to their country of destination; (ii) ‘binationally’ oriented movers with a strong attachment to both their country of origin and their country of destination; (iii) ‘foot-loose’ movers with a weak attachment to both their country of origin and their country of destination; and (iv) ‘settlers’ with a weak attachment to their country of origin. Whether their attachment is weak or strong, all mobile EU citizens organize their lifeworlds transnationally between the sending and receiving countries. These mobility patterns have been confirmed in similar studies – for example, by Düvell and Vogel (2006), who distinguish mobile EU ‘citizens oriented on returning’, ‘movers who wish to settle’, ‘temporary movers’, and ‘global nomads’.

These findings indicate that analyses of linkages between forms of migration/mobility and European social security benefit from avoiding the overly simplistic assumptions of the welfare magnet theory. Instead, current research needs to consider the multilocal lifeworlds of mobile Europeans and the consequences these lifeworlds have for movers’ social protection arrangements. Whereas recent studies of European migration/mobility acknowledge this variety of migration patterns, mobile EU citizens’ forms of employment (regular/irregular) are still understudied, and only a few qualitative studies from migration research have approached different forms of irregular work and related practices of exploitation (Amelina 2017; Bommes and Sciortino 2011; Jandl et al. 2009). In addition, welfare studies still often remain focused on national systems (and therefore on the rights of settled ‘immigrants’), rather than analysing the implications of changing migration/mobility patterns and labour relations for the institutional organization of (European) social security.

(2) The second body of relevant literature (Hammar 1990; Bommes and Geddes 2000; Sainsbury 2012) focuses on the impacts of different welfare systems/regimes on mobile individuals’ access to social security and other types of rights and analyses access within the four ideal-typical welfare regimes: social democratic, conservative, liberal (Esping-Andersen 1990), and Mediterranean (Ferrera 1996). In addition, there are studies of new EU member states’ post-communist welfare regimes (Carmel, Sojka, and Papież 2016) that examine the remarkable differences among and within EU member states (political, economic, social contexts) when it comes to interactions of varying combinations of social protection, welfare, and migration policies; their institutional architecture and articulation at different welfare levels; and the various coexisting processes of inclusion and exclusion of different migrant groups in the ‘national societies’.
Although the references above cannot, of course, account for the complexity of the research on European welfare, we can still say that many of these studies overgeneralize the various (legal) categories of movers ignoring the impact of legal status on the interaction between (welfare) state and migrant. In addition, given that their main focus is on national welfare systems, these studies do not reflect the supranational organization of social security (e.g. on the EU level) and the institutional selectivity criteria it involves. Because studies of this type focus mainly on institutional frameworks, they rarely consider the changing and increasingly transnational quality of migration/mobility that contributes to the transnational lifeworlds of European movers and to the ways they use social security in practice. In many cases, it also remains unclear how the interplay of different sets and levels of regulations and the diverse welfare systems of the sending and receiving EU member states may become an obstacle to accessing and porting social security rights.

(3) The third research area addresses some of these lacunas by focusing on the emergence of supranational citizenship, as laid down in the Maastricht Treaty of 1993 (Hansen and Hager 2010; Maas 2007, 2013). It is concerned primarily with how mobile EU citizens access and port social security rights from one member state to another. In this regard, portability has been defined as ‘the possibility of acquiring and keeping social benefits’ entitlements and/or social rights in the event of mobility for work [or other] reasons’ (d’Addio and Cavalleri 2015: 346). Differentiating various regimes of social security rights portability, researchers have highlighted that the European portability regime offers mobile individuals relatively non-discriminatory access, which for EU nationals is organized in accordance with the European social coordination system (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010; Holzmann and Koettl 2012). The most relevant legislative acts today are Regulations 883/2004 and 987/2009. Portability can be defined as ‘the ability to preserve, maintain, and transfer vested social security rights or rights in the process of being vested’ (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010: 456). Porting social rights from the migration-sending to the migration-receiving country becomes particularly important when these rights include elements of a long-term fund (e.g. health care, pension) (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010: 456). From a somewhat more labour market-related perspective, portability has been defined as ‘the possibility of acquiring and keeping social benefits’ entitlements and/or social rights in the event of mobility for work reasons’ (d’Addio and Cavalleri 2015: 346).

Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler (2010) distinguish four types of regimes with regard to the transfer/portability of social security rights in the process of international migration: Regime 1 (e.g. within the EU or between high-income countries) offers mobile individuals (i.e. EU nationals according to the EU social security coordination system) non-discriminatory access to social security; Regime 2 offers mobile individuals access to social security rights in their country of destination, even in cases where no bilateral agreement with the country of origin exists; Regime 3 (e.g. in the Gulf region) denies migrants
social security rights, either for the purpose of exclusion or because there is no social security system in place; and Regime 4 is directed at undocumented migrants, who are rarely able to rely on a social security system. Regime 1 functions mainly within the EU and accounts for nearly one-quarter (23 per cent) of total migration worldwide (Holzmann and Koettl 2012). Within the EU, over 1,000 intra-EU agreements now govern the portability of various types of social security rights in the context of intra-EU mobility (Avato, Koettl, and Sabates-Wheeler 2010). According to d’Addio and Cavalleri (2015: 358), roughly one fifth of the respondents of the Eurobarometer survey in 2011 had accessed or ported their social security rights during their migration/mobility history. Interestingly, 62 per cent experienced the transfer as being very or fairly difficult (d’Addio and Cavalleri 2015: 358ff.).

These findings show that social scientific analysis of the linkages between intra-EU movements and welfare cannot be limited to the national frameworks of receiving countries’ welfare systems. However, the above typology of portability regimes does not pay much attention to the discriminatory practices inherent in Regimes 1 and 2. Although the normative premise is that mobile and immobile EU citizens must be treated equally, scholars have observed inequalities in welfare opportunities between mobile and immobile Europeans, as well as among mobile Europeans, such as everyday discrimination, obstacles to labour market integration, a lack of information on social security, and bureaucratic barriers (Bruzelius, Chase, and Seeleib-Kaiser 2016; Kahanec, Pytlíkova, and Zimmermann 2016). For these reasons, ‘The problem of portability has been central to [the] EU policy agenda, as the lack of portability is perceived as an obstacle to the success of the single labour market’ (d’Addio and Cavalleri 2015: 347). Many studies in this area also focus mainly on legislative and institutional aspects of EU social security while ignoring the concrete institutional selectivity of EU social security coordination, and they rarely address transnational practices of mobile Europeans who should be able to access and use EU social security.

These interesting insights notwithstanding, few of the studies cited focus explicitly on the issues of welfare inequality (in terms of privileges and disadvantages when it comes to accessing and porting social rights) even though mobile Europeans’ unequal welfare opportunities may result from institutional selectivity of the EU social security coordination system and its national implementations in member states with diverse welfare systems. The research on European social rights portability cited above often lacks specific information about how mobile Europeans access and port social security rights in their everyday lives. Hence, there is little research into mobile Europeans’ (transnationalized) ways of accessing social security in the sending and receiving countries and into the related potential or actual disadvantages.

To address these shortcomings, this book systematically relates analysis of the multiscalar institutional organization of European social security and the selectivity criteria it incorporates; their symbolic signification in the (specialized expert) discourses on the intra-EU movements and welfare; and the concrete experiences
of mobile Europeans in their attempts to access and port social rights from one country to another.

**European social citizenship as the nexus of knowledge, power and inequalities: the aims and conceptual basis of this volume**

Focusing on the hierarchical boundaries in accessing European welfare (in terms of differentiated welfare opportunities among mobile EU citizens), this book has two major objectives. *The first objective* is to introduce *a novel conceptual basis* that integrates analysis of cross-border social security into the social scientific research on intra-EU migration/mobility and welfare in Europe by drawing on the theory of European social citizenship. *The second objective* is to provide *a detailed comparative empirical examination* of mobile Europeans’ access to and portability of social security rights in the EU as lived varieties of European cross-border social citizenship. These empirical insights build on the comparative research on transnational labour migration/mobility from the new to the old EU member states (Hungary–Austria, Bulgaria–Germany, Estonia–Sweden, Poland–UK), which has been conducted within TRANSWEL, the international large-scale research project introduced earlier.

