**University of Milan and University of Brescia**

**Joint PhD program in Economic Sociology and Labour Studies – XXXII cohort**

SPS/09, SPS/07, IUS/07, IUS/14, SECS-P/07, SECS-P/07, SECS-P/10, SECS-S/04, M-PSI/06

# PhD Thesis

# Intra-EU Mobility and National Welfare States

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Academic Year 2019/2020

## Abstract

This research enlightens several critical issues emerging from the tension between intra-European mobility and national welfare states. Initially, a broad literature review presents the current academic contributions dealing with the topic from a variety of points of view. Four main disciplines (sociology, economics, political sciences and law) and three levels of analysis (the national, the supra-national and the individual one) are discussed. Subsequently, three empirical chapters provide examples of studies on 'micro' data against this 'macro' background. In particular, two chapters are dedicated to the debated issue of mobile European citizens' access to welfare in host member states. The focus is on unemployment, family and housing benefits which present higher rates of receipt among EU citizens and are the most 'visible' dimension of welfare. The first study provides also a detailed descriptive overview on the populations of EU citizens across countries, while the second tests the concept of 'migration neutrality' over time both intra and inter generations. The use of benefits by EU citizens does not seem to be always connected with their socio-economic profiles, and the first five years of residence come out to be the only relevant threshold to access benefits across all welfare regimes. The last empirical chapter faces a new emerging issue by adopting the point of view of sending countries, that is whether intra-EU mobility is beneficial for intergenerational social mobility. In the case of Romanians, who are the most mobile population in Europe nowadays, the choice to migrate emerges to be detrimental for social mobility, independently from the area of destination. These insights contribute to add evidence to the complex and evolving picture of intra-European mobility, hopefully informing both academics and policy makers.

*A mia mamma*

## Acknowledgment

I wrote this PhD thesis under the supervision of Professor Cinzia Meraviglia, who followed me throughout the PhD programme in Economic Sociology and Labour Studies, directed by Professor Gabriele Ballarino at University of Milan. In particular, the original idea to focus on intra-European mobility for this research project was born in the end of 2013, during conversations with both Professors Stefano Sacchi and Massimo Pallini, who supervised my master thesis on EU citizens' access to minimum income schemes throughout Europe.

Once enrolled in the doctoral programme in October 2016, especially Professor Ilaria Madama helped me to build and update the literature review, to refine my research question and formally request the data to Eurostat (both EU-SILC and EU-LFS). At the University of Milan, also Professors Marino Regini, Maurizio Ambrosini and Nazareno Panichella offered me several valuable suggestions. In addition, at the EUI Migration Policy Centre 2017 School and subsequent conferences, I had the chance to get into contact with scholars who occasionally advised me on the direction of my researches. Among them, I especially thank Jean-Claude Barbier, Pau Baizán, Cecilia Bruzelius, Mikko Kuisma, Adeline Otto, Joakim Palme and Daniela Vintila.

The third chapter presented in this thesis has been developed with Professor Márton Medgyesi from Corvinus University in Budapest. I visited him twice at TARKI Institute in Budapest, and our collaboration has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under InGRID-2 grant agreement N. 730998. I presented this chapter at ESPAnet 2018 European and Italian conferences.

Finally, the fourth and the fifth chapters have been designed together with Professor Cinzia Meraviglia, following some preliminary works that I have presented at ECSR School in 2018, at ECPR 2019 joint sessions and at Eurostat 2019 users conference. Moreover, my visiting at GESIS Institute in Cologne under the EUROLAB grant in November 2018 has been particularly useful in order to identify the right database (EUCROSS) for the fifth chapter. This has been presented at the Joint Doctoral 2019 conference hosted by Pompeu Fabra University and at SISEC 2020 national conference.

*Maria Giulia Montanari*

Milan, 5 June 2020

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## Overview of the contents

**Literature Review: Free Movement and Welfare State**

A broad and multidisciplinary literature review on the topic, bridging contributions from different academic fields (sociology, economics, political sciences and law) and exploring three levels of analysis (the EU member states as single nation-states, the European Union as a supra-national level of governance, and the individual micro-level typical of economic sociology). It introduces the 'macro' background which the subsequent three empirical chapters refer to.

**Who Receives Which Benefits? A Cross-Country Comparison**

The scope of this study is to explore the profiles of European citizens who access social benefits in host Member States, and try to highlight the patters of their welfare use. Even though the accessibility of host welfare states by EU citizens have been in the public eye since the EU Eastern Enlargements and the 2008 economic crisis, still little is known about who exactly receives which benefits. This research aims to answer the subsequent questions: 1. Do the populations of European citizens vary across countries according to their demographic and socio-economic characteristics? 2. Are the EU citizens enjoying benefits as much as natives in the country of destination? Firstly, a descriptive analysis will be run to compare the population of EU citizens across five Member States (Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, and the UK). Subsequently, their probability to access both unemployment and family benefits (on EU-LFS and EU-SILC databases, respectively) will be assessed for wave 2015. Finally, the outcomes will be discussed in order to provide a preliminary test assessing whether the welfare use by mobile Europeans can be linked to their socio-economic profiles and trajectories.

**Migration Neutrality in Accessing Welfare Across Europe**

This research aims to test the hypothesis of a greater 'migration neutrality' over time in respect to welfare accessibility. EU citizenship is expected to lose relevance as a criterion for accessing household benefits along two thresholds. These are the first five years of residence, distinguishing between newly arrived and long-term migrants, and the shift between the first and the second generation of migrants. The analysis is run on the 2011 wave of EU-SILC database, which is the only one informing about generations. 12 European countries are analysed, covering 4 welfare regimes: Continental (Austria, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland); Nordic (Finland, Norway and Sweden); Liberal (Ireland and the United Kingdom); Southern (Italy and Spain). The findings confirm that, once controlled for EU citizens' characteristics, migration neutrality is reached after 5 years of residence. No difference emerges over generations nor across welfare regimes. Nevertheless, in the Southern European regime both EU citizens and natives present a restricted access to household benefits, probably due to a higher reliance on family rather than welfare resources.

**Is Intra-EU Mobility beneficial for Social Mobility?**

By focusing on Romanians, who are the most mobile European citizens nowadays, this analysis compare the status attainment of stayers in Romania to the one of migrants towards multiple destinations (Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom). According to the 2116 in-depth interviews collected by EUCROSS database in 2012, Romanians come out to be positively self-selected into migration in respect to social origin. However, the lower the social origin, the higher the probability of migrating to Southern Europe instead of to Central-Northern Europe. Furthermore, among individuals with an average and lower-than-average social origin, stayers are more likely to achieve an higher socio-economic status compared to migrants. Finally, both social origin and education have a stronger effect on status achievement of Romanians in Central-Northern Europe rather than Romanians in Southern Europe. Therefore, while the choice to move tends to be detrimental for social mobility, among movers Romanians in Central-Northern Europe are better-off due to a positive self-selection mechanism rather than higher social mobility opportunities offered by the area.

# 1. Introduction

To introduce the topic of my work I will use an episode that I recently witnessed while walking towards my favourite park in Milan. Along the usual way, I bumped into an unexpected scene: the trade union head quarter was covered in red paint as if it was a Pollock creation. Three men were standing up, looking at the scene, while a woman, slightly bending herself on high heels, was trying to wash away some spots, in a poorly effective way. I asked to the oldest man "What has happened?" and he replied "We do not know, they were probably protesting because of the climate, it is 'Friday for future' today". We easily agreed that perhaps putting some greenery on the soil would have been a more coherent initiative.

Coming back from the park half an hour later, I passed through the same trade union quarter, but the scene I saw was quite different this time. The three men and the woman from the union were not there anymore. At their place, however, there was a young man, poorly dressed and leaning on his knees, cleaning out the red paintings in a professional and effective way. His clothes were becoming red and red as much as the trade union window was returning crystal clear. As in this case, all of us in everyday life meet migrant people who performs either highly qualified or, most commonly, low qualified jobs. Nevertheless, we tend to ignore them, and sometimes even hastily identify them as invaders from a certain abroad, as if "abroad" was a place out of our comfortable universe. Instead, these migrants come from a definite country of origin, and follow specific migratory trajectories which lead them here, among us, to perform jobs which we are either unable or unwilling to do.

This sketch helps approaching the topic of migration as something we experience in everyday life and which involves everybody, as far as we live 'embedded' in the current society. Nowadays, migration is overwhelming and cannot simply be eradicated by establishing borders or barriers, being these obstacles made of space, time, social roles (division of labour, either in the market or in the family), gender identities and so on. Moreover, if we think at the world as a unique system, to a certain extent migration flows can be considered as an indirect consequence of the inequalities between countries and continents. War, insecurity, lack of rights or freedom, poverty are all triggers which push people from poorer countries towards the wealthier ones, in the attempt to rebalance un unequal distribution of resources.

This PhD thesis focuses on intra-European mobility, which is a particular system of migration, middle way though international and internal migration. Indeed, going and returning migration flows are made easier by the introduction of the Schengen area, removing visa and border controls. Moreover, the free movement arrangements bestow EU citizens with the right to reside in other member states and with social rights through a special system of social security coordination. Intra-EU mobility is unique also because it involves different nations, language and cultures, which share, at the same time, a high degree of communalities, similar histories

and values. The European Union has made the lives of Europeans more and more interrelated to each other, even though its internal unbalances persist over time. Migration flows occur mainly from poorer to richer countries, involving low-skilled labour migrants and their families. Nevertheless, there are also significant flows of high professionals, sometimes referred to as 'first class migrants' together with international students and pensioners searching for a better quality of life.

The present research approaches intra-EU mobility through two main issues. The first issue has gained political salience in the last decade, that is the European citizens' access to welfare benefits in host member states. The second issue has instead been largely disregarded so far, that is whether migration is beneficial for social mobility. In the long run, these two issues may be interconnected if one think that the enforcement of social rights has the potential to reduce social inequalities. Nevertheless, in the case of migrations the redistributive mechanism occurs at a supra-national level instead of within the same nation-state. European citizens may find a job in another EU member state, access welfare benefits there and experience upper social mobility chances which might be precluded in their country of origin. Overall, 'mobile Europe', as Recchi (2016a) called it, is a unique case of study to assess whether the world one day will become more equal through migrations.

Initially, a broad and multidisciplinary literature review on the topic is presented in the second chapter. This review bridges contributions from different academic fields, that are sociology, economics, political sciences and law. Indeed, following the suggestion by Massey (1993), contemporary migrations can be better understood by combining a variety of approaches. Moreover, the review is organized into three levels of analysis which are the national, the supra-national and the individual ones. The first level corresponds to the EU member states, that are the typical unit of analysis of political science and economic comparative studies. In particular, the impact of migrants in the country of destination will be discussed both in economic terms and in relation to voting behaviour. The second level corresponds to the European Union, which bestows mobile EU citizens with the rights to reside and access benefits in other EU member states. Not only law contributions are analysed at this level, but also the issues of governance of the Union as a multi-layered system, together with the tension due to the incompatibility – according to Freeman (1986) – between free movement and national welfare states. Finally, the third level corresponds to individual migrants and their characteristics, and is typical of economic sociology studies.

While the second chapter contains a literature review introducing the 'macro' context, the subsequent three chapters contain three analyses based on 'micro' data, representing examples of novel research on the topic. In particular, both the third and the fourth chapter focus on the accessibility of welfare by European citizens, and then they are linked to each other even though they present different hypotheses, case countries and benefits selection. Instead, the fifth chapter deals with a different topic, that is the social mobility of EU citizens both inter and intra generations. To introduce the third chapter, a broad descriptive analysis on the population of EU citizens

run on the EU-LFS database is presented for several member states. Even though the selection of destination countries is restricted to the relevant ones for the following analysis, this introductory description informs about how diverse the population of EU citizens can be across member states. In particular, they differ for the origin area and the wave of arrival, but also individual characteristics as gender, age and education. Importantly, the citizens coming from 'old' member states (EU15) distinguish themselves from the ones coming from 'new' member states (EU13) for the higher quality of occupations performed.

On the basis of similar differences in the characteristics of EU citizens, different expectations are formulated in respect to their welfare use across countries. For instance, in countries where EU citizens are more at risk of unemployment they are expected to access more unemployment benefits, while where they have on average more children they are expected to access more family benefits. Unemployment and family benefits have been selected because the rate of receipt of these benefits among EU citizens has found to be higher compared to natives in several countries. The fourth chapter focuses on family and housing benefits for the same reason but shifts the analysis to benefits provided on a household basis only. Regarding the selection of countries, while the third chapter analyses one country per welfare regime (5 countries in total), the fourth chapter analyses multiple countries (12 in total) for each welfare regime cluster (excluding the Eastern European regime).

Another major difference of the analyses run in the first two empirical chapters is that the second one is over time. Indeed the fourth chapter tests the concept of migration neutrality, expecting that EU citizenship as a criterion to access benefits loses relevance over time. Time is tested along two dimensions, that are the years of residence in the country of destination and the migrant generations. While the third chapter combines EU-LFS and EU-SILC databases for the 2015 wave, the fourth chapter focuses on the 2011 wave of EU-SILC because it is the only database informing about generations. Both analyses dialogue with comparative welfare studies literature and in particular the studies on welfare beneficiaries, which are a stream recently developed thank to the availability of new data (EU-SILC). Welfare regimes are confronted with each other in the third chapter, while in the fourth chapter also a specific hypothesis is dedicated to them. Differently, the fifth chapter compares 'old' and 'new' migration receiving countries (corresponding to Central-Northern Europe on the one hand and to Southern Europe on the other hand), observing mainly the differences in the labour market rather than in the welfare system.

Indeed, the fifth chapter does not deal with welfare beneficiaries, but it explores migrants' social mobility patters through the use of a novel database. This is EUCROSS, collected through thousands of in-depth interviews taken in 2012 on both Romanian stayers and migrants. The choice of Romanians among EU citizens is due to the fact that they are the most mobile and widespread population in Europe nowadays. Interestingly, this time EU citizens (Romanians) are not compared with nationals in the country of destination, as in the previous two chapters, but with stayers in Romania. Therefore, the point of view of the country of origin is adopted to deal with intra-European mobility, following a new approach which bridges sociology of migration and social stratification studies, as proposed by Zuccotti, Ganzeboom and Guveli (2015). The relevant research question is whether

migration is beneficial for social mobility, while the previous chapters focus on the use of welfare benefits by migrants as compared to natives.

Finally, the sixth and conclusive chapter of the thesis summarizes the main results of the three empirical chapters and links back to the debate around intra-EU mobility introduced with the literature review. Overall, this doctoral thesis has been inspired by a deep interest in migrations in general and intra-European mobility in particular. As every research project, it starts with a broad declaration of interest which then needs to be narrowed and specified step by step, so to find a niche to explore because it is relevant and it has not been studied yet. This process, together with the complexity of migratory phenomena, leads to interact with multiple academic disciplines, levels of analysis and points of view. As a consequence, the results may not seem organic and univocal, but the aim is to add some new pieces to the multifarious puzzle of intra-European mobility and national welfare states.

## 2. Literature Review

> "*A full understanding of contemporary migratory processes will not be achieved by relying on the tools of one discipline alone, or by focusing on a single level of analysis. Rather, their complex, multifaceted nature requires a sophisticated theory that incorporates a variety of perspectives, levels, and assumptions*" (Massey et al. 1993: 432)

This research approaches Intra-European mobility through a variety of perspectives, following the suggestion by Massey on migratory phenomena. The freedom of movement within Europe is indeed a migratory system with some peculiarities which will be presented throughout this chapter. In particular, this introductory literature review discusses contributions coming from multiple academic disciplines, namely sociology, economics, political sciences and law. The 'state of the art' paper on comparative political economy and international migration by Afonso and Devitt (2016) constitutes a paramount starting point for this analysis. However, while the two authors focus on the nation state as (only) unit of analysis, the present literature review attempts to expand their arguments along two additional analytical levels.

On the one hand, this work deals with the European Union, as a supra-national level of government which interacts with the national ones, but also as a deeply interdependent area (from an economic, political and social point of view), and more generally the geographical area which delimits the type of migration chosen as the object of study. For instance, the so called 'migration crisis' occurred in 2015 is out of the scope of this research because it entails inflows from both Middle-East and African countries towards Europe, thus intercontinental migrations. Conversely, this PhD thesis focuses on migration flows occurring within the European continent, and involving in particular the citizens of a member state of the European Union who move their residence to another EU member state. EU citizens can be defined as migrants with additional rights bestowed by the European Union, mainly the freedom to move and reside throughout the continent and the right to export and access welfare benefits, so that to realize a substantial equal treatment with the nationals of the host member state.

On the other hand, the empirical core of this research adopts individuals as main unit of analysis, that corresponds to what is called the 'micro' level within the field of Economic Sociology (Regini 2007). Indeed, the main socio-economic characteristics of individuals (among which the class of origin, occupation, education, gender, age) are assessed in order to explore the mechanisms through which social structures reproduces themselves both inter and intra generations. The present chapter will mainly focus on the academic contributions referred to the 'macro' level of analysis, comprehending both national and supra-national levels, which the first and second sections are dedicated to. This broad overview allows to put into context the 'micro' level of analysis, which is briefly introduced in the last section of this chapter, and then further developed within the specific

literature reviews preceding the chapters three to five. These subsequent empirical chapters use indeed micro-data to analyse individual EU citizens across a variety of member states. As it will be discussed in the conclusion, the comparative perspective is key to link back the 'micro' to the 'macro' level.

## 2.1. Nation-States as Unit of Analysis

### 2.1.1 The Mutual Relationship between Intra-EU Mobility and National Institutions

One of the objectives of this PhD project consists in exploring the interactions between the common framework of free movement granted to all European citizens and the varieties of national institutions (labour market, education, production systems and, especially, welfare) already in place within each country. While institutions are often presented as given and fixed entities, able to shape mobility flows (either as pull or push factors for migrants), a sort of causal relationship can be theorized also the other way round (Afonso and Devitt 2016). Indeed, either the shortage of migrant supply (in the host labour market) or its redundancy, and then the presence or absence of mobility in-flows, have been found to work as a trigger for either the change or the stability of national institutions (Oesch 2015; Reyneri 2016).

An example specifically concerning welfare and migration is the one of Eastern European women employed as 'badanti' (i.e. domestic care workers) in Italy (Ambrosini 2001). Given the traditional 'familist' approach to elderly care typical of the country, combined with an increasing female participation to labour market and an ageing population, Italian families started struggling for taking care of their old parents. Their demand first met a huge availability of female migrant workforce from Eastern Europe, willing to be hired also 'informally' at low salaries directly by single Italian families. What 'pushed' Eastern European women to migrate was mainly the mounting unemployment (especially for their husbands) generated first by the transition from Communist to Capitalist economy and then by the 2008 economic recession (Andrén and Roman 2016). The crucial pull factor was the employment chances that migrants could enjoy in Italy, higher and/or better paid as compared to the ones they had in their country of origin. In contrast, the 'welfare magnet' theory, that will be discussed in the last section, expects that migrants are attracted by welfare benefits more than employment opportunities.

The relevant aspect for national institutions is that, without the availability of Eastern European women from abroad, Italian families should have addressed their care needs somewhere else 'internally', for instance by campaigning for a policy change to reinforce public services or by stimulating the offer of 'formal' and structured private services on the market (Van Hooren 2012). Instead, the demand for welfare coming from inside a member state (Italy) met and reinforced a migration flow from outside (Fellini and Fullin 2018). The presence of a similar migrant in-flow in turn alleviated a potential pressure on the elderly care system, which could remained as such. As a consequence, the change and stability of national institutions (here the system of welfare provision) can be influenced also by the availability of resources (skilled workforce) coming from outside the national boundaries.

This case exemplifies how much the national institutions can be complementary and/or substitutive to each other (Afonso and Devitt 2016), both within the same member state (as in the case of elderly care, which can be provided either by the State, or by the market or even by the family) and between different member states (i.e. the redundancy of persons skilled for a particular job in one country might help to address the labour shortage for the same skills in another country). In particular, the latter argument – that is absorbing each other unemployment shocks – represented one of the main reason for the member states to introduce and then expand the freedom of movement within the European Union.

Other similar examples have been provided by Devitt (2011), who concluded that the availability of a 'reserve army' (in this case a migrant workforce) from the Commonwealth countries allowed the UK to postpone the innovation of its industrial sector while saving on labour costs. Instead, Oesch (2015) notices that German firms, differently to the British ones, had to invest in innovation and training in order to compensate the comparatively higher costs of labour. According to a 'political economy' approach, different combination of welfare regimes, capitalist models, skill production systems and labour market features contribute to both attract different types and sizes of migrants, and to offer them different opportunities once arrived (Ruhs and Palme 2018). This theoretical framework conciliate the role of institutions at macro (national) level with the one of individuals (migrants) at micro level, even though it often disregards the point of view of the countries of origin, which may lose social capital investment, skilled workforce and so on.

### 2.1.2 The Effects of Migration on the National Equilibrium

A dominant approach in academic literature concerning the interaction between welfare and migration at national level consists in the estimation of the so called 'fiscal impact' from the point of view of the receiving country. When estimating the fiscal impact, scholars (mainly economists) try to assess whether migrants (all together) are either net contributors or recipients of the national budget. Since the 2004 Eastern enlargement there have been a flourishing of economic estimations, mainly focusing on the United Kingdom, whose public opinion has been particularly concerned about the so called 'Polish invasion' (Rowthorn 2014). In the political climate of the time, the same freedom of movement principle, previously perceived as an opportunity (for national to go abroad), started being seen as a threat (foreigners coming in our nation). Scholars have often discussed and improved each other estimations, stressing this or that result according to the message they wanted to stress. Nevertheless, all studies agree on the fact that the absolute effect of migrants' fiscal impact is negligible, since it rarely exceeds the 0.5 of the GDP of the host country (Nyman and Ahlskog 2018; Dustmann and Frattini 2015; ECAS report 2014).

As Zimmerman et al. (2012) noticed, the estimation of the fiscal impact can be relatively straightforward when we limit ourselves to compare the taxes paid with the benefits received by migrants in a country. However, a more comprehensive analysis should take into account the general equilibrium effects led by immigration on wages,

employment and growth. Such assessment can only be country-specific, given the different characteristics of each national labour market, or even of each employment sector within a single country. For instance, additional migrant workers can play either a complementary or substitutive role in respect to national ones. In the latter case, they may affect both the employment and the wage levels of national workers, and thus their own level of contributions and taxes paid on the one hand, and the benefits accessed – i.e. as unemployed – on the other hand. Unfortunately, most of the studies do not account for the indirect effects of migrants on the national employment and wage equilibrium.

An exception is the research by Cattaneo, Fiorio and Peri (2013), who simulated what would have happened if the in-flow of migrant workers had increased in each of 11 European countries. In this way, they could test the effect of migration (treated as an external shock) on the labour market outcomes (employment and wage levels) of natives. Contrary to the expectations, they found an increased probability of occupational upgrade for natives, and, most importantly, no evidence of unemployment nor downgrading for the national workforce. Basically, economic migrants tend to fill in the job position that nationals abandon, being complementary rather than substitutive in respect to the national workforce. Then the common fear that 'migrants steal our jobs' has been disconfirmed by data.

Adopting a similar technique, Fenwick (2019) tested whether welfare retrenchment reforms have been introduced over years as a consequence of migrants' in-flows. Indeed, other than a negative fiscal impact, welfare retrenchment might be another (indirect) way through which migrants undermine the stability of national welfare states. However, by cross-checking several countries together with each year of observation in the period 1990–2010, the author is able to show that there is no correlation between migrant in-flows and welfare retrenchment policies. Therefore, the hypothesis of a causal nexus between migration and social rights adjustment seems not to be supported by data. The last section of this review will discuss micro-data approaches dealing with the fiscal impact of migrants at 'micro' rather than at 'macro' level, that is whether single migrants loose or gain from the interaction with the welfare system.

### 2.1.3 Welfare Chauvinism

Another important academic debate among political scientists concerns the public attitudes towards intra-European migration, and the nationals' willingness to share welfare benefits with migrants. While initially the freedom of movement for European citizens was mainly perceived as a fundamental opportunity allowing citizens of each member state to circulate and to remain socially protected abroad, the group of its supporters has then shrunk after the two Eastern enlargements and the 2008 economic crisis. In addition, the recent 2015 migration crisis, triggered by the mass arrivals from the Middle-East, has dramatically worsen the general perceptions towards migrants as a whole.