To achieve *the first goal*, this book develops two conceptual innovations. The first of these innovations is *the concept of European social citizenship*, which combines elements of transnational social citizenship approaches (Bauböck 1994, 2017; Soysal 1994; Kivisto and Faist 2007; Maas 2013), transnational research on intra-EU migration/mobility (Recchi 2015; Engbersen et al. 2013), inequality research on the life chances of mobile individuals (Amelina and Vasilache 2014; Faist and Bilecen 2015; Boccani 2017), and research on migration and belonging (Yuval-Davis 2011). The proposed perspective approaches institutions of European social security coordination, the discursive narrations incorporated into them, and mobile Europeans’ experiences in accessing and porting social security rights as *a paradigmatic example of the European social citizenship* that has developed in the EU in the context of its recent enlargements. Thus, the concept of European social citizenship allows for a systematic analysis of the complex regulations that channel access to and portability of social security in the enlarged European Union, the related discourses, and mobile ‘Eastern’ Europeans’ concrete experiences.

The second conceptual innovation is the incorporation of a Foucauldian reading into the analysis of European social citizenship, which highlights the interplay of knowledge (e.g. influential classifications inscribed in European social security and portability regulations) and power (as manifested in individuals’ unequal welfare opportunities), and which provides a broader understanding of cross-border membership patterns (see Ong 1999; Isin 2012).4 From this point of view, European social security coordination can be regarded as a form of governance that includes supranational, national, and transnational welfare settings that may intersect with migration and mobility regulations; that relate to diverse, and
sometimes even contradictory, discourses of belonging in terms of ethnicity/race, class, gender, and so on; and that shape individuals’ experiences in accessing and porting their social security rights.

The Foucauldian reading allows us to address the nexus between institutional organization of European social security and mobile Europeans’ social security experiences. The benefit of this reading is that it reveals how the institutional regulation of cross-border social security/portability rests on specific regulatory and discursive selectivity criteria of welfare provision to mobile EU citizens (e.g. formal employment and residence requirements). This reading also shows that the boundaries of European social membership, in terms of selectivity of access and portability of social security rights, are linked to discursive boundaries between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’. Thus, this conceptual lens enables us to examine how the powerful, institutionally produced membership boundaries (in terms of the selectivity of provision or non-provision of social security) impact on mobile individuals’ lives, how they affect individuals’ welfare opportunities, and, therefore, lead to experiences of welfare inequality.

These conceptual innovations, then, make it possible to approach the hierarchic boundaries of European social membership between privileged and disadvantaged individuals who are trying to access or port social security rights.

To achieve the second goal – a comparative empirical analysis of access to and portability of social security rights in the EU – this book focuses on labour migration/mobility between four pairs of countries (see above) in order to better understand the complexities of the cross-border organization of and access to welfare and of the transnational lifeworlds of mobile Europeans. Empirically, the book focuses on three themes.

First, the comparative examination of mobile Europeans’ access to and portability of social security considers institutional entanglements of social security regulation on the supranational, national, and transnational scales of governance. In this regard, the volume pays particular attention to various selectivity criteria of welfare provision that are incorporated into institutional regulations: they benefit specific categories of welfare claimants (in particular, one-time movers in [skilled] long-term employment) but exclude other categories. This comparative analysis shows how the hierarchical boundaries of European social citizenship are institutionally produced.

Second, the book investigates how European social security coordination is narrated in welfare experts’ discourses on sending and receiving countries. It reveals symbolic orders of belonging (in terms of class, ethnicity/race, gender, etc.) that classify some mobile EU citizens as ‘deserving’ and others as ‘undeserving’ when it comes to accessing and porting social security rights. This focus provides comparative insights into how the hierarchic boundaries of European social citizenship are discursively narrated in four pairs of countries among welfare experts involved in the decision-making concerning mobile Europeans’ social security entitlements and portability rights.
Third, this volume provides a detailed empirical analysis of experiences in porting social security rights, within Europe, of mobile individuals who move from the new to the old EU member states (and back). It also presents a comprehensive analysis of ‘lived’ European social citizenship, which is understood as the ways in which mobile Europeans experience, interpret, and evaluate cross-border social citizenship in terms of accessing and porting social rights within the EU (or failing to do so). In addition, this analysis considers the specific role of mobile EU citizens’ distant family members and friends who remained in the sending countries. This focus allows us to understand comparatively the challenges and differentiated welfare opportunities faced by mobile EU citizens (comparing the settings of four pairs of sending and receiving countries) who use, or attempt to use, the social security coordination system, as well as the strategies they and their distant significant others develop to deal with these challenges.

The next section outlines how these objectives and the comparative approach used to achieve them are reflected in the structure of this volume.

**Setting the structure of the volume: conceptual and comparative insights into the boundaries of European social security**

The structure of this volume corresponds to its two objectives: (1) the development of a novel concept (i.e. European social citizenship) to understand the linkages between intra-European East-West mobility and the boundaries of European social membership, and (2) a detailed comparative empirical analysis of various aspects of the European social security system in the context of mobility between four pairs of sending and receiving countries (Hungary–Austria, Bulgaria–Germany, Estonia–Sweden, Poland–UK).

Chapter 2, by Anna Amelina, provides a more detailed discussion of how the concept of European social citizenship allows us to understand the linkages between intra-EU migration/mobility and cross-border social security. This chapter not only questions the methodological limitations of national citizenship approaches, it also combines theories of transnational social citizenship (Soysal 1994; Kivisto and Faist 2007; Maas 2013) with a Foucauldian perspective on social membership (see Ong 1999; Isin 2012), which understands European social security coordination as a paradigmatic example of European social citizenship and as a nexus of institutional structures, knowledge, power, and inequalities, with European social security coordination involving three interlinked dimensions:

- **Entanglements of European cross-border and multiscalar regulations on access to and portability of social security rights:** this dimension refers to the multiscalar institutional organization of social security that shapes mobile Europeans’ social practices.
• **Discourses of belonging** (classifications regarding ethnicity/race, class, gender, etc.) that are inscribed in social security and portability regulations; this dimension refers to the idea of the interlinkage between ‘power’ and ‘knowledge’, with ‘knowledge’ regarded here as powerful classifications that draw boundaries between members and non-members of a social and political community.

• **‘Lived social citizenship’**: understood as mobile Europeans’ concrete everyday practices of and experiences in accessing and porting social security rights; this dimension refers to how mobile individuals live, practise, and evaluate social citizenship in Europe. In particular, it refers to differentiated welfare opportunities experienced by ordinary Europeans.

The advantage of this conceptual innovation is that it enables us to address cross-border social security and portability as a nexus of institutional regulations (organization of European social security governance), powerful knowledge (discourses of belonging inscribed in European social security and portability regulations), and power effects (mobile individuals’ differentiated welfare opportunities and inequality experiences). It also provides a power- and inequality-sensitive conceptual specification of the hierarchic boundaries inscribed in European social citizenship.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 draw on the conceptual basis developed in Chapter 2 to provide comparative analyses of a number of aspects of the boundaries of European social citizenship studied in the four pairs of mobility-sending and mobility-receiving countries (Hungary–Austria, Bulgaria–Germany, Sweden–Estonia, and Poland–United Kingdom).