On the one hand, the initially clear-cut distinction between EU citizens and third country nationals has then become blurred (Pascouau 2013). On the other hand, the more migrants (all groups) are perceived as a threat, the more negative attitudes towards free movement grow (Meltzer et al. 2018, 23). Toshkov and Kortenska (2015) demonstrated that migration from the new member states (Eastern Europe) undermines the support for the Union at regional level in Spain, France, Ireland and The Netherlands. Moreover, an experiment among Swedish voters shows that the public support for cross-border access to welfare is conditioned by negative stereotypes about migrants (Hjorth 2016). As a consequence, welfare chauvinism can keep self-reinforcing even by sticking on believes which are very far from reality.

According to Kaczmarczyk and Rapoport (2014), the common belief that migrants are net recipients of public transfers can be explained through the fact that they are over-represented among the most 'visible' dimensions of welfare benefits, i.e. unemployment benefits, social housing, and children/family allowances. Nevertheless, since health insurance and pensions represent the bulk of welfare payments, immigrants' net positive contributions to these dimensions actually more than compensate for their over-representation as beneficiaries in other dimensions. The same authors also claim that, within the European context, we cannot take for granted that an increased diversity reduces the willingness of nationals to redistribute, as argued by Collier (2013).

Rather, Alesina et al. (2014) have found that the birthplace diversity arising from intra-European migration – which differs for instance from the ethnic diversity – translates into more positive attitudes towards redistribution. Nonetheless, we have to mention that the mounting concerns about migration in Europe, compounded by declining levels of trust in politics, have provided fertile ground for populists and the extreme right (Geddes and Hadj-Abdou 2016). Nowadays, in Europe the topic of migration reached unprecedented levels of politicization (Van Der Brug et al. 2015). However, populists do not usually stand for liberalization, but rather for its opposite, i.e. the increase of social expenditure and redistribution, even though at the advantage of nationals only.

## 2.2. The European Union as a Supra-National Level of Analysis

### 2.2.1 Peculiarities of Intra-European Mobility

Shifting the focus from a national to a supra-national level of analysis, one must first consider the distinctiveness of intra-European mobility as compared to other international migrations. Even though the main flows occur from the classical peripheries (Southern and Eastern EU) to the core countries (Western and Northern EU) following the economic disparities, several exceptions can be identified. Among these there are: Eastern EU workers to Southern EU, which has started being also a receiving rather than only a sending area; Northern EU pensioners moving seasonally or permanently to Southern EU, so that Northern EU can be considered a sending area as well; students mobility which involves all areas both with sending and receiving roles. Overall, migration flows among EU countries are becoming more and more mutual rather than with one direction only.

Moreover, the freedom of movement principle – together with the social rights enforced for mobile EU citizens – introduced a new system of migration in Europe, to which the traditional theories of migrations no longer apply. According to Favell (2008), the post-colonial, guest-worker and asylum seekers' models should be replaced by more recent models such as the network-based migration (Massey), segmentation/internal dual labour market theories (Portes, Piore), and assimilation/human capital selection theories (Borjas, Chiswick). Even more radically, Faist (2014, 211) argues that intra-EU mobility is a unique experiment in the world: while cross-border movements can be considered international or interstate migrations, the European legal framework treats them as internal migrations, as if the European Union was a single federal state.

Nevertheless, the shift of (territorial, but also social) borders from single member states to the Union remains problematic. Eastern workers in Western Europe might experience upward mobility compared to their nationals at home, but still they rank poorly when compared to the nationals in the country of destination (Recchi 2016a). Interestingly, Favell (2008) expects that the inflows from Eastern to Western Europe, accelerated by the Eastern EU enlargements, will likely to encourage a more effective racial or ethnically-based closure towards migrants from Africa and Middle East. The rationale is that Eastern Europeans are more 'desirable', due to the smaller distance in respect to native culture, religion, language etc. However, this 'substitution' will not end up with a reduction of the gap between nationals and foreigners: the 'new' migrants will be discriminated too. Nonetheless, the two authors keep asking themselves whether migrations have a chance to rebalance social inequalities in the long run (Recchi 2019).

As suggested by Sassen (2010), overcoming the methodological nationalism is crucial in order to understand migratory phenomena, which occur both intra and inter nations. Whatever the relation between intra-EU Mobility and national Institutions is, their interaction might generate social inequalities. It has been shown how social inequalities can be considered the roots of many migration processes (Faist, 2016 p. 326). Similarly, considering the world as a unique system (Wallerstein 1979), one might argue that the variety of national institutions in itself represent a form of inequality among the people of the world, who are entitled to different welfare rights and enjoy different opportunities according to the nation they belong to. Leaving apart these considerations, the European Union represents a unique system of free movement and social security coordination, which other regional arrangements (such as NAFTA and MERCOSUR, that are mainly commercial agreements) are trying to emulate. Nevertheless, the current European Union is still very far from a federal system as for instance the United States of America, where the concepts of nation and citizenship, and thus the freedom to move without barriers, are definitely established at federal level (Maas, 2013).

### 2.2.2 Welfare Rights of Mobile EU Citizens

As anticipated, the fundamental principle of free movement has been increasingly contested in the political arena, with the rising of chauvinist parties after the 2008 economic crisis and the EU enlargements to Eastern countries. Moreover, in the law arena Verschueren (2015) and Giubboni (2017) have identified a shift in the recent European court of justice's case law, starting from the cases C-140/12 Brey, C-333/13 Dano, C-67/14 Alimanovic and C-299/14 Garcia-Nieto. Originally, the European court of justice had adopted a so called 'judge-artist' approach in this field, bestowing rights on European citizens even beyond the EU treaties' rationale. Instead, nowadays the court seems to follow a more restrictive interpretation of the EU legal framework. In Giubboni's view (2017), it is as if, after two decades from the birth of the Union citizenship, the judges of Luxembourg had acknowledged the change of the political climate.

In particular, the court's jurisprudence now gives precedence to the application of the Residence directive n. 2004/38 over the Social Security coordinating regulation n. 883/2004. According to the Residence directive, non-workers EU migrants acquire the right to equal treatment with nationals only after five years of residence. Before, they can access social assistance benefits as long as they do not become an 'unreasonable burden' for the welfare system of the host member state. The novelty is that they cannot use any more the 'special benefits' (of assistance nature) falling under the Social Security regulation in order to fulfill the self-sufficiency requirement of the Residence directive. Rather, following this new approach, when applying for social benefits EU citizens not only are likely to obtain a denial but they risk also to lose the right to reside in the host country. Therefore, an immediate assimilation approach has been substituted by a progressive assimilation approach (Verschueren 2007), where mobile European citizens are put under test during the first years of residence.

Moreover, several national rules and administrative practices have been found to be – either directly or indirectly – in breach of the European legal framework. Given that welfare is an exclusive competence of member states (Art. 153(4) TFEU), the latter enjoy considerable discretion in applying the Social Security coordination rules. According to Thym (2015), national administrations do not have a clear guidance on whether to grant benefits to inactive EU citizens before five years of residence. And this is still the case, despite since 2011 the TRESS report has listed several recommendations which should be adopted in order to clarify the ambivalent relationship between the Social Security coordinating regulation and the Residence directive. As Ferrera (2005) noticed, within this field Member States enjoy a wide room for maneuver, thus they can easily adopt 'non-compliance and hiding strategies' in respect to the European legislation.

Furthermore, a research group of political scientists and lawyers has recently joined under the name 'TransJudFare'. They are collecting evidences on what they call the 'transnationalization and judicialization of welfare', with a special focus on Austria, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. Their main claim is that, while the eligibility of inactive EU migrants to non-contributory benefits has been widely discussed, there is no systematic study of its actual impact on national welfare states. In order to fill in this gap, they are looking at

national legislation, lower courts case law and administration practices. Even if their main results are still likely to come, they have already found some interesting evidences. For instance, Martinsen et al. (2017) documented how the national control over EU migrants access to benefits has been tightened over time in Denmark. While nationals access social assistance on the mere basis of residence, EU migrants now have to face an additional test, as in the case of the 'right to reside' test introduced in the UK since 2004. Moreover, in 2015 nearly a third of the EU students residing in Denmark had to pay back their grant after that enhanced control mechanisms have been put into place.

Another interesting finding is the one by Hendlmaier and Bleuberger (2017), who run about 50 interviews in order to compare the administrative practices ongoing in Germany and Austria. On the one hand, they found a conflict of interpretation between the German federal court and the Berlin court on whether granting the unemployment allowance to EU jobseekers residing in Germany. On the other hand, they highlighted a sort of conflict of interests between the welfare authorities and the security ones. Indeed, the former make pressure on the latter in order to expel the EU migrants who have not sufficient resources to live in Austria, while the latter – more concerned with the presence of third country nationals – tolerate that EU citizens stay even without the formal permit released by the former.

The attitude of the Austrian security authorities seems to be in line with the cross-country data reported by the European Parliament (2016). Indeed, the number of EU citizens who have been formally refused the right to reside clearly exceed the number of EU citizens expelled from the same Member State. In addition, the few expulsions concerning European citizens seem to be linked to public order and security reasons more than to a failure in fulfilling the self-sufficiency requirement. However, further collection of data is needed because the ones available are limited and often incomplete. As the report by the EU Parliament denounces, national administrations are often unwilling to release detailed information on refusals of residence and expulsions.

### 2.2.3 Issues of Governance

As a multi-layered system, the European Union presents several issues of governance, not limited to the interaction between the national and the supra-national levels. First of all, Ruhs (2015) calls for the unsustainability of the current European legal framework from a systemic point of view. According to the author, unrestricted intra-European migration cannot be coupled with equal access to different national welfare states. Rather, the author suggests abandoning the latter in favor of the former, as the USA historically did in respect to international migration. Another skeptic vision about the current EU arrangement is the one of Scharpf (2010), who highlights that the so called 'integration through law', by bestowing more and more rights upon the European citizens, has been producing a deregulatory effect on national welfare states. In his view, social sharing in Europe is a road never taken, given that member states have reacted to EU integration by liberalizing and cutting benefits rather than by giving up their sovereignty and building a real European social pillar.

In a certain way, both Scharpf and Ruhs share the well-known view of Freeman (1986), who argued that welfare states cannot coexist with freedom of movement. According to Freeman, the intra-EU migration has challenged the European welfare systems to the point that the latter have been 'Americanized' (liberalized), losing their traditional, well rooted political consensus. Like Americans, Europeans would have started associating the access to social benefits with a visible and subordinate minority, as something for 'them' paid for by 'us'. Despite the attractiveness of the Freeman's argument, it has been already discussed how intra-European migrations generate mixed effects on public attitudes towards social redistribution. Moreover, as outlined by Kaczmarczyk and Rapoport (2014), applying a theory tested in the USA to the European context can be at least misleading. Nevertheless, here it comes out clear how the issues related to public attitudes and the ones related to governance are necessarily related, provided that governments cannot but depend on their national consensus.

A study on the formation of member states' (domestically constrained) preferences – following a liberal intergovernmental approach as the one suggested by Moravcsik (1993) – is needed in order to better understand the national governments' interests before the negotiations at European level. Indeed, as Ferrera (2016) notices, contrary to the advancement of studies on European integration, we still have insufficient knowledge on the re/distributional outcomes generated by the freedom of movement within Europe. Furthermore, we lack of terms of comparison, given that the European Union can be considered a unique experiment in the world. Maas (2013) found in the USA history several examples of a tension between the equality promised by common citizenship and the diversity institutionalized by borders, and he links this tension with the one that the European Union is now facing. However, when comparing the EU to the United States of America, where redistribution mechanisms systematically occur both within and between the states, one cannot disregard the fact that in the USA the concept of nation – and thus the solidarity link – is primarily set at federal rather than at national level. Instead, the challenge of Europe consists in shifting – at least partially – the solidarity link from the national to the supra-national level.

## 2.3. The Individual level: EU citizens

### 2.3.1 Varieties of Socio-Economic Profiles among EU Citizens

Even though the calculations of fiscal impact at national level consider all migrants together, distinguishing among different profiles of migrants is crucial to run a more accurate assessment (Kaczmarczyk and Rapoport 2014). The most important differentiation is the one between active and inactive migrants, provided that the former are relatively more likely to pay contributions and taxes (on earnings), while the latter are relatively more likely to access social benefits. In particular, high professionals with a certain degree of seniority, like engineers, doctors, researchers and so on can be considered 'first class' movers, provided that they are clearly a resource for the receiving member state, and then are welcomed and never referred to as 'migrants' (Recchi 2019, Faist 2014).

Rather, expressions as 'expatriates', 'posted workers' or simply 'mobile EU citizens' are often adopted in order to distinguish them from other unwelcomed migrants.

Among inactive migrants we can identify different profiles, such as family members, who access to family allowances, schools and other ad hoc services, or students who access to university facilities, or pensioners, who access social pensions and are usually more in need of health care services. According to the variety and generosity of social benefits offered by the host Member State, each profile of migrant can potentially bring a different cost to the national budget. Instead, regarding the active migrants, a paramount distinction is the one between high-skilled and low-skilled. Generally, high-skilled migrants (the 'first class' ones) earn higher salaries, and then they pay more taxes while being less in need of in-work benefits, often reserved to the low-wage earners who pass a test of means.

Even within a single country of destination, the group of European citizens may present a huge internal variance, and considering them as coming from a 'single origin' can be tricky (Recchi 2016a). In particular, the citizens coming from the so called 'old Europe' (EU15) are more likely to perform high-skilled jobs compared to the ones coming from the 'new Europe' (mostly Eastern European countries, corresponding to EU10 accessed in 2004 and EU2 accessed in 2007). This is the reason why some studies which have restricted the origin of migrants to Eastern EU only (EU10, mainly Polish + EU2, mainly Romanians) used the EU15 group as a category of reference, additional to the one of nationals (see, among others, Fellini and Guetto 2018).

A cornerstone study regarding migrants' occupational outcomes is the one by Reyneri and Fullin (2011), who focused on Eastern EU migrants across six Western EU member states in 2005. By observing the migrants' occupational outcomes across countries, the authors formulated the hypothesis of a trade-off between employability and job quality. In particular, they expected that in Southern Europe migrants can easily find a job (having the same unemployment rates than natives) but this job is likely to be of lower quality compared to the one that migrants can find in Central and Northern Europe (where they are affected by higher unemployment rates compared to natives in turn). The migrants employability versus job quality trade-off has been subsequently confirmed by several comparative studies (Fellini and Guetto 2020 and 2018; Ambrosini and De Luca 2019; Ballarino and Panichella, 2017 and 2013).

### 2.3.2 Is Generous Welfare a Pull Factor for EU Citizens?

As anticipated, the fiscal impact depends on both the specific country and the profile of migrant concerned. On the one hand, Member States offer different social benefits and require different payments, while on the other hand different profile of EU citizens have different needs once moved. Therefore, within the economic literature of migration has been raised the hypothesis that certain profiles of migrants are attracted by certain countries, according to their trade-off between benefits and payment. This is the so called 'welfare magnet' hypothesis, which considers the welfare regime as a main pulling factor in the individual decision to migrate, at 'micro' level.

In other words, typically low-wage earners and inactive people would be more attracted by the countries with more generous welfare states, especially if benefits are immediately accessible by residence rather than by contributions. Some scholars refers to this phenomenon as 'welfare or benefits tourism', that at 'macro' level might be linked to the wider phenomenon of regime shopping, comprehending also the international movement of labour and services. In particular, poorer areas of the continent may take advantage of their lower cost of labour and degree of regulation to realize 'social dumping' at the expense of richer areas. The equivalent of a 'social dumping' effect for 'benefit tourism' would be the de-regularization of welfare discussed in the second section.

While the first studies on the 'welfare magnet' hypothesis were related to the internal migration among the United States of America (Borjas in 1999), more recently these have started to deal with migrations among the European member states. In particular, Boeri (2009) runs a broad comparison of the access to the welfare states of EU15 countries by the European citizens. According to the author, there is no general evidence that European migrants are net recipients of state transfers, rather they earn their way into the welfare systems. This result is explained through migrants profiles, since nowadays the migration within the so called 'old Europe' is mainly led by high-skilled – and thus high paid – migrants, who contribute more than they benefit. However, Boeri argues that some evidences of both 'residual dependency' on non-contributory transfers and self-selection of unskilled migrants may be found in countries with most generous welfare benefits. This means that welfare, even though it is not the main reason explaining the decisions to move and stay for EU citizens, it does play a role both as a pull factor and as a retaining factor for at least a minority of either low-skilled or inactive EU migrants.

In order to challenge this conclusion by Boeri, Martinsen and Pons Rotger (2016) have recently estimated the fiscal impact of EU migration on Denmark, which has notably a generous, universalistic and tax-financed welfare state. In particular, they wanted to falsify the general theoretical assumption according to which the citizens from the 'new Europe' move towards the 'old Europe' mainly because of its social benefits rather than its employment opportunities. While Boeri – as the other economists – used macro data aggregated at national level for several countries, Martinsen and Pons Rotger could exploit a national administrative micro dataset, registering both the tax paid and the social benefits accessed by every single EU citizen residing in Denmark. They found that from 2002 to 2013 EU immigrants had a significant positive fiscal impact on the Danish welfare system of about 6,600 euros on average per each EU citizen. Therefore, in the case that these European citizens had moved to Denmark in order to enjoy its social benefits, they have de facto paid more than they gained.

Notwithstanding the importance of Martinsen and Pons Rotger's findings on Denmark, these cannot be generalized to all countries with a universalistic (or Beveridgean) welfare state. For instance, one cannot say that Denmark and the UK have the same share of low-skilled EU migrants accessing non-contributory benefits without comparing their own individual data. In addition, there might be some other reasons why the British welfare state is attractive for low-skilled migrants while the Danish one is not. Thus, further research is required in order to explore whether and in relation to which migration patterns the 'welfare magnet' hypothesis applies. Up to now, one can just say that it does not apply automatically in every country and for every profile of migrants.

Furthermore, even in the case one would be able to demonstrate that the fiscal impact of a group of EU migrants in a certain member state is systematically negative – meaning that they gain more than they receive – one should not automatically conclude that they decided to move and stay exactly for this purpose. Rather than an economic study, a sociological one would help to better understand which are the main reasons to move throughout Europe (Schulzek 2012).

Nevertheless, the topic of EU citizens and welfare state can be approached the other way round, that is not how much EU citizens contribute to the welfare state, but how much the latter is able to reduce the poverty of the formers. Indeed, even though migrants are not specifically targeted by the national welfare systems, they are usually over represented among poor and then they are likely to qualify for means tested, social assistance benefits. A seminal contribution in this regards is the one by Morissens and Sainsbury (2005), who read the major disparities between migrants and nationals in the light of the stratification and decommodification dimensions of welfare regimes proposed by Esping-Andersen (1996). However, their expectation that socio-democratic regimes treat migrants more equally has been found not supported by data.

A decade later Hooijer and Picot (2015) suggested that welfare generosity may be a necessary, but not sufficient condition for migrants' access to welfare. According to the authors, in order to reduce migrants' poverty a combination of factors is needed, comprehending the basic characteristics of welfare regimes (universal versus insurance-based), labour markets (degree of employment protection), and profiles of foreign population (humanitarian and family versus economic migrants). Similarly, Eugster (2018b) tests the poverty-reducing capacity of welfare through a series of migrants' accessibility criteria and labour market regulation. However, more generous welfare states do not necessarily appear to be the most inclusive, as confirmed also by Gschwind, Nyman and Palme (2019).

### 2.3.3 EU Citizens' Access to Welfare

By running a meta-analysis on the previous contribution by Bruzelius, Chase and Seeleib-Kaiser (2015), the study by Luppi, Santero, Naldini and Knijn (2018) found out that both young and women among European migrants might be discriminated in accessing social benefits of other EU member states. Indeed, they argue that women and young face additional impediments compared to other categories of mobile EU citizens, due to either their over representation among informal and low-paid sectors (when working) or the higher probability to be inactive (mostly represented among family members and students). The authors reached this conclusion trough a comparison of the social rights which EU citizens are entitled to in 11 member states.

It would be interesting to test whether this result holds also on beneficiaries data, by searching out whether the young and women mobile EU citizens currently enjoy a statistically lower probability to access social benefits in different Member States. Arguably, a similar result is not to be taken for granted, given the significant

asymmetries between paper reality and facts often highlighted by the literature on comparative welfare studies (Van Oorschot 2013). Indeed, social rights recognized on paper might not be enforced efficiently by local administrations or migrants might not be able to claim them, and this mismatch can be tested only by looking at data on the actual beneficiaries. Moreover, a paramount lesson coming from Hurst, Fitz Gibbon and Nurse (2016) is that inter-sectionalities do matter. However, the combined penalties of being both a mobile EU citizen and a woman, a young or other potential 'bases' for inequalities have not been explored yet. Studies on micro-data might launch a new frontier of research by cross-checking the rights which EU citizens are bestowed on paper with the ones they effectively benefit in practice.

Up to now, the researches which use micro-data on beneficiaries have focused on the comparison between the rates of receipt of social benefits among the populations of migrants and natives. The European Commission has funded several cross-countries comparative studies to investigates the use of welfare by EU citizens, as for instance the one by Juravle et al. (2013). Not only the fiscal impact and the welfare magnet hypothesis are discussed, but also a distinct hypothesis of 'welfare overuse'. According to the authors, EU citizens may be more intensive users of social benefits either because of their socio-economic characteristics or a specific 'immigration effect'. On the one hand, a higher share of recipients among EU migrants can be explained through factors such as age, household composition, income etc. On the other hand, the difference between migrants and natives remains even once controlled for all these characteristics. In the last case, the gap can be read as a signal of either discrimination (considering migrants as the passive 'victims' of the system, having limited access to employment and better paid jobs, thus being more in need of benefits) or dependency attitude (considering migrants rational actors who decide to live on benefits while having other alternatives).

Another study funded by the European Commission is the one of the two academics Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013), and it focues on the different likelihood of EU citizens to be recipients of benefits compared to nationals in 18 member states. The EU-SILC database is used extensively, allowing a distinct overview for each kind of benefit receipt (education, unemployment, disability, housing, family-related transfers and transfers to combat social exclusion). Unlike the seminal study of Zimmerman et al. (2012), Medgyesi and Poloskei distinguish between migrants coming from EU member states and from outside the Union. This distinction might explain why they found that for most benefits the differences between natives and mobile EU citizens are small and statistically insignificant in most of the countries, instead of the general pattern of lower rates of receipt among migrants discovered by Zimmerman et al. In addition, Medgyesi and Poloskei found that there is a higher receipt of housing benefits among mobile EU citizens, which remain significant also once controlled for age, gender, education, household type and labour-market status. Viceversa, being a mobile EU citizen is associated with a lower probability of receiving family and child-related benefits. The third chapter of the present thesis will develop the analyses of EU citizens' profiles and use of welfare starting from these two contributions.

## 2.4. Conclusion

The academic literature regarding intra-EU mobility and welfare state is developing and involving several disciplines and levels of analysis. In this review the criterion of the level of analysis has been used to present the different points of view that researchers have adopted to deal with the topic, ranging from 'macro' to 'micro' approaches. Starting with the member state as unit of analysis, it has been explored how national institutions can shape migration flows, by attracting different types and sizes of EU citizens and offering them different opportunities once arrived. At the same time, also migrants can affect the national equilibrium, both economically as in the case of the fiscal impact, and socially and politically as in the case of the support for redistribution and welfare chauvinism attitudes.

This literature review has highlighted different roles plaid by national institutions and migrant communities both across countries and over time, trying to answer questions such as: Do the availability or the absence of a certain migrant workforce allow the production system or the welfare system either to change or to resist changes over time?; Do the fiscal impact of EU citizens varies across countries and according to which factors?; Are chauvinist parties growing similarly everywhere or different trends can be identified across countries? Nevertheless, interesting questions still to be answered at 'macro' level are: Will mobile EU citizens remain perceived as foreigners or as members of a single European community?; Which countries gain the most from the presence of EU citizens and according to which factors?; How much intra-European mobility can help rebalance the risk of unemployment across member states?

As anticipated in the second section of this review, several frictions emerge between the national and supra-national level of governance concerning the EU citizens' access to welfare. Several scholars have highlighted the attempts of national administrations to deny social rights to EU citizens even in breach of the EU law. Another critical issue is the possible liberalization effect on welfare provisions as an indirect consequence of the reinforcement of EU citizens' social rights. As an innovative and unique migration system, the European free movement still has to be explored in its potential of either stimulating a 'social dumping' and liberalization effect, or reducing unemployment and social inequalities throughout the continent. Both national and supra-national levels of analysis belong to a 'macro' approach which is not directly addressed throughout the thesis but that constitutes its background.

The present study adopts indeed a 'micro' approach to intra-EU mobility and welfare states, choosing mobile EU citizens as the unit of analysis. The last section of this review has discussed how vary their socio-economic profiles can be, and how they can be discriminated in the access to social benefits. An important stream of literature has explored whether and how migrants are attracted by welfare provisions in their decision to move, while another stream has compared the migrants' rates of receipt of benefits to the one of natives. At this level, the main research questions developed are: Do the populations of migrants and nationals differ according to

socio-economic characteristics?; Are poor EU citizens dependent on the welfare benefits of host member states?; Do migrants access benefits in the same proportion, more or less than nationals across countries?