Chapter 3, by Emma Carmel, Bożena Sojka, and Kinga Papież, provides conceptual and empirical reflections on institutional entanglements of European social security regulations. Building on an interpretative policy analysis of social security regulations and on expert interviews from the four country pairs, it focuses on the implications of coexisting regulations between European and member state governance of access to and portability of social security rights in the areas of unemployment, family benefits, health insurance, and pensions. It explores how mobile EU citizens’ multiple memberships with respect to accessing and porting social security rights are simultaneously organized in regulatory frameworks on supranational, national, and transnational scales. In addition, Chapter 3 examines how the regulatory frameworks articulate selectivity criteria across the different policy areas; how these selectivity criteria vary across the country pairs; and how the regulations limit the meaning of European social citizenship as manifested in EU governance. Entanglements between European, transnational, and national regulations mark out key boundaries among mobile EU citizens and shape their unequal hierarchic positioning as they move between specific paired countries. The chapter shows that these entanglements selectively privilege settled one-time migrants, and that regulations originally designed to support mobile workers may in practice hinder their acquisition of rights as they move between member states.
Chapter 4, by Ann Runfors and Florence Fröhlig, focuses on discourses of belonging – as articulated by welfare experts interviewed in the four pairs of countries – as another element of European social citizenship. Using a combination of political discourse theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fröhlig, Runfors, and Sojka 2016; Remling 2018a, 2018b), the chapter illustrates how discursive articulations of boundaries between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ (identified in expert interviews) shape the symbolic horizon, within which mobile Europeans from the new EU member states practise and experience cross-border social security. In essence, discourses of belonging contain patterns of naturalized gendered, ethnicized/racialized and class-related views on social rights and social security. They articulate ideas of inclusion and exclusion in relation to welfare that discursively organize who belongs where and under what conditions, thus providing insights into how the boundaries of mobile Europeans’ social membership are discursively constructed. The chapter shows that the identified articulations portray movers from new member states as a burden on the receiving countries, and posted workers, illegal workers, and unemployed mobile citizens who do not claim their rights in the receiving country as non-belonging.

Chapter 5, by Elisabeth Scheibelhofer, Clara Holzinger, and Nóra Regös, provides a comparative analysis of the central patterns of mobile Europeans’ experiences of cross-border social security, who move from the new to the old EU member states (and back). The chapter examines how mobile EU citizens from a wide range of social backgrounds ‘live’ (i.e. practise), evaluate, and interpret social citizenship in everyday life. Thus, their analysis of welfare experiences refers to the participatory dimension of European cross-border social citizenship, which has often been overlooked in the research. The chapter focuses on actors’ experiences of barriers to accessing and porting social security rights; the transnational coping strategies they develop; and related experiences of inequality in the four social security areas of unemployment, family benefits, health, and pensions. This analysis is complemented by an analysis of how mobile Europeans’ distant significant others view mobility and formal social security, because in many cases, movers’ families and friends in the sending countries are involved in the organization of cross-border social support. The analysis builds on a large-scale qualitative research project involving more than 100 problem-centred interviews with mobile EU citizens and with their significant others in the four relevant countries. The chapter shows that mobile EU citizens are finding themselves in highly diverse and complex situations when accessing European social security. It also makes boundaries of European social citizenship visible, showing that mobile citizens who either lead transnational lifestyles or are unable to find legal full-time employment are particularly at risk of losing welfare chances.

The second part of the volume is dedicated to detailed analyses of the linkages between intra-European migration/mobility and European cross-border social security, with each chapter focusing on one pair of sending and receiving countries: Hungary–Austria (Chapter 6, by Nóra Regős, Clara Holzinger, and
Anna Amelina

12 Anna Amelina

Elisabeth Scheibelhofer), Bulgaria–Germany (Chapter 7, by Jana Fingarova and Anna Amelina), Sweden–Estonia (Chapter 8, by Bożena Sojka, Kinga Papież, and Emma Carmel), and Poland–United Kingdom (Chapter 9, by Florence Fröhlig, Maarja Saar, and Ann Runfors). The key benefit of the book’s empirical part is that rather than focusing exclusively on the immigration contexts, it focuses on pairs of sending and receiving countries to analyse mobile Eastern Europeans’ access to and portability of social security rights. This allows us to consider the places of both departure and destination as relevant elements of the research framework and thus to apply a transnational multi-sited research methodology that requires empirical analysis (document analysis, discourse analysis, qualitative interviews) of sending and receiving countries (see Amelina and Faist 2012). It also allows us to avoid methodological nationalism in the study of European welfare and mobility, because it does not focus exclusively on mobile EU citizens’ access to social security rights in the immigration countries (for criticism of methodological nationalism, see Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003; Amelina et al. 2012).

These chapters provide detailed analyses of mobile Europeans’ access to and portability of social security rights in the contexts of EU enlargements, thus focusing on EU citizens who move between new and old EU member states. Each chapter centres on three elements of the concept of European social citizenship: (1) the country pair-specific institutional selectivity criteria that channel mobile Europeans access to social security; (2) welfare policy professionals’ discourses on EU movers’ welfare ‘deservingness’; and (3) mobile Europeans’ welfare experiences, related to their (transnational) coping strategies, and unequal welfare opportunities. This country pair-specific focus allows us to better understand the differences and similarities of European social membership and, in particular, the hierarchic boundaries of welfare as they are experienced by specific categories of movers. The main outcome of the country pair-specific comparative analysis is that it reveals complex interdependences between the migration contexts of the sending and receiving states and individuals’ patterns of accessing/porting social security rights.

Building on multi-sited fieldwork in the greater border region between Hungary and Austria, Chapter 6 identifies a mismatch of European social security regulations, the ways in which the national representatives of Austria and Hungary interpret them, and the lived transnational experiences of Hungarian migrants. Chapter 7 examines how mobile Bulgarians navigate through institutional limitations by relying on their individual migration/mobility projects. It approaches intra-EU movement and European social security with a focus on mobile Bulgarians’ agency, which varies between the self-positioning as ‘subordinated’ and ‘empowered’ actors. Chapter 8 explores Polish migrants’ transnational access to and portability of social security when moving between the UK and Poland. Brexit cast a long shadow over a tightening regulatory framework and the experiences of mobile EU citizens. Studying welfare opportunities of Estonians working in Sweden after Estonia’s EU accession in 2004, Chapter 9
identifies institutional expectations stemming from the Estonian and Sweden welfare systems as crucial for understanding Estonian EU citizens’ welfare experiences and opportunities. It shows how different expectations regarding how to access welfare systems and how to demonstrate non-dependence on welfare are produced when the movers’ experiences of the Estonian neoliberal welfare system are confronted with the settings of the more inclusive Swedish system. Those in low-paid, low-skilled, and precarious employment are less likely to be able to access social security rights. The final chapter of our volume, Chapter 10 by Anna Amelina, Emma Carmel, Ann Runfors, and Elisabeth Scheibelhofer, links the conceptual foundations with the empirical outcomes using our multilevel comparative framework. It summarizes this book’s three conceptual innovations for studying the hierarchical boundaries of European social membership: the notion on institutional entanglements of cross-border, multiscalar social security governance; the concept of discourses of belonging; and the ‘lived’ citizenship approach (i.e. concrete actors’ practices and experiences of European social membership). These conceptual innovations are then linked to comparative findings which allows us to see country pair-specific differences within the European social security and to identify the more cross-cutting pattern of European social membership.

Concluding remarks

Starting from an investigation of a variety of migration and mobility patterns in the enlarged Europe and using a comparative perspective, this book provides the comparative analysis of European social security with a focus on mobile Europeans’ social security arrangements. It links analysis of institutional settings of European social security to a deeper, more comprehensive examination of movers’ agency and welfare opportunities. In doing so, it extends the exclusive focus on the national welfare systems of the receiving states to include the supranational organization of social security, as well as the institutional and organizational social security arrangements between sending and receiving countries. The book pays particular attention to the heterogeneity of the national welfare settings, but also analyses the national scale as only one of the relevant elements of European social security settings.

By considering the multiscalar quality of European social security governance, the book traces the implications of such institutional entanglements for individuals’ experiences of inequality across the European Union. By combining the perspectives of various strands of research on migration, welfare, social citizenship, and welfare inequality studies, this book shows how the institutional selectivity criteria of European welfare are produced across borders, are discursively narrated, and are linked to the emergence of unequal welfare opportunities among European movers. Findings from qualitative interviews with Eastern European movers indicate that access to and the portability of their social rights are constrained by multiple barriers that rest on ‘ideologies of sedentariness’, among
others. However, there is a wide variety of strategies that mobile individuals use to overcome these obstacles and to contest the hierarchic boundaries of European social membership they encounter.