Nevertheless, several research questions are still to be answered at micro level of analysis, as Schulzek noticed:

> "*It would be very enriching to apply micro-level data to this research area, which would not only detect if immigrants are attracted by welfare, but also if immigrants use these benefits in the end and if their expectations are met* " (Schulzek 2012, 30)

Addressing this call, the present PhD thesis has tried to answer some of the many research questions still open in this field, by exploiting micro-databases which have recently became available. In particular, the third chapter starts with an overview on the populations of mobile UE citizens actually residing in a variety of member states. These descriptive analyses of migrants' socio-economic characteristics are often overlooked in the literature, even though they can be useful to interpret the variations observed in the migrants' use of welfare across countries. Indeed, the chapter continues by answering the question whether the use of welfare (and in particular unemployment and family benefits) by EU citizens can be explained on the basis of their characteristics (employment status and household structure).

The fourth chapter utilizes the same database, that is the *European Statistics on Income and Living conditions* (EU-SILC), and especially the 2011 ad hoc module on generations, in order to answer the question: Is a situation of migration neutrality in accessing welfare reached over time? This represents the first attempt ever done in the literature to explore the migrants' use of welfare over time. Moreover, it adopts the concept of 'migration neutrality' recently proposed by Recchi (2016b). Migration as a relevant criterion to access benefits is tested both intra and inter generations, having the first five years of residence and the second generations as the relevant thresholds. Moreover, household benefits (family-child related and housing) are selected because, according to the literature (Kaczmarczyk and Rapoport 2014), they present higher rates of receipt among migrants compared to natives.

Finally, the fifth chapter answers to the novel question "Is intra-EU mobility beneficial for social mobility?" which has rarely been proposed by the literature (Zuccotti, Ganzeboom and Guveli 2017), even though it is crucial to better understand social inequalities in Europe. New is also the database, that is the EUROCROSS survey, which has been collected by a group of international researchers in 2012 and it has recently become available (Pőtzschke 2015). As a case of study, the Romanian diaspora has been selected because it is the most important and, at the same time, widespread diaspora in Europe nowadays. Moreover, focusing on a single diaspora allows to take into account also the point of view of origin countries, which are usually disregarded in the debate around migrations. As for the previous chapters, the empirical analyses are developed in a comparative perspective, so that the results, even though 'micro' and country-specific, can contribute to build a wider 'macro' picture.

# 3. Who Receives Which Benefits? A Cross-Country Comparison

## 3.1. Introduction

### 3.1.1 Free Movement: A contentious Issue

The history of European integration has always been characterized by a separation between the so called 'economic track' from the 'social' one. Following a market-tailored rationale, goods, services and capitals were made to circulate freely, in order to improve the economic exchanges between Member States. The workers' freedom to move throughout Europe was enforced too, exactly because this was functional to the overall economic growth. Nonetheless, social rights were soon called into question, given that their loss could discourage workers from moving abroad (Ferrera, 2005). In order to remove all the obstacles to labour mobility, all the Member States gradually agreed to expand both the entitlements and the coverage of social protection, up to the point that, nowadays, every European citizen can potentially claim a right to access the national welfare system of a Member State different from his or her own (Verschueren, 2007).

However, these rights cannot be considered completely settled yet. The current European Union is still very far from a Federal system as for instance the United States of America. Here the concepts of nation and citizenship, and thus the solidarity link, are definitely established at federal level (Maas, 2013). Conversely, in Europe the willingness to share is uncertain, and might be withdrawn during hard times. It is not by chance that the fundamental principle of free movement has been increasingly contested since the 2008 economic crisis, and especially after the EU Enlargements to Eastern countries, with comparatively lower socio-economic standards. Chauvinist parties, which have been gaining consensus all over the continent, blame EU citizens for burdening their own national welfare systems (Van der Brug et al., 2015; Van Der Waal, De Koster and Van Oorschot, 2013). Some politicians openly asked to tighten the rules which grant social benefits to mobile citizens (May et al. 2013; Cameron, 2013). The 2016 UK referendum on EU membership has contributed to further rising the public concern on intra-European mobility[1].

Within the public opinion, mobile European citizens are increasingly associated to migrants coming from third countries, albeit their legal status is completely different (Pascouau, 2013). Indeed, the introduction of Free Movement rights within the European Union has initiated a new system of migration, where traditional theories concerning post-colonial flows and bilateral arrangements between a sending country and a receiving one do not

[1] According to Eurobarometer (2016), in 2015 immigration ranks first among Europeans' concerns (over terrorism), even though free movement is still considered the most positive result of the EU (over peace). The idea that Europeans do not perceives themselves as a single community might explain such a contradiction: supporting Free Movement as an opportunity for themselves while preventing 'the others' from enjoying it.

longer apply (Favell, 2008). It is not by chance that the EU legislation refers to 'mobile EU citizens'[2] who enjoy the fundamental Freedom to Move[3] within the Union as a whole, instead of migrants who move from a single State to another one. Today all European citizens can either export the benefits that they have already contributed for in their country of origin or access the non-contributory benefits of the country of destination as soon as they move their residence there[4].

### 3.1.2 The Academic Debate

The economic analyses highlight that the EU citizens represent a boost rather than a burden for the host tax-benefit systems and, above all, their impact on the national GDP is negligible compared to the whole budget (Nyman and Ahlskog 2018; Zimmerman et al. 2012). Why then several governments and political leaders have been campaigning against the Freedom of Movement within Europe, and in particular against the access to welfare by mobile Europeans? Within the academic debate, most of scholars have stressed the role of actors into national political arena (Ferrera 2017; Geddes and Hadj-Abdou, 2016; Collier, 2014). According to them, populist and right-wing parties rode the wave of welfare chauvinism to scapegoat EU citizens for wider issues brought by the 2008 economic crisis, the increasing unemployment and the need for cutting welfare in order to allow its sustainability.

Other scholars instead have shown how institutions can shape different normative attitudes towards redistribution (Martensson et al. 2019; Ruhs and Palme, 2018; Afonso and Devitt, 2016). Following their view, different

[2] Initially, the right to Free Movement was reserved to workers only, and other categories of citizens were left aside, provided that their mobility do not directly affect the functioning of the labour market. Nevertheless, step by step the European Court of Justice managed to extend many of the workers' rights to other types of beneficiaries, such as workers' family members, students, jobseekers and pensioners. Since early 1990s, the introduction of the concept of 'European citizenship' into the EU Treaties boosted the process of social integration. Finally, since mid-2010 the national social protection systems of Member States became accessible by all EU citizens residing there, with no regard to their activity status.

[3] In parallel to the coverage, also the entitlements of social protection have been improved over time. Indeed, without harmonizing the existent variety of national provisions, a Social Security Coordination System[3] has been built since late 1950s. All benefits with mainly 'insurance' features have been included, with the initial exclusion of 'social assistance'. The underpinning idea was that every country should take care of its own poor. However, certain benefits which may present assistance features such as the family ones have subsequently been included, in order to avoid the discrimination of mobile workers' families compared to nationals. During 1970s, a new equilibrium has been reached, by distinguishing between contributory and non-contributory benefits. On the one hand, contributory benefits (with a clear insurance nature as for instance pensions), follow the exportability principle, meaning that they can be enjoyed also out of the country. On the other hand, non-contributory benefits (with mainly an assistance nature as the minimum income schemes, financed out by general taxation at national level) follow the territoriality principle, and cannot be exported out of the country.

[4] Of course, they can also access the contributory benefits of the host Member State, even though obtaining the entitlement by paying contributions will take time. The focus of this paper is not on exportability, but on accessibility of benefits by EU citizens in host Member States. Any reference to contributory benefits will concern the ones accessed in the country of destination. An important disclaimer concerns the benefits accessed on the basis of the employment contract in one country, and eventually 'exported' to another country where the EU citizen resides. These benefits may be either contributory or non-contributory, but the present research design do not account for them.

combination of welfare regimes, capitalist models, skill production systems and labour market features contribute to both attract different types and sizes of EU citizens and to offer them different opportunities once arrived. Therefore, not only public opinion and political actors, but also national institutions would trigger different Member States attitudes towards Free Movement. Building on this theoretical framework, the present paper aims to provide a preliminary test to assess whether the patterns of welfare use by mobile Europeans can be linked to their migration trajectories.

The academic literature concerning Intra-European mobility offers several hints that both the size and the profiles of EU citizens vary across Member States. For instance, Recchi (2016a: 71) found out that the mobile citizens moving within the so called 'Old Europe' (EU15) are more likely to be high professionals compared to the citizens moving from 'New' to 'Old' Europe, meaning from East to West (the EU10 accessed in 2004 plus the EU3 accessed in 2007 and 2013)[5]. Furthermore, the cluster analysis run by Manafi et al. (2017) highlighted that the traditional distinction between 'New' and 'Old' Europe is well mirrored in the actual net migration flows from 'periphery-sending countries' to 'centre-receiving countries'. The scope of this paper is not to provide a comprehensive picture of the migration trajectories within Europe. Rather, a descriptive analysis will be run on the populations of EU citizens in order to check whether (and according to which factors) their socio-economic characteristics might vary across countries.

Up to date, all the aspects linked to European citizens' profiles have remained nearly unexplored in the literature concerning benefit recipients. The academic contributions dealing with the EU citizens' access to host welfare states have concentrated either on social expenditure (Bruzelius, Reinprecht and Seeleib-Kaiser 2017; Pacolet and De Wispelaere 2015; De Wispelaere and Pacolet 2015) or social rights (Martinsen et al. 2017; Heindlmaier and Blauberger 2017). On the one hand, the formers have highlighted that both the size and the composition of the social expenditures vary a lot across Member States. In particular, the benefits that European citizens can export from the country of origin have different purchasing powers according to the country of destination, and then they may not grant a sufficient coverage there. On the other hand, the latters have shown that the accessibility to social benefits by EU citizens in the country of destination is often hindered by additional requirements and/or vesting periods at national or local level, thus might not be in compliance with EU law.

This paper will not account for the existing issues of welfare accessibility by EU citizens due to incorrect implementation or direct violation of their rights, nor for the variety of social benefits that nationals (and thus EU citizens too) enjoy across countries. Nevertheless, it will focus on a lacking piece of the puzzle, i.e. the socio-

[5] The EU15 or 'Old Europe' comprises the following 15 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom. Among the 'New Europe' there are the EU10 (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic and Slovenia) accessed in 2004 plus the EU3 corresponding to Bulgaria and Romania accessed in 2007, and to Croatia accessed in 2013. It is relevant to note that the nationals from the 'New Europe' did not enjoy Free Movement rights immediately after the Enlargement due to the transitional restrictions applied by most of the 'Old' Member States up to a maximum of 7 years.

economic characteristics of mobile Europeans who access benefits in host Member States. In particular, following the suggestion by Huber and Oberdabernig for all migrants (2016), the profiles of European citizens will be explored and used to explain the differences in welfare use (if any) in comparison to natives. The subsequent section contains an overview on the literature dealing with migrant beneficiaries of host welfare states. Then the third section present the research questions, methodology and data. The fourth section is dedicated to results and finally the fifth section contains the conclusion.

## 3.2 Literature Review

### 3.2.1 The Impact of EU Citizens on the Welfare state

The most flourishing strand of contributions in the field of migrants and welfare focuses on the 'fiscal impact' of migration, in order to detect whether migrants are, overall, either net contributors or recipients of the national budget in the country of destination. Among these studies, only few distinguishes European citizens from other migrants coming from outside the EU. Most of them deal with the United Kingdom only, whose public opinion have been particularly concerned about the so called 'Polish invasion' (Rowthorn, 2014; Dustmann and Frattini, 2015). Instead, the comparative studies (Osterman, Palme and Ruhs 2019; Nyman and Ahlskog 2018; ECAS report 2014) try to answer the question whether there is a group of countries (or welfare regime cluster) where migrants have a comparatively higher fiscal impact.

These analyses highlight that the estimations may vary significantly across countries, but the size of the impact on the national budget remains overall positive and small (see table A3 in the annex for an overview of the fiscal impact and the benefits received by EU citizens in the countries considered by this analysis)[6]. Despite the importance gained within the public debate, granting social rights to European citizens can be considered a negligible effort (Vargas-Silva, 2015). What might be perceived as 'unfair' would be the relative unbalance of expenses across countries, rather than their absolute amount. For instance, Ruhs (2015: 20) suggests that member states with mainly universal (instead of contributory) welfare systems would have to bear higher costs for granting benefits to European citizens. Nevertheless, the fiscal impact variation does not seem to mirror either the distinction between universal/Beveridgean and contributory/occupational/Bismarkian systems nor the well-known Gosta Esping-Andersen's regimes typology (1990).

A second stream of literature has grown around the question whether some welfare systems attract certain profiles of migrants, shifting the attention from welfare institutions to migrant characteristics. By studying migrations among the United States of America, Borjas (1999) hypothesized that typically low-wage earners and

[6] Interestingly, in Eastern European countries the fiscal effect of EU citizens tends to be negative, even though small. The authors suggest that this may be due to the small size and probably skewed age distribution of migrants in these countries.

inactive people would be attracted by the countries with comparatively more generous welfare benefits. Academics call it the 'welfare magnet' hypothesis, considering welfare regime as a main pulling factor in the individual decision to migrate, while the media generally use the expression 'welfare or benefits tourism', suggesting that migrants may behave as 'free-riders'. In his study on the 'Old Europe' (EU15), Boeri (2009) argued that in most generous welfare systems some evidences of both 'residual dependency' on transfers and 'self-selection' of unskilled migrants might be found for a minority of the migrant in-flow.

In order to challenge this argument, Martinsen and Pons Rotger (2016) have estimated the fiscal impact of EU migration on Denmark, which has notably a generous, universalistic and tax-financed welfare state. According to their findings, each EU citizen made a significant positive net contribution to the Danish welfare state paying de facto more than they gain[7]. Moreover, as claimed by Pellizzari (2011: 4), the theoretical arguments linked to 'welfare magnet' present several ambiguities. Even in the case that the fiscal impact of a group of migrants in a certain country would found out to be systematically negative, one should not automatically conclude that they decided to move and stay exactly for this purpose. Rather than an economic study, a sociological one would help to better understand which are the main reasons to move throughout Europe[8].

### 3.2.2. The Profiles of Welfare Beneficiaries

In order to run a sound assessment of the impact of intra-EU mobility on national welfare states, one should distinguish among different profiles of migrants (Kaczmarczyk and Rapoport 2014). For instance, active migrants are relatively more likely to pay contributions and taxes (on earnings), while inactive migrants (such as pensioners, students or family members) are expected to rely more on social benefits. Similarly, high-skilled workers, who earn higher salaries and thus pay more taxes, differs from low-skilled workers, who better qualify for means-tested benefits. A third and last strand of studies have then focused on the socio-economic characteristics of migrants who receive welfare benefits in the host country.

In particular, in these authors compare the rates of receipt of benefits among migrants with the ones among natives. The main contributions are the seminal study by Zimmerman et al. (2012) and the extensive report by Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013). They estimate the different likelihood of EU citizens to receive benefits versus nationals in all countries available in EU-SILC database for waves 2007 and 2011, respectively. In both studies, a

[7] Instead of a macro dataset with costs and revenues aggregated at national level, Martinsen and Pons Rotger (2016) could exploit a national administrative micro dataset, registering both the tax paid and the social benefits accessed by every single EU citizen residing in the country. According to their findings, each EU citizen made net contribution to the Danish welfare state of about 6,600 euros between 2002 and 2013.

[8] Eurobarometer data (Juravle et al., 2013: 47) inform that in 2007 the main two reasons to move within Europe were work (accounting for about 40% of cases, and it rises up to 60% among EU12 migrants) and family reunion (that accounts for 30%, and it shrinks to 15% among EU12). It would be interesting to update, observe and discuss these figures in a chronological perspective.

distinct overview on each kind of benefit in cash is provided, comprehending transfers for education, unemployment, disability, housing, family and child-related benefits plus other transfers to combat social exclusion. While Zimmerman et al. (2012: 49) found out a general pattern of lower rates of receipt among EU citizens, Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013) found a similar trend in relation to family benefits only[9].

If a gap between migrants and natives emerges, this can be due either to different composition of the two populations or to a specific 'migration effect'. In the case of a compositional effect, the difference between migrants and natives is expected to disappear once controlled for the main demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Otherwise, the residual difference has been attributed to either discrimination or 'welfare dependency' attitude (Juravle et al. 2013), depending on whether the responsibility is placed on social institutions or individuals[10]. This paper will not deal with specific 'migration effects', arguing that a qualitative sociological study would better address the on-going academic debate. Rather, this research will try to identify (if any) a compositional effect, and which EU citizens' characteristics explain most the difference with natives in welfare use.

## 3.3. Research Design, Data & Method

### 3.3.1 The Research Hypotheses

Building on the studies by Zimmerman et al. (2012) and by Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013), the contribution that this paper aims to provide is twofold. On the one hand, updating their analyses by using a more recent wave of the same dataset (2015 wave of EU-SILC). On the other hand, narrowing the focus on a limited number of both social benefits and countries of destination. Arguably, a restricted selection allows first to concentrate on the fewer cases with high numbers, and then to explore more in depth their specificity. Indeed more attention will be given here to the socio-economic characteristics of the population of European citizens (age, gender, years since arrival, level of education, status of employment, level of skills, household composition and household income), which may vary consistently across the countries considered.

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[9] Zimmerman et al. note that "Clearly trends in take up of welfare vary between countries in Europe. In some countries it is low, while in other countries there is higher use of welfare by migrants than natives. There are also a variety of growth trajectories, welfare use is growing quickly in some countries, relatively stable in others, and actually declining in some cases. There are also differences within take up rates between different migrant groups differentiated by country of origin and gender" (2012: 75).

[10] The discrimination argument can work in both ways. On the one hand, when migrants present higher rates of receipt, they can be seen as the passive 'victims' of the system, more likely to be in need for assistance benefits because unable to reach decent working and living conditions in the country of destination. On the other hand, when they make a restricted use of welfare, it may be so because they are discriminated against when applying for benefits they are entitled to (Pellizzari, 2011), either directly (national administrations do not collaborate with them) or indirectly (lower take-up rate due to language/cultural barriers and lack of information on their own rights). Differently, the dependency argument is pushed forwards only in case that migrants present higher rates of receipts, alleging that they have somehow rationally decided to live on benefits, behaving as 'free riders' at the expenses of the host society.

Moreover, special attention will be paid to the part of the gap between natives and EU citizens that can be explained though these characteristics, following the example of Huber and Oberdabernig (2016) on all migrants. Furthermore, it will be possible to comment results looking back at the institutional features of each country (welfare regime, labour market mechanisms, etc.), and at the specific characteristics of the benefits provided (generosity, eligibility, funding and coverage). As underlined by Hooijer and Picot (2015), generosity is a necessary but not sufficient condition to access welfare provisions for migrants. They also need to present the individual and household characteristics addressed by benefits. For instance, having been formally employed (rather than inactive or employed in the grey market) in order to qualify for unemployment benefits, or having a certain number of children (either reunified or born in the host country) in order to qualify for family benefits.

This paper aims to answer the subsequent research questions: Do the populations of European citizens vary across countries according to their demographic and socio-economic characteristics?; Are the EU citizens enjoying benefits as much as natives in the country of destination?; Is there a compositional effect which contributes to explain the difference in welfare use between EU citizens and natives?; If yes, which characteristics of EU citizens explain the most their difference from natives? The hypotheses emerged from the analysis of literature are:

H1) EU citizens present different profiles across host member states:

a) *In more generous countries EU citizens are more unemployed/inactive than in other countries* (employability)
b) *In more generous countries EU citizens are less educated/skilled than in other countries* (quality of job)

H2) EU citizens' characteristics contribute to explain the gap with natives in accessing welfare (compositional effect):

a) *Where EU citizens are more at risk of unemployment than natives, they have more access to unemployment benefits*
b) *Where EU citizens have more children than natives, they have more access to family benefits*

Therefore, the empirical analysis will consist in two parts. The first one will compare the population of EU citizens among each other and across countries. In particular, the European citizens in more generous member states will be compared to the ones in less generous member states with regards to their activity status, level of education and level of occupational skills. In this way, the countries where EU citizens are more a burden than a boost for welfare states will be identified. According to the welfare magnet hypothesis, the general expectation is that unemployed/inactive (1a) and lower educated/skilled migrants (1b) couple with more generous welfare states. Nevertheless, migrants might be attracted not only by welfare benefits, but also by working opportunities. Therefore, the causal nexus can be framed also the other way round, that is a set of national institutions offer or not certain working opportunities to migrants once there (Ruhs and Palme 2018). However, determining the

direction of the causal nexus is out of the scope of this research. Rather, a variety of EU citizens profiles across member states is a precondition for the second step of analysis.

In the second step, EU citizens in each member state are compared to the natives of each country considered. The scope is to establish whether they access welfare benefits more, and, if this is the case, whether the gap with natives can be at least partially explained through observed characteristics. This compositional effect might be due to many demographic and socio-economic characteristics such as gender, age, education, etc. In particular, the hypothesis here is that in the countries where EU citizens are at more risk of unemployment they also access unemployment benefits more compared to natives (2a). Similarly, in the countries where EU citizens present higher number of children they also access more to family benefits than natives. The use of welfare by European citizens has been operationalized as the difference in rates of receipt with the native populations.

### 3.3.2 The Selection of Benefits

This paper will focus on two main types of social benefits in cash, that are unemployment and family benefits. These benefits are generally accessed by European citizens once they move their residence in the country of destination, rather than being exported from their country of origin. Zimmerman et al. (2012: 39) found that migrants are more likely to receive unemployment and family-related supports compared to nationals in a wide range of countries. Moreover, according to Afonso and Devitt (2016: 608), unemployment and family benefits are the welfare provisions which are more likely to function as a magnet for migrants. Some scholars identified also social housing as an area where EU citizens presents higher rates of receipt in respect to nationals (Reyneri 2016: 55; Ruhs, 2015; Medgyesi and Poloskei, 2013). However, this is not taken into account here because housing benefits are often provided through services in-kind rather than cash transfers, thus they are more difficult to be compared across countries.

A main issue concerning both unemployment and family benefits is that they may be of contributory nature in some countries, especially the unemployment ones. Within the scope of this research, it is crucial to disentangle contributory benefits from non-contributory ones, because the object of political contention is placed mainly on the latters. And even more important is avoiding to include in this analysis the contributory benefits which EU citizens are exporting from their country of origin, since accessibility and not exportability has been put into question. This is the main reason why it has been chosen to use two different databases, one to study unemployment benefits and the other one to study family benefits[11].

11 According to its original design, this research would have been run completely on the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) database, focusing on the sub-categories of the benefits which exclusively identify non-contributory schemes. Nonetheless, from a deeper analysis of cross-country data, a huge inconsistency emerged in regards to the ways according to which each Member State filled in the sub-categories of the benefits variables. Moreover, in several countries these sub-categories are either empty or present scant frequencies.

Indeed, EU-SILC is used for family benefits (variable 'hy050g'), since they are generally linked to the country of residence and are unlikely to be exported. Instead, with regards to unemployment benefits a similar choice would have been at more risk of bias, because these are much more likely to be of contributory nature and linked to the employment contract, thus they could have been exported from the country of origin[12]. Consequently, it has been opted for using the variable 'register' of *European Labour Force Survey* (EU-LFS), following the example of Maquet, Maestri and Thévenot (2016: 19), who used the same to measure the coverage rate of unemployment benefits across countries. Indeed, the first value of this variable inform on whether the '*Person is registered at a public employment office and receives benefit or assistance*', allowing to identify individuals who access to the unemployment benefits provided by the country of residence only. Therefore, these benefits might be either contributory or non-contributory, but at least they are not exported.

### 3.3.3 The Selection of Countries

Previous contributions in the field tried to compare as many countries as possible according to the availability of data (Medgyesi and Poloskei, 2013; Zimmerman et al., 2012). In contrast, the choice made in this paper consists in focusing the analysis on a limited number of countries. Considering the trade-off between wide comparisons and in-depth analyses typical of case studies (see for instance Juravle et al., 2013; Pellizzari 2011), this research can be placed middle way through the two extremes. The advantages are twofold. On the one hand, it is possible to compare the variety of EU citizens populations across member states. On the other hand, one can discuss the characteristics of the benefits actually enjoyed by European citizens in each of the countries considered.