Notes

1 TRANSWEL (Mobile Welfare in a Transnational Europe: An Analysis of Portability Regimes of Social Security Rights) is an international comparative project (February 2015–July 2018) and is funded within the NORFACE Framework Programme ‘Welfare State Futures’; Prof. Anna Amelina is the general lead of TRANSWEL, which involves four country teams: Germany (lead: Prof. Anna Amelina, the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg), Austria (Prof. Elisabeth Scheibelhofer, University of Vienna), Sweden (Prof. Ann Runfors, Södertörn University), and the UK (Prof. Emma Carmel, University of Bath). For more details about this project, see www.transwel.org.

2 Throughout this chapter, the two terms ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’ will be used to approach movements of EU citizens within the EU. Whereas ‘migration’ conventionally refers to long-term settlement of over one year, ‘mobility’ denotes short-term movements (seasonal and circular). Given the diverse quality of movement patterns within the EU, both terms are significant for research on intra-EU movements and welfare.

3 Originally developed for ‘economically active’ EU citizens and their families, this system now also includes rights of ‘economically inactive’ EU citizens (e.g. pensioners).

4 The incorporation of the Foucauldian perspective on citizenship suggests that in the context of governmentality analysis, citizenship patterns (e.g. political, economic, social forms of membership) could be approached as a regime that links specific forms of powerful knowledge to the organization and governance of membership (see Ong 1999; Isin 2012). However, this volume focuses exclusively on social membership.

5 The term ‘transnational’ refers to the institutional and organizational linkages between the migration-sending and migration-receiving states that involve activities of individual migrants (Faist 2000; Amelina and Faist 2012), whereas the term ‘international’ refers only to linkages between the nation states.

6 Through collaborative work under the lead of Emma Carmel, the country teams conducted analyses of welfare policy documents of the respective mobility-sending and mobility-receiving countries. Additional clarifications concerning national and European regulations on social security coordination were obtained through expert interviews on issues related to policy and administration, which the respective country teams conducted in all four country pairs.

7 The analysis of the problem-structured interviews with European movers and their significant others is organized collaboratively. Under the lead of Elisabeth Scheibelhofer, it involved interviews conducted by the respective project teams in the sending and receiving countries.

8 The selection criteria of the sending and receiving countries relate to the recent history of EU enlargements (differences in transitional regulations for the receiving countries) and the late twentieth-century histories of East-West migration and mobility patterns (long-term vs. short-term history of westbound outmigration from the sending countries). Germany and Austria were the receiving countries with the most severe labour market restrictions for migrants from new EU member states, whereas the United Kingdom and Sweden have been less restrictive in this respect in that they opened their labour markets immediately after the 2004 and 2007 enlargements. Among the selected sending countries, we have differentiated between countries with longer histories of migration/
mobility (Hungary–Poland) and sending countries whose migration/mobility has been particularly shaped by an EU enlargement (Bulgaria–Estonia).

References


European welfare


movers from the ‘peripheries’ of the EU, of whom the self-sufficient movers are approached in a more positive light than the apparently non-sufficient movers. In other words, discourses of belonging naturalize the institutionally produced hierarchical boundaries of European social membership.

Finally, our analysis of the participatory dimension of European social citizenship—through the lens of mobile Europeans’ lived experiences—revealed some specific linkages within the multiscalar organization of institutional selectivity, relevant discourses of belonging, and the power effects on the life worlds of ordinary EU movers from the ‘East’. In other words, the power effects of institutional selectivity (in terms of principles of the [non-]provision of social security to mobile Europeans) have been conceptualized as manifesting themselves in mobile individuals’ experiences of interactions with the welfare state authorities in the sending and receiving countries. These individual experiences are articulated according to the ways in which mobile Europeans describe the institutional barriers they encounter and the coping strategies they develop to overcome them. Most importantly, the focus on individual experiences allowed us to disclose facets of welfare inequalities, which manifest themselves in a vicious circle of losses of welfare opportunities as a result of an interplay between movers’ insecurity about the available social security rights, their decisions not to claim their rights owing to the barriers they experience, and their perceptions of not being treated in the same way as immobile welfare claimants.

Notes

1 TRANSWEL, an international comparative research project (February 2015–July 2018), was funded as part of the NORFACE Welfare State Futures (WSF) Programme. For more information, see www.transwel.org.

2 Originally developed for only ‘economically active’ EU citizens, the European social security coordination system now also includes the provision of rights for ‘economically inactive’ EU citizens (e.g. family members, students, pensioners).

3 See Weber (1978 [1922]: 43) for the classical definition of ‘social closure’ as a social relationship in which ‘according to its subjective meaning and its binding rules, participation of certain persons is excluded, limited or subjected to [specific] conditions’; with respect to citizenship, the notion of social closure signifies socially produced boundaries of membership as ‘sources of group formation, instruments for resource allocation, and at the same time potential objects of contention’ (Ferrera 2005: 20).

4 Whereas the welfare system in Austria and Germany is conventionally characterized as conservative-corporatist, that of Sweden as social democratic, and that of the UK as liberal, the welfare systems of Bulgaria, Hungary, Estonia, and Poland are described as post-communist (see Carmel, Sojka, with Papież 2016).

5 Conventionally, in addition to social rights, theories of citizenship consider civil and political rights, which provide for civil liberties and participation in the political sphere, as well as economic rights, which govern access to the labour markets (Carmel and Paul 2013).

6 The significance of the participatory dimension in research goes back to the traditional civic-republican political philosophy of (national) citizenship, according to which the public practice and political participation of citizens play a particularly important role in the reproduction of the political community (Rousseau [1984 (1762)]).
Recent analyses of the local, national, transnational, and global socio-spatial scales have moved away from the naturalized understanding and consider that the scales themselves are the result of specific social practices and significations (for details, see Amelina [2017]).

The post-national citizenship approach in particular highlights that some members of a political and/or social community are privileged while others are disadvantaged in terms of access to (welfare and other) resources. Similar accounts concerning the stratification of rights also characterize the nested citizenship approach, in which the provision of rights is hierarchized according to the multiple scales of governance (supranational, national, transnational, etc.). In other words, mobile individuals may experience privileged access to (social) rights on one scale (e.g. supranational), but may face disadvantages in accessing rights on another (e.g. national) scale. The peculiarity of the intersectional perspective with regard to stratifying the rights of members of a political/social community is that it links the hierarchization of (social) rights to the processes of social categorization in terms of gender, class, ethnicity/race, and so on.

Building on the nested citizenship approach, one could argue that each of the socio-spatial scales of European membership might be linked to the specific semantics of identity and belonging, with the national level being connected to the (conventional) national identity rhetoric, the supranational level being related to European visions of identity (i.e. official EU discourses), and, at the same time, the transnational (bi-local or multilocal) level referring to the specific entangled histories/belonging with respect to the migration-sending and migration-receiving countries.

In social scientific research, the focus on citizens’ participation in a political/social community goes back to civic-republican political philosophy, according to which the public practice and political participation of citizens are of outstanding significance for reproducing the political/social community (Rousseau [1762] 1984).

These findings result from the collaborative work (data gathering and analysis) carried out as part of the TRANSWEL project. Research on social security regulations was conducted by all the country teams under the leadership of Emma Carmel and included the analysis of welfare policy documents of the mobility-sending and mobility-receiving countries (based on the interpretative policy analysis by Dvora Yanow [2000]). Additional clarifications of national and European regulations on social security coordination were obtained through expert interviews (44 in total) covering issues of policy and administration in all four country pairs: Bulgaria–Germany, Poland–UK, Estonia–Sweden, and Hungary–Austria. See Chapter 3 for more details.

The linkages between the supranational and the national scales of governance are stabilized by the mechanism of open coordination, which is a form of EU governance based on voluntary cooperation between member states and the use of quasi-legal instruments (guidelines, indicators, benchmarking, or best-practice models) (Dehousse 2002).

Though the analyses presented here do not consider the local/urban and global scales, further research might include these scales when investigating social security governance.