Therefore, five member states have been selected by following the subsequent criteria: being among the main countries of destination for European citizens (either in absolute numbers or relative to the national population); presenting a sufficient number of recipients for both the unemployment and the family benefits among the population of EU citizens in the EU-LFS and EU-SILC database, respectively; allowing to identify the European citizens (for instance Germany, despite being among the main countries of destination, has to be kept out of the analysis because in both databases the migrants born in the EU are not distinguished from the ones born outside the EU[13]); Representing each of the five typologies of European welfare regimes with at least one case.

The countries chosen are: Austria, as an example of Continental model with high number of beneficiaries in both samples; Denmark, for the same reason among Nordic models; Hungary, which is the biggest country among the

[12] Unfortunately, given the method according to which EU-SILC data are collected through both questionnaires and administrative registers at national level, it is not possible to reconstruct the exact country which provides the benefits concerned at European level (cross-country data).

[13] For EU-SILC this holds for also in case that nationality rather than country of birth is selected as a criterion to identify mobile EU citizens.

Eastern ones allowing to identify European citizens[14]; Italy, presenting the highest numbers of EU citizens within the Mediterranean countries; The United Kingdom rather than Ireland among the Anglo-Saxon model because, while having similar numbers of beneficiaries in the samples, it has been a much more debated case both pre and post Brexit. Together with the UK, also Austria is a relevant case in the public debate because of the government's attempt to restrict the access to family benefits[15]. Both Austria and the UK signed the letter to request the EU commission to restrict free movement rights arguing that these threaten the sustainability of welfare (May et al. 2013). Conversely, Denmark and Italy can be placed in a silent position, while Hungary, as all Eastern European countries, is clearly in favour of Free movement.

Table 3.1 summarizes the main features of the countries selected, highlighting two important aspects. First, the general classification of a country within a welfare regime group might not be mirrored when looking at single benefits. For instance, unemployment benefits in Denmark are provided on an occupational basis (financed by contributions and addressed to employees only), rather than an universal one (financed by general taxation and addressed to all residents) as one would have expected for a country grouped within the Nordic welfare regime. Second, the relative share of EU citizens in a country might vary a lot, thus for instance Austria and Hungary present the highest and the lowest share of EU citizens (about 8% and 1% respectively) while having a similar size of national population (about 9 millions of inhabitants).

**Table 3.1. Selection of five countries of destination for mobile EU citizens.**

| EU Member State | Model of Welfare Regime | Access to Unemployment benefit | Access to Family benefits | % of EU Citizens on the tot. population |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Austria** | Continental | Occupational | Universal | 8.4 |
| **Denmark** | Nordic | Occupational | Universal | 3.9 |
| **Hungary** | Eastern European | Occupational | Universal | 1.3 |
| **Italy** | Mediterranean | Occupational | Occupational | 3.2 |
| **United Kingdom** | Anglo-Saxon | Universal | Universal | 5.6 |

At a first glance[16], it can be noticed that in the countries selected and for the year 2015 unemployment benefits are generally funded through contributions and addressed to all people who have previously worked as

14 Unfortunately both Poland and Romania present do not allow to distinguish between EU citizens and extra-EU migrants in EU-SILC and present very few cases of EU citizens in EU-LFS.

15 Source: https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/austria-wants-to-cut-family-benefits-for-children-living-abroad/

16 A complete list of all the national policy schemes captured year after year by the benefits variables is not available for

The relative percentages of EU citizens on the total population are elaborated from EU-LFS wave 2015 with weight factor [iw=coeff].A full picture of the residing population in each country according to the country of birth is showed in tables A1 and A2 in the annex.

(comprehending both the amount of benefits relative to the purchasing power and the duration of transfers); Eligibility (entitlement rules, including the presence of means-tests and vesting periods); Funding (mainly through taxes and/or contributions); Coverage (either universal or linked to the employment/occupational status).

dependent employees. The United Kingdom constitutes an exception in this regard, by financing the Income-based Jobseeker Allowance through general taxation and providing it to all residents rather than employees only. Conversely, family benefits are financed out by taxes and cover all residents, except than in Italy where they are of contributory nature and limited to employees only. Academic literature on welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1990; Ferrera 2005) generally highlights the difference between welfare regimes, thus group of countries rather than single countries.

Nevertheless, when studying the access of EU citizens to welfare, the characteristics of single welfare provisions (which might diverge from the features of the overall regime) may play their own, distinct role. In the case that this analysis will be further developed, it would be interesting to study also possible variations within the welfare regime clusters. Nonetheless, the main attempt of this paper consists in detecting divergences between countries, which might eventually reveal differences between welfare regimes. The focus on single countries rather than welfare regime clusters can be justified in the light of the literature on fiscal impact, which have not found significant divergences between welfare regimes (Osterman, Palme and Ruhs 2019; Nyman and Ahlskog 2018).

### 3.3.4 The Steps of the Analysis

A first step of this study will consists in running a descriptive analysis in order to explore the EU citizens' profiles across the countries selected. Mainly the EU-LFS database has been chosen for this scope, because it presents a wider sample size (1,238,783 individuals, detailed features in table A1 in the annex), and it allows to go on further details in respect to the country of origin, by distinguish between 'EU15', 'EU10' and 'EU3' groups[17]. The aim is to test the first hypothesis, that is the populations of EU citizens present substantially different characteristics across host member states. The focus will be on the different composition of the populations in respect to the country of origin, age, gender, education level and skill level across the countries of destination. In particular, the probability to be unemployed and the household structure will be checked to establish where EU citizens are expected to access more unemployment and family benefits. A full list of the variables used completed with their descriptions is available at the beginning of the annex.

In order to identify the European citizens, the criterion of the country of birth is preferred to the one of citizenship, even though both of them risk to be biased. Indeed, the latter might not account for cross-country differences in acquiring nationality, while the former might be inflated due to the nationals born abroad, and then misclassified as migrants. Nonetheless, Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013: 7) argue that, the criterion of country of birth come out

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[17] Unfortunately, due to the process of anonimyzation applied by Eurostat to all databases before being realised to researches, the variables linked to both country of birth and nationality are recoded into broad groups in order not to provide information on the single country of origin

to have a smaller distorting effect. This might be due also to free movement rules, allowing European citizens to move and acquire nationality quicker and in an easier way compared to extra-EU migrants. Therefore, the analysis focuses on all individuals who reside in a EU Member State while being born in another one[18].

Subsequently, the second hypothesis will be assessed through a series of probit regressions, following the path suggested by previous studies (Medgyesi and Poloskei 2013; Zimmermann et al., 2012). Whether EU citizens' characteristics contribute to explain the gap with natives in accessing welfare will be tested by comparing the gaps between the share of benefit receipt among European citizens and the one among natives in each country. Thus, different populations of natives will represent the reference category time by time. For both unemployment and family benefits, two probit models will be launched. The first one 'raw', with the dependent variable (dummy for receipt of the benefit) and the independent variable (dummy for EU citizens versus natives) only. The second one 'explained', with the introduction of several control variables related to the socio-economic characteristics of individuals (unemployment benefits) and households (family benefits). For both EU-LFS and EU-SILC databases, the wave 2015 has been used, having 2014 as the income period of reference[19].

## 3.4. Empirical Results

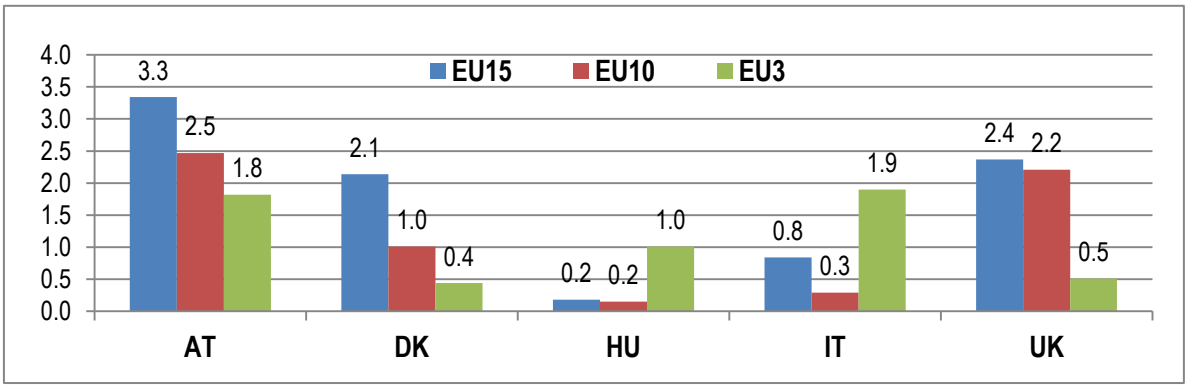
### 3.4.1 Descriptive Analysis on EU Citizens' Profiles

For all the member states considered, figure 1 shows the composition of the population according to the country of birth (tables 3.A1 and 3.A2 in the annex presents the sample size split by country and country of birth for both EU-LFS and EU-SILC databases). In Hungary and Italy EU citizens are mostly coming from EU3 countries, while in all the other destinations EU15 are the most present group of origin, followed by EU10. Austria is the country with the largest share of European citizens on the whole population (around 8%) while Hungary the one with the smallest (around 1%)

[18] The identification of EU citizens through the criterion of country of birth (variable 'countryb' in EU-LFS) might be improved by filtering out all individuals who have been resided in the country of destination for a long time, for instance 20 years or more (with variable 'yearesid'). However, also this measure could be biased due to the fact that under20s might have moved to the country soon after the birth, and then they would be considered EU citizens just because their age is below the years of residence set as threshold. Provided that both 'yearesid' and 'age' variables in EU-LFS are grouped into 5 years bands which do not match with each other, it is not possible to use the variable 'age' to correct the measure.

[19] In 2014, the transitional restrictions to Free Movement for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens (among EU3) were already expired, while the ones for Croatian citizens were still in place in 13 Member States, among which Austria, Italy and the UK. Arguably, the fact that the citizens from Croatia could not yet enjoy a full right to move should not significantly impact on this analysis. Indeed, according to Castro-Martin and Cortina (2015: 112), the most important flows of EU citizens since 2003 onwards were the ones of Poles among EU10 and Romanians among EU3. Both of them started migrating well before the EU Enlargements, and transitional restrictions seem to have affected more the choice of the destination rather than the number of out-flows. If anything, since the EU Enlargements they have been entitled to EU citizenship, and then the right to access social benefits in the host Member State.

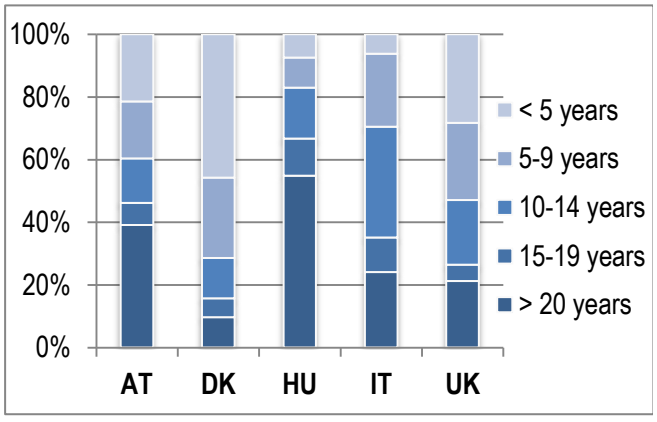
**Figure 3.1. Shares of EU Citizens on the Total Population of each Country by Group of EU Origin**




Percentages of mobile EU citizens on the total population within the 5 countries of destination by group of origin.

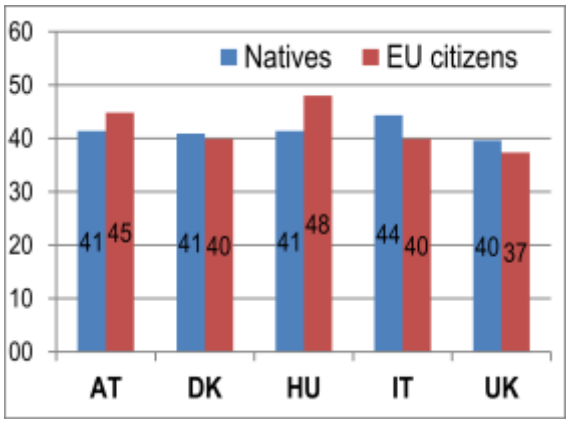
Figure 3.2 offers an overview on the length of residence that EU citizens spent in each country. Austria and especially Hungary emerge as the countries of destination where European citizens arrived first, having about 40% and 60% respectively share of EU citizens who have been resided there for 20 years or more (thus arrived before 1995). In contrast, in Denmark more than 40% of EU citizens have arrived recently, within the last 5 years (thus arrived since 2010). Both Italy and the United Kingdom present comparatively more regular inflows of EU citizens over years, with a larger share of newly arrived EU citizens in the UK. As a consequence, one would expect European citizens in Austria and Hungary to be more integrated and then to access benefits in a way more similar to natives compared to Denmark.