An important constraint regarding mobile EU citizens’ equal treatment in the area of social rights is the principle of a single country’s responsibility for social security, meaning that the mobile EU citizen must make contributions in one country only, and that his or her benefits are not covered by two countries simultaneously. The pivotal standard that secures this principle is that employed or self-employed mobile individuals are ‘subject to the legislation of the country where [they] actually work as an employed or a self-employed person’ (European Commission 2010). For those who work in more than one country at the same time, the concept of the ‘substantial part of activity’/‘habitual centre of interest’ (a minimum of 25 per cent) is crucial (European Commission 2010).
Commission 2010). For ‘economically inactive’ individuals (students, pensioners), determining their ‘habitual residence’ is essential (Regulation 883/2004).

Furthermore, as indicated in Chapter 3 of this volume, both these selectivity criteria interact with the administrative operational conditions that become essential constraints to the provision of welfare and its portability. Although these conditions differ depending on benefit type and country pair, our research identified three types of procedural requirements: (1) regular participation in special trainings or medical procedures, (2) enrolment to receive a special card or number, and (3) an application for unemployment benefits (even if one is not entitled to them) in order to apply for other benefits. In addition, institutional complexity can be a barrier to accessing and porting social security benefits.

In other words, mobile individuals may experience privileged access to (social) rights on one scale (e.g. supranational) while facing disadvantages in accessing rights on another (e.g. national).

Images of proper citizens may also include further classifications in terms of ‘space’ (including categories of ‘migration’/‘mobility’), ‘sexuality’, ‘health’, and ‘age’ (see Amelina 2017).

Although discourses of belonging may also be articulated in media discourses on welfare (such as the discourse on ‘poverty migration’), expert narratives are not identical to media narratives. Whereas discourses of belonging in the media often include generalized assumptions about migrants’ ‘Otherness’ (Hall 1997), the specialized expert discourses studied here were concerned explicitly with the European social security coordination system and intra-EU mobility and with the respective ideal images of welfare deservingness.

The data collection and empirical analysis designed to uncover discourses of belonging were based on the collaborative efforts of all the TRANSWEL country teams under the leadership of Ann Runfors. The methodology used was based on a combination of the Logics Approach (LA) and Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), thus providing more practical tools for the empirical analysis and allowing comparisons across discourses (see Chapter 4 for further details).

Furthermore, ‘lived citizenship’ refers to a range of abilities (not) to navigate and (not) to collect knowledge about how welfare systems work within/between various nation state settings. In addition, it considers movers’ strategies to adapt to or avoid interactions with welfare state authorities. Emerging in the process of migration/mobility, ‘lived social citizenship’ is linked to movers’ imagination of migration/mobility projects (i.e. ‘future plans’) and their concrete patterns of (long-term or temporary) movement. Working arrangements (regular, irregular, or semi-regular) are also co-constitutive for experiences of lived social membership.

The analysis of the 100 semi-structured interviews with mobile Europeans in the receiving countries (Austria, Germany, Sweden, and the UK) and with their distant significant others in the sending countries (Hungary, Bulgaria, Estonia, and Poland, respectively) was carried out as a collaborative effort (data gathering and analysis) by all the TRANSWEL country teams under the leadership of Ella Scheibelhofer; the data were interpreted based on Kathy Charmaz’s constructivist approach in grounded theory (2006).

However, Estonian movers rely mainly on information provided by their co-ethnics in Sweden and less on the support of their distant relatives.

References


Notes

1 In this chapter, we use the terms ‘EU migrant’ and ‘mobile EU citizen’ interchangeably. EU law and policymaking draws a determined and hierarchic distinction between migrants subject to EU freedom-of-movement regulations as they move between member states and ‘third-country nationals’ who move to a member state from elsewhere. Such legal and regulatory naming strategies are always highly political (Carmel and Kan 2018). They involve the exercise of power to exclude people from social membership, disguising differences among migrants with the same legal status and similarities among those of different status (Crawley and Skleparis, 2018). In the spirit of a more critical sociological enquiry, then, we adopt the broader concept of ‘migrant’ while having as a central feature of our analysis an interrogation of what the status of ‘free mover’ or ‘mobile citizen’ invokes in policy and for migrants themselves.

2 We also examined the formal rights for each of these categories according to their length of stay and/or return between countries (three months, 12 months, and five years). In this chapter, we present key results relating to the three main categories.

3 ‘Exercising Treaty rights’ is the formal expression of EU migrants’ rights of residence, work, and equal treatment in another member state. EU citizens must not be ‘a burden’ on the social assistance system of the member state in which they reside, and they must have comprehensive health insurance. Determination of these rights, then, also depends on their status as workers, as discussed in the next section.

4 A catch-all term referring to any employment that is fixed-term, part-time (including variable hours), or not directly with the employer for whom the work is carried out (i.e. agency work).

5 In order to get a permanent personal identification number (PIN); see below.

6 Estonia classifies both child benefit and parental leave benefit as family benefits, whereas Sweden classifies only child benefit as a family benefit. When deregistering to live outside Estonia, one loses both parental leave benefit and child benefit, but this does not mean that one will automatically get parental leave benefit or parental allowance in Sweden (Florence Fröhlig (2018) personal communication to the authors, 3 January).

7 There are new regulations concerning childcare allowance for parents whose children were born on or after 1 March 2017 (Clara Holzinger (2018) personal communication to the authors, 8 March).

8 Policy experts stressed the importance of both the parent and the child being legally resident in an EU country, passing mother–child examinations, and having their centre of vital interest in the country of portability.

9 The UK has a ‘shared parental leave’ scheme (up to 18 weeks’ leave shared between parents) but this is unpaid.

10 Although as they cannot really be in insured employment without a PIN, this is really for exceptional circumstances.

11 Requirements as permitted by the Citizens’ Rights Directive 2004/38 (see Section 3.1).

12 However, in more recent research, Brigden and Meyer (2019) found that low income earners, even with long contribution records in the country of immigration are likely to find their pensions below the poverty line of the country of destination.

References

Beyond the rights-bearing mobile EU citizen. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.


Beyond the rights-bearing mobile EU citizen


by the operations of the logics of the nation which seemed to act as fantasmatistic logics that captured and emotionally invested some experts. Despite our research’s transnational analytical approach, and despite EU regulations meant to counteract nationalist tendencies by prescribing non-discriminatory treatment for all economically active EU citizens, hence we found that nationally oriented discursive processes were at hand also on a policy level.

Notes
1 An exception is the study by Schall (2016).
2 The credentials of the experts who were interviewed included the following: individuals involved in different EU committees, individuals working as senior members of a department or an advisory para organization, civil servants, senior lawyers, politicians, trade union representatives, business policymakers, or individuals associated with think tanks. The interviews were conducted face to face (except for some occasional Skype interviews), each session lasting for at least an hour.
3 Using identical topic guidelines, each research team interviewed experts drawn from its respective country pair to elicit the experts’ views on the four main topics: (1) the member state welfare system in general – its strengths and weaknesses; (2) EU migration in general – in relation to the member state welfare system and to EU migrants’ right to access and port benefits (including the main subjects being debated and the views of each of the sending country’s experts regarding returnees); (3) actual or desired reforms that may affect EU migration, as well as the EU movers’ welfare management; and (4) questions perceived to be particularly tricky regarding freedom of movement, welfare, and social policy – for the member states in question and for the EU. The interviewers were instructed to cover all four topics but also to adjust their approach to fit the narrative of each expert and to ask relevant (e.g. country-specific) follow-up questions. They were also asked to pay special attention to any aspects of belonging that may have been ethnicized, classed, gendered, and so on. All the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed by the research teams.
4 Yuval-Davis uses the concept of ‘politics of belonging’ to highlight the contested nature of identities and to analyse how belonging manifests itself in political projects. She focuses on the technical mechanisms that states use (e.g. official statistics and passports) to govern citizenship and national belonging (2011). In our case, we chose to investigate the contested nature of discourses of belonging that contain conflicting and diverse categories of belonging.
5 Even though the Logics Approach is based on PDT and has an ontological understanding of discourse other than CDA, these two types of analysis function well together methodologically (Remling 2018a, b; Egan Sjölander and Gunnarsson Payne 2011).
6 Assumptions such as existential assumptions (what exits), propositional assumptions (what is the case), and value assumptions (what is desirable/undesirable).
7 In this brief chapter, we refer mostly to assumptions. For more explicit use of other CDA concepts, see the respective country pair research papers (Fröhlig, Saar, and Runfors 2016; Regös, Holzinger, and Scheibelhofer 2016; Sojka and Carmel 2016; Zabransky, Fingarova, and Amelina 2016).
8 The UK expert interviews took place during the months preceding the Brexit referendum. Considering the result of that referendum, their articulations might be surprising, but one interpretation is that Brexit is in part an effect of the logic of superiority behind these articulations, because the outcome supports depictions of Britain as holding the EU steering wheel, or at least as the country that should be holding it.
This interpretation of autonomy is also stated in Swedish regulations that prescribe welfare subsidies to reduce for example gender dependency and inequality.

This corresponds with Swedish welfare regulations, where all parents who are registered as residing in Sweden are, for instance, entitled to a child allowance.

This aligns with the regulatory one-year residency demand for receiving a PIN and for entering the Swedish welfare system.

Mobile EU citizens were welcome in Germany as long as they contributed through their work and taxes, but they were expected to leave once their contracts ended (Zabransky, Fingarova, and Amelina 2016: 37).

References


patterns in this complexity. First of all, and in concurrence with the results presented in Chapter 3 of this volume, migrants’ narratives reflected the complex, opaque, and often incompatible regulations they often confront. They invest considerable time, effort, and sometimes financial resources to understand these regulations and must often wait a long time before they receive replies from institutions or must travel to other countries to meet with officials in person in order to obtain documents or to file requests or complaints. We also learned that the dispositions of migrants are as important as the (transnational) legal regulations.

In our research aimed at addressing the migrants’ experiences, we introduced the metaphor of divergent labyrinths as a heuristic tool to help us understand their individual difficulties and their relation to the dispositions and resources of migrants, as well as the specific, scaled legal regulations imposed by the destination countries. The experiences of migrants are also tainted by what they perceive as discriminatory practices when confronting local bureaucrats. In addition, we were able to relate these experiences to discourses of inclusion and exclusion (see Chapter 4). The qualitative interviews we conducted showed that migrants perceive their situation in quite distinctive ways when it comes to social security issues. Migrants who lead transnational lifestyles may be denied social benefits because regulations regarding EU portability have introduced the notion that there is only one centre of vital interest, thus favouring sedentarism over the more complex forms of everyday living that characterize transnational families and individual cross-border living arrangements. Also, those who cannot, for various reasons, engage in full-time, legitimized employment are clearly subject to exclusion from social benefits within the EU member state or states in which they are living. We therefore recognize the direct implications of the disputed and conflicting political goals of the many actors involved in achieving freedom of movement without discrimination for EU citizens. The narratives of EU migrants revealed the limits and pitfalls of EU social citizenship in terms of lived citizenship, as discussed in Chapter 1 of this volume.

Notes

1 This chapter is based on research sponsored by the Austrian Science Fund FWF (grant no. I2025-G16, project lead: E. Scheibelhofer).

2 We concur with Emirbayer and Mische (1998), who define agency as the temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments – the temporal-relational contexts of action – which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgement, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations. (p. 970)

3 Our understanding of the individual dispositions is similar to Bourdieu’s concept of habitus (Bourdieu 1977 [1972]). However, our methodological approach enabled us to stress the importance of individual agency, seeking thereby ‘to avoid a dichotomy between “agentic” and “determined” players’ (Bathmaker, Ingram, and Waller 2013).
4 Our interpretation of the data has led us to understand that these resources are here best conceptualized along Bourdieu’s concept of capital forms (Bourdieu 1986), thus both depending on and influencing the migrants’ positioning within the societal structure.

5 See Chapter 1 regarding our use of the terms ‘immigration’/‘emigration’ and ‘new EU sending countries’/‘old EU receiving countries’.

6 The core international research team is represented by all the authors who have contributed to this volume. We also thank our many collaborators who worked with us for certain periods of the project within some of the five work packages.

7 The four research teams both collected and analysed data in their respective country pairs and authored internal reports on migrant experiences. The comparative analysis presented here is built mainly on these internal reports and the translations of interview passages provided therein.

8 For the most part, interviews were carried out in the first languages of both the interview partners and the researchers, but the languages of coding were not determined beforehand and turned out to be mixed within all country pairs. This helped as we continually exchanged our research findings, because English was the lingua franca for the project.

9 A good example of this is that specific legal status (as posted workers, frontier workers), which we initially excluded, proved to be important, especially in Sweden or Austria, so we decided to include interviewees having this status as well.

10 Very much in line with Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, we understand an individual’s disposition (including mental and corporeal structures of perception, feeling, and thinking) as being socially stratified.

11 As noted in Chapter 9, eligibility for EU benefits is a result of registering oneself within the Union (usually for at least one year prior to unemployment). Natalja did not take the necessary steps specific to Sweden; as a result, she was unable to fully acquire social security in these terms.

12 Such practices were one of the most prominent features of the transnational social security practices described by the Polish interviewees. Although we also met Hungarians in Austria and Bulgarians in Germany who gave us detailed insights into similar transnational health practices, the issues in these cases were more about trust and speaking the same language than about perceiving the sending country’s health care system as superior.

13 We defined discrimination analytically in two ways: either interviewees would personally perceive themselves as discriminated against (as exemplified in Darek’s comments in Chapter 8) or we, as researchers, would interpret certain interactions, omissions, or narrations as instances of discrimination (see Weiß 2002; Verwiebe et al. 2016).

14 For details on this case history, please refer to Chapter 7 in this volume.

15 These three ways of acting in the labyrinths can be understood heuristically as ideal types rather than as an exhaustive typology.

References


Appendix 2: Functional equivalents of English terms for the Austria–Hungary country pair

Austrian Health Insurance Card: ecard
Capital and County Government’s Office: Fővárosi/Megyei Kormányhivatal
European Health Insurance Card: EHIC card
Government Windows: Kormányablak
Hungarian Health Insurance Card: TAJ kártya
Ministry for National Economy: Nemzetgazdasági Minisztérium
Ministry of Human Capacities: Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma
National Health Insurance Fund: Országos Egészségbiztosítási Pénztár (OEP)
Public Employment Service (AMS): Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich
Regional Health Insurance Fund: Gebietskrankenkasse

Notes
1 Names, places, and other personal data obtained during the interviews have been changed to ensure anonymity.
2 This chapter is based on research sponsored by the Austrian Science Fund FWF (grant no. I2025-G16, project lead E. Scheibelhofer).
3 Those who stay in Austria for more than three months are obliged to apply for a confirmation of registration (Anmeldebescheinigung).
4 This questionnaire is used by the AMS to decide whether an applicant is to be categorized as a commuter. If so, the individual in question is excluded from receiving the unemployment benefit in Austria but is entitled to the significantly lower unemployment benefit in Hungary. For the legal basis of this judgement, see Regulation (EC) 883/2004, Article 1(f, j), and Chapter 3 in this volume.
5 An exception was made for one interviewee who moved before Hungary’s accession to the EU, whose case was included in our sample because of his long-term experience with the portability of family benefits to Hungary, which is the focus of our research project.
6 See further details to the methodology and Hungarian migrants’ experiences and coping strategies in Bakonyi et al. (2018).
7 For an international comparison of the eight countries discussed in this volume, see Chapter 3.
8 This decentralization resulted in a strong correlation between the dangers of poverty and unemployment and an individual’s place of residence (Tausz 2009).
9 In 2011, 23 per cent of the GDP was spent on public social protection (compared with an average of 29 per cent for the EU overall) (KSH 2014).
10 For example, the universal family allowance was devalued by about 20 per cent between 2009 and 2014, while at the same time an extremely generous tax credit system was introduced that benefits wealthier families (Lendvai and Stubbs 2015).
11 In 2014, 30 per cent of the GDP was spent on public social protection (Eurostat 2016a).
12 It was only in 2011, after the maximum transitional period, that restrictions on the free movement of workers from the EU-8 were reduced.
13 Examples are the self-employed and recipients of various social benefits.
14 The Hauptverband der österreichischen Sozialversicherungsträger.
15 Although social assistance is mentioned here, it should be noted that this area was not addressed in the TRANSWEL project.
16 In 2017, the threshold was €425.70 (www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/207/Seite.2070006.html).
Prior to export, the applicant must have been registered as a jobseeker with the employment services in the country where that applicant became unemployed for at least four weeks.

For a definition of this term, see Note 3 in this chapter.

In our sample, all five significant others were spouses of the mobile Hungarians we interviewed.

This qualitative study was part of a larger endeavour (see Chapter 5), so our theoretical sample was limited to our research interests in the context of the overall research project. The individuals we ultimately interviewed were all of working age (between 26 and 63 years old) and included slightly more women (15) than men (10). Most of the interviewees were married or in a relationship. Fifteen had a university degree or an equivalent diploma, five had attended vocational training school, three had graduated from secondary school, and one had attended primary school. At the time of the interview, 15 of our interviewees were regularly employed, three received unemployment benefits in Austria, one had a mixed (regular and irregular) work arrangement, three women were looking after their children and were not working, and two were self-employed. One interviewee was already retired in Hungary, but at the time of our interview officially worked in Austria and was undocumented. Concerning mobility patterns, most of the interviewees travelled regularly between Austria and Hungary, usually to spend the weekend with family in Hungary or to look after their properties. Twelve interviewees commuted at least every second week from Austria to Hungary. None of our interviewees travelled to Hungary fewer than four times a year. Thus, we observed the importance of different kinds of mobility and few instances of sedentarism in our sample.

In some instances, the interviewees themselves felt discriminated against; based on our coding of the empirical data, we as researchers were also able to reconstruct aspects of discrimination in other cases that resulted in experiences of social inequalities.

The transnational character of social inequalities adds to the national perspective usually assumed in research on social inequalities (Weiß 2005).

References


Statisitik Austria (2017b) International Migration. Vienna: Statistik Austria.


Regardless of gender, age, education, and marital status, the movers who lacked clear information in both Germany and Bulgaria perceived the opaque and time-consuming institutional procedures as the greatest barrier to claiming their social security rights. As shown in the results of our study, however, experiences of inequality are the result of a complex interplay of individual migration projects, regulatory complexity, and narratives of belonging.

Notes

1 The methods chosen for this study were interpretative document analyses of EU social security coordination rules and their institutional implementation, as well as expert interviews. In the context of this project, 11 expert interviews in the field of EU mobility and social security were conducted for the country pair Germany–Bulgaria (four in Bulgaria and seven in Germany) (see Chapter 3 for details).
2 According to the EU regulations on social security, the unemployment benefit is only partially exportable for up to three months or a discretionary maximum of six months.
3 This refers to insurance-based unemployment benefits according to Regulation (EC) 883/2004.
4 Health insurance has been mandatory in both Bulgaria and Germany since 2009, which is why any missing insurance periods must be accounted for.
5 After three unpaid months during the last 36 months, Bulgarian health rights expire until they can be re-established. In order to re-establish them, the individual must pay for those periods that were missed during the previous five years.
6 The methods used to analyse the expert interviews were Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Logics Analysis (LA) (see Chapter 4 for details).
7 2015–2017, TRANSWEL Research. The qualitative analysis in the fourth phase of TRANSWEL (WP4) was based on the grounded theory method (GTM, see Chapter 5 for details), which was used to conduct and analyse 26 semi-structured interviews within a year’s time (Spring 2016–Spring 2017), whereas 21 in Germany and five in Bulgaria.
8 All the names and places referred to in this paper have been anonymized.
9 Vania Koleva is 47 years of age, separated, and has two sons, aged 29 and 27. The older son is in Bulgaria and the younger son is a trainee and living in Germany. Vania graduated from a technical high school in Bulgaria and worked 20 years as a chef.
10 Svilen Bokov is age 42, is married, and has two daughters (ages 8 and 16) who reside in southern Bulgaria. His family never joined him in his endeavours abroad. After graduating from a technical high school, he went abroad and worked as a construction worker in many roles, the most difficult job being the most recent one, where he survived a serious fall while constructing tents.
11 Boriana Borislavova is a 40-year-old divorced woman with one child (age 11) from a small Bulgarian town who moved to Germany in 2010. With a degree from a technical high school, she never worked in that field. First, a circular migrant with a Bulgarian company on a three-month rotation, she worked in eldercare. At present, she is a social worker on a permanent contract at a boarding school for children who are protected by the state.
12 Iskren Georgiev is a 30-year-old man with work experience in business and management but an uncompleted B.A. degree. He came to Germany in 2015 and found a cleaning job.
13 Iva Taneva is a 45-year-old medical nurse with long work experience. Married with two grown-up children, she came to Germany in 2013; her husband joined her in 2015, but one of the children has remained in Bulgaria.
14 Structural changes were again introduced, so migrants had to correspond with the Family Benefit Department (Rheinland-Pfalz–Saarland) in Mainz.
Currently, this threshold is about BGN 400 (about €200) per family member. The definition of family was recently changed to include not only spouses but also partners living together.

Bulgarian child benefits are means-tested and are available up to the age of 18.

Sissi Angelova, a 36-year-old woman who completed her secondary education in Bulgaria, followed her partner to Germany in 2015. Having worked as a full-time taxi dispatcher and with her partner working as an international driver, she was unable to support her three children in Bulgaria, so she moved to Germany after finding her partner a job as a driver there. Sissi has two daughters in grades 9 and 11 in Bulgaria from her first marriage and a 7-year-old son with her current partner.

Boris Borislavov is a 63-year-old man who came to Germany in 2014 with the hope of finding work appropriate to his qualifications in sound engineering but was unable to do so. Eventually, he gave up and, after taking a short course as a child care worker, found a job as a social worker and as a self-employed musician.

Anton Georgiev is 40 years old and studied business administration in Bulgaria. Despite his position as a manager for a large German corporation stationed in Bulgaria, he always knew that he wanted to live abroad, and in 2010 he moved to Germany. He experienced obstacles to finding a job, such as obtaining a priority review and a work permit, but also experienced problems in claiming, receiving, and transferring unemployment benefits.

In Sissi’s case, it was the complementary basic provision for jobseekers, ALG II ergänzend.

In spite of the different mobility/migration projects, all interviewees maintained (various degrees) of transnational linkages.

References


From subordination to empowerment?


and networks and quasi-legal strategies (i.e. under the radar or in the shadow of regulations) (see also Chapter 5).

When strategies of ‘parcelling up’ or ‘working around’ were not available, the migrants tended to feel uncertain and anxious, ‘left adrift’ with no social security to fall back on. This was especially evident in migrants’ feelings about the long-term future and retirement.

At the time of writing (mid-March 2019), very little was clear about the future prospect of the UK’s membership of the European Union, except that EU citizens’ rights would be significantly curtailed. As we have shown in this chapter, even before the 2016 referendum, preventing migrants from accessing social security was a significant part of the political and policy context to the extended process of re-negotiating the UK’s membership of, and then exit from, the Union.

At the moment, the UK is in a process of repealing free movement. According to the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated between the UK government and the EU in autumn 2018 (but not approved by parliament), social security coordination was going to apply to EU/EEA nationals who were already in the UK after the end of the transition period. In June 2018, the Home Office introduced the EU Settlement Scheme that was designed to secure rights of EU citizens and their family members who, by 31 December 2020, have been continuously resident in the UK for five years. There was, however, a danger that significant numbers of EU nationals might fail to secure their settled status. These include: (1) long-term residents as they might assume that the scheme is designed for newcomers; (2) children, as it might be unclear that they have to apply for the settler status; (3) migrants who had already obtained permanent residence status as they also have to apply; and last, (4) migrants who out of fear of the complexity of application process or the costs associated with it decide to not to pursue an application. Leaving without the Agreement rescinds these rights, and those of returnees.

The entangled transnational regulation of social security portability rights described in Chapter 3 has not made for a secure life for Polish migrants in the UK, as we have shown. Yet there is no doubt that its disentanglement in the UK would involve a significant loss in protection for Polish and other EU nationals. Since Brexit negotiations started, proposals for a two-year transition period for existing residents to secure their status, along with limits on residence and employment rights for people arriving after ‘exit day’, have all signalled further significant restrictions on mobility and residence as well as social rights. And it is the low-paid and precariously employed, especially those facing life events and family crises, that will pay the heaviest cost for that loss.

Notes
1 By 2018/2019, as the protracted negotiations for the UK’s exit from the European Union remained stuck, migration from all EU-8 countries to the UK decreased.
2 The guides for decision-makers provide examples of certain types of precarious work (e.g. freelance translation) as being likely to meet thresholds that agency, factory, or care work might not meet (Department for Work and Pensions 2015).
Recent changes oblige health care staff in the UK to check the immigration and insurance status of patients. Overall, the combined expense and scarcity of housing in the UK, along with a significant level of precarious employment, has allowed housing of extremely low quality to flourish in the ‘immigrant’ housing market. The iniquitous and pernicious effects of this situation have resulted in significant increases in homelessness, exacerbated by the 2014/2015 restrictions on EU citizens’ access to housing benefits.

The word for charity or alms in Polish is *jałmużna*.

For more detailed statistics on migrants and benefits in the UK, see House of Commons Library (2017).

This limit was increased to 30 hours per week beginning in 2017.

A small flat-rate fee is payable for short-term prescriptions, from which children, pensioners, and anyone in receipt of benefit is exempt. Long-term prescriptions are also exempted from this payment, for which patients are issued a registered ‘white card’ to show at pharmacies.

### References


same expectations as expressed by mobile Estonian citizens themselves. As we have shown, this overlap influenced and generally impeded access to welfare, as was evident in the Estonian migrants’ reluctance to rely on social benefits.14

In the Estonia–Sweden country pair, the most neoliberal welfare system examined in this research project met the most universalist one. Thus, in terms of this, we conclude that the conflict between the welfare systems of Estonia and Sweden can be attributed to the two countries’ expectations with regard to non-dependence, which leads to different expectations concerning how to access welfare as well as how to negotiate the welfare system. The Estonians’ expectations fostered a general unwillingness to apply for social rights until an emergency demanded it, which was not compatible with the Swedish welfare system, in which a ‘preventative’ attitude is needed to receive most benefits. From the Estonian perspective, state-provided welfare is something one applies for in the worst case. In general, the interviewees considered reliance on the state to be the last straw, to be submitted to only when all other options have been exhausted. In contrast, the Swedish welfare state may be complex, but it is constantly present in its citizens’ lives, from the cradle to the grave. Mobile Estonian citizens accordingly must contend not only with the ‘thin’ Estonian welfare state, which is modelled on the idea of a business contract, but also with the ‘thick’ Swedish welfare state, which is modelled on the idea of a social contract between a state and its citizens. As the welfare-related expectations and strategies that Estonian citizens adopt in Estonia did not work in the Swedish context, one could conclude that Estonian intra-EU movers are faced with general inequalities when trying to access the Sweden’s welfare system.

Our main conclusion, therefore, is that the institutional expectations stemming from the respective Estonian and Swedish welfare systems play an integral part in our understanding of mobile Estonian citizens’ welfare experiences and opportunities. Based on these results, we argue that research on the ability of EU citizens to access welfare and port benefits transnationally should pay more attention to institutional expectations concerning who should be entitled to welfare and how a welfare claimant should behave. We further argue that such institutional expectations and individuals’ own welfare experiences are often interrelated and that this interrelationship must be studied in order to understand migrants’ struggles to access welfare.

Notes

1 This included an analysis of national regulations (Swedish and Estonian) and the implementation of supranational EU rules (see Runfors, Fröhlig, and Saar 2016; Carmel, Sojka, with Papież 2016) (see also Chapter 3 in this volume).
2 Qualitative interviews with policy experts were analysed using a combination of Logics Approach discourse theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (see Runfors 2015; Fröhlig, Runfors, and Saar 2016a; Fröhlig, Runfors, and Sojka 2016b; see also Chapter 4).
3 Qualitative interviews were conducted with mobile Estonians working in Sweden after Estonia’s accession to the European Union in 2004 and with some of their relatives in
Estonia. The results were analysed according to grounded theory (Saar, Fröhlig, and Runfors 2017; see also Chapter 5).

This distinguishes Sweden from other Nordic states that did not host a significant number of Estonian refugees after the Second World War and do not have well-established Estonian communities (Tammaru, Kumer-Haukanõmm, and Anniste 2010).

According to Eurostat data, Estonia devoted 14.6 per cent of its GDP to social protection in 2013, whereas Sweden spent 29.4 per cent (with the average for the EU-15 and the EU-27 being about 27 per cent).

A provisory PIN, the *samordningsnummer*, was initially introduced so that individuals could pay their taxes in Sweden. The provisory PIN cannot simply be acquired by the migrant but must be issued through an administrative order.

The agency takes into account the duration and continuity of a migrant’s presence in Sweden, his or her circumstances – that is, activities (e.g., the stability of the activity, or work contract), the family situation and family ties, the exercise of any non-remunerated activity – the place of permanent residence, and the country where the migrant is taxed. Also, the agency assesses the migrant’s intention to live in Sweden for at least one year.

The criterion of class is important, because it entitles migrants with a short-term work contract to obtain health insurance (if they can provide a certain document) even though they are excluded on the basis of space and time. Hence, short-term mobile citizens who reside in Sweden for less than one year can receive care under the same terms as those who are registered as members of the Swedish population. To receive this care, however, the intra-EU mover must apply beforehand for a certificate of residence in Sweden, which would then be presented to the care provider. Although this certificate is issued to enable EU workers with short-term contracts to have access to health care, it also represents a procedural condition.

This cash benefit can also be paid to a pregnant woman in cases where the laws that govern the work environment forbid her to work or when she cannot be transferred to a less demanding job.

To be entitled to unemployment insurance, the migrant must register with a Swedish unemployment insurance fund. If the claimant has not been accepted in such a fund in Sweden (or does not fulfil the requirement for the earnings-related benefit), the claimant may be entitled to an assistance unemployment benefit (at a flat rate) through insurance benefits accumulated during previous employment within the EU. Hence, periods of insured employment and self-employment outside Sweden are portable, but only if the claimant has been working in Sweden for at least a few days (although the experts noted that only one day of work would suffice). The difference in benefit depends on whether it will be paid at a flat rate or whether it will be earnings-related. The fact that short-term and flexible contributions are recognized in Sweden facilitates the porting of benefits for temporary and circular migrants.

One reason for the variations in waiting periods might be a recent procedural shift that makes it difficult for EU migrants to identify the official in charge. After 2015, migrants no longer had to register at the migration board to apply for a PIN but could go directly to the tax office, so those who were aware of this change were able to obtain a PIN more quickly.

Individuals who have family staying in another country are legally allowed to receive compensation for the difference between child allowances in the respective countries.

The Swedish government is now addressing the problematic nature of the one-year requirement for obtaining a PIN (SOU 2017: 5), indicating that this issue is considered a major problem that requires institutional intervention.

When faced with the complexity of the Swedish system discussed above, one reaction could be to learn the system, but most of the migrants seemed to fall back on the idea of self-reliance and tried to cope by themselves.
References


Europeans’ experiences in their fine tuning. Although in most cases the differences among the country pairs could be attributed to the different welfare systems and their histories (e.g. the varying importance of family support in terms of childcare), the similarities across all four country pairs were impressive. For example, all our interviewees faced detours and delays when attempting to gain information and experienced exclusion due to institutional constraints.

All in all, our comparative analysis suggests the need to recast the existing scholarship in the areas of welfare, social security, and migration and to see them as sources of (national) social citizenship in order to accommodate the multiscalar regulatory frameworks, discourses, and experiences of social security that govern the ‘multiplicity of memberships’ as they are manifest in the stratified social rights available for transnationally mobile (European) movers.

Notes

1 Here and in other chapters the terms ‘social citizenship’ and ‘membership’ are used synonymously (see Chapter 2).
2 However, in some instances, positioning oneself as ‘the good one’ served to justify one’s entitlement, as compared with those migrants who were seen to be ‘abusing the system’.

References