**Figure 3.2. Share of EU Citizens by Years since Arrival**




Data elaborated from EU-LFS wave 2015 with weight factor [iw=coeff].
The variable 'yearesid' has been recoded into 5 years bands.

**Figure 3.3. Average Age of Natives and EU Citizens**

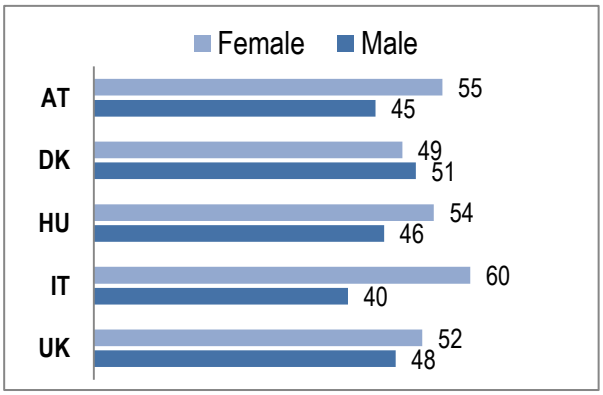



Differences in mean age of EU within 5 countries of destination.
Elaboration of EU-LFS wave 2015 with weight factor [iw=coeff].

According to figure 3.3, the average age of EU citizens varies quite a lot across countries, ranging from 37 in the United Kingdom to 48 in Hungary. In Austria and even more in Hungary European citizens are on average older than natives, while in the in the other destinations EU citizens are on average younger than natives. Interestingly, the main two destinations of EU3 in the sample, that are Hungary and Italy, receive quite different flows of individuals in respect to age. Indeed, EU3 in Hungary are on average older individuals who have been resided at least 20 years in the country, while EU3 in Italy are comparatively younger and arrived more recently.

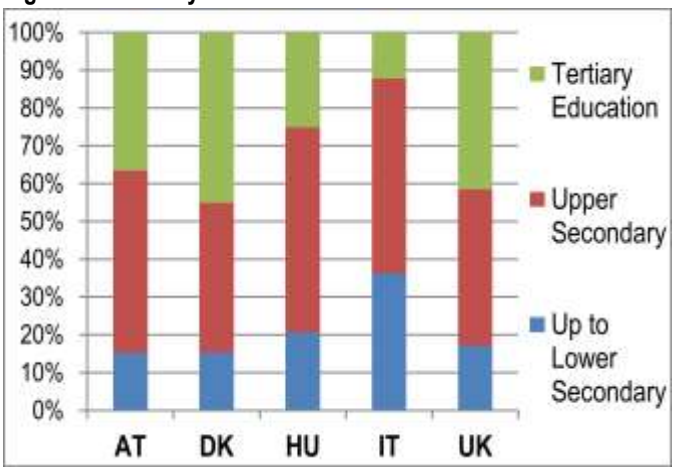
Figure 3.4 shows the gender composition within the populations of EU Citizens residing in each country. With the exception of Denmark, EU citizens are more likely to be female rather than male. Italy is a particularly interesting case, having 60% of female European citizens. The literature has explained this peculiarity in the light of the great demand for female migrants to be employed as domestic and care workers in Mediterranean countries, in order to preserve the familistic welfare model (Reyneri 2016: 60). With regards to the level of educational that EU citizens have across countries of destination, figure 3.5 presents the percentage of individuals with a tertiary, upper secondary or a lower degree. European citizens emerge to be highly educated in Austria, the UK and especially in Denmark. Instead, only 25% of European citizens have a tertiary degree in Hungary, and less than 15% in Italy. The size of these differences suggest that there might be a mechanism of self-selection of EU citizens into different countries of destination according to their gender and educational level.

**Figure 3.4. Gender Composition of EU Citizens**




Percentage of Male versus Female EU citizens in 5 countries of destination. Elaboration of EU-LFS wave 2015 with weight [iw=coeff].

**Figure 3.5. Tertiary Education of EU Citizens**

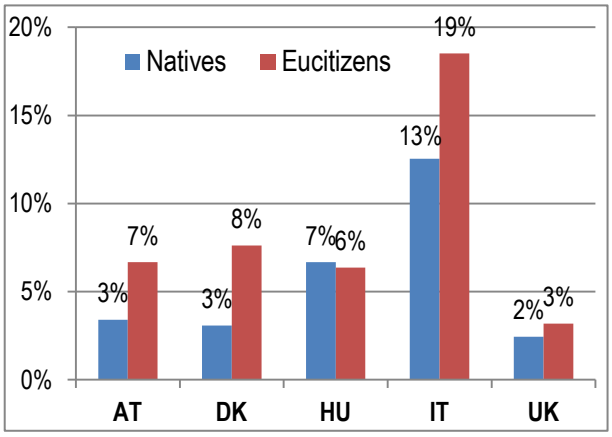



Percentage of individuals with Tertiary Education among Natives and EU Citizens. Elaboration of EU-LFS wave 2015 with weight factor [iw=coeff].

As suggested by figure 3.6, EU citizens have a significantly higher probability to face unemployment compared to nationals in all the member states analysed, with the exception of Hungary. The European citizens residing in Italy experience the worst occupational outcomes, having the comparatively highest probability to be unemployed (19% as shown in figure 3.6), and, at the same time, the lowest shares of high qualified jobs (ranging from 0 to 25% in figure 3.7). This result is consistent with the ones of Recchi (2016: 103), who found that Romanians (among EU3) in Southern Europe enjoy a particularly lower occupational status.

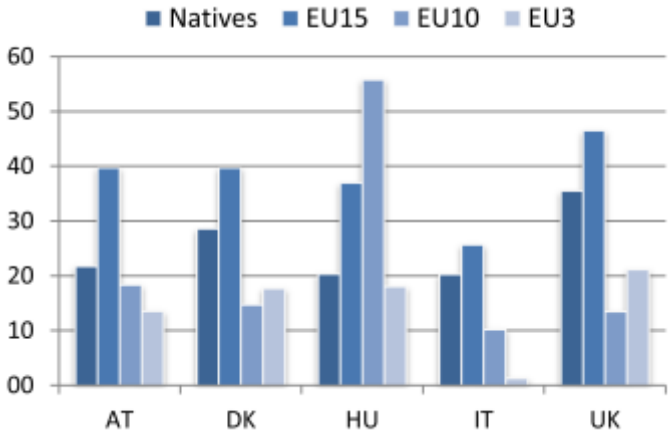
Figure 3.7 allows to compare the percentages of high professionals among natives and the three groups of EU citizens within each country. Interestingly, in each country EU15 citizens are even more likely than nationals to perform highly skilled jobs. In Hungary EU15 are surpassed by EU10, even though both estimations might be affected by the small sample size of the two groups (about 400 individuals each, table A1 in the annex). Interestingly, in the other four member states, a clear division emerges between EU citizens coming from the 'Old' Europe and the ones coming from the 'New' Europe. Indeed, the latter present lower shares of high professionals compared to natives, with little difference between the groups EU10 and EU3.

**Figure 3.6. Risk of Unemployment**



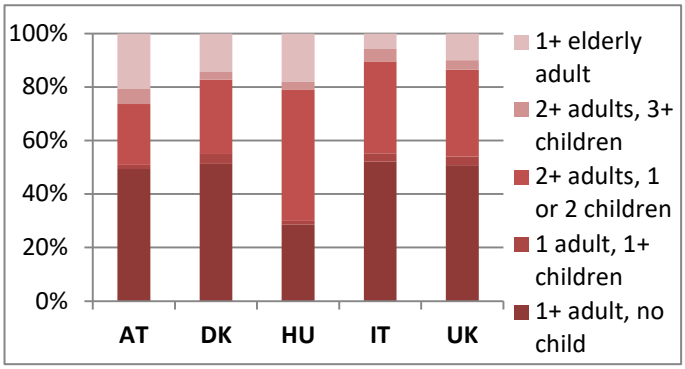

Percentage of unemployed people on the whole working-age population of Nationals and EU citizens separately within each country. Elaboration of EU-LFS wave 2015 with weight factor [iw=coeff].

**Figure 3.7. Shares of High Professionals across Countries**



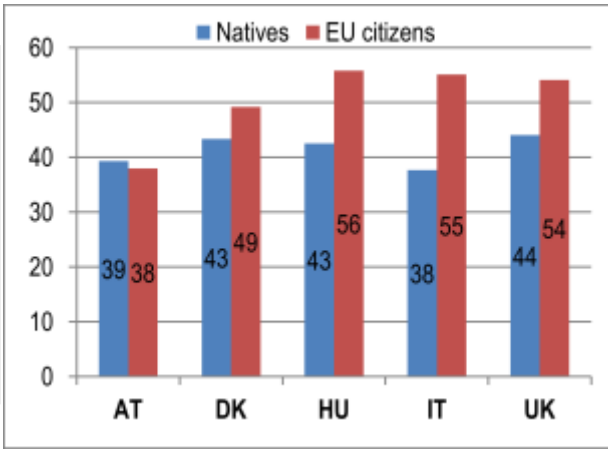

Percentage of individuals with highly skilled professions, corresponding to values 100 (Managers) and 200 (High Professionals) of the variable 'isco1d'. Within every country, each population (Natives, EU15, EU10 and EU3) is equal to 100 after summing these features to the ones of lower skill occupations. Elaboration of EU-LFS wave 2015 with weight [iw=coeff].

**Figure 3.8. Household Structure of EU Citizens**




Percentage of five types of household structure on the total population of EU citizens in the five countries of destination. Elaboration of EU-SILC wave 2015 with weight [iw=rb050].

**Figure 3.9. Shares of Households with Children**




Percentage of household with at least one child among natives and EU citizens in the five countries of destination. Elaboration of EU-SILC wave 2015 with weight [iw=rb050].

Finally figure 3.8 presents the distribution of five types of household structure within the population of mobile EU citizens who reside in the five countries concerned. The first and last household types comprehend adults only, while the three typologies in the middle refer to adults with children. Except for Hungary, the most common type among European citizens is '1+ adult, no child', which comprehends both single adults and couples without children. Right after there is '2+ adults, 1 or 2 children", that is a couple with either 1 or 2 children, which is the most widespread type in Hungary. Third type in terms of importance is '1+ elderly adult', which includes either single or coupled old age persons, and it is particularly spread (more than 20%) in Austria. On the basis of the household typologies, one would expect that mobile EU citizens in Hungary are more in need, and then access more family benefits in Hungary rather than in Austria.

Similarly, figure 3.9 shows the share of households having at list one child (irrespectively of the household composition) within the populations of natives and EU citizens per each country. Again, European citizens in Hungary are the most in need for family benefits, followed by Italy (where there is the widest gap between EU citizens and natives) and by the UK. Interestingly, Austria is the only country where the percentage of households with children is nearly the same for natives and EU citizens. This means that, following the rational of the second hypothesis, in Austria EU citizens are expected to be less in need, and then to access less to family benefits.

Considering this description of the main socio-economic characteristics of European citizens (group of origin, years since arrival, age, gender, educational level, probability to experience unemployment, skills level, household composition and household with children), one can conclude that the first research hypothesis is verified. Therefore, the populations of EU citizens present substantially different characteristics across host member states. Furthermore, the European citizens' profiles do diverge not only between the countries of destination, but also within them. Indeed, significant differences can be observed in respect to the group of countries of origin (EU15 versus EU10 and EU3). Along with the subsequent steps of the analysis, the second

hypothesis will be tested, that is EU citizens' characteristics contribute to explain the gap with natives in accessing welfare.

### 3.4.2. Probability to Receive Benefits

In order to assess the probability to access benefits, in this step of analysis all the European citizens will be treated as a whole. On the one hand, the EU-SILC database does not allow to split the group of mobile EU citizens into EU15, EU10 and EU3 groups of origin. On the other hand, in EU-LFS the number of beneficiaries among these three groups of origin would be too low. Therefore, a single group of origin comprehending all the EU citizens will be compared to the native population. Given that the populations of both natives and European citizens varies significantly across countries, the analysis will be run within each country separately. Then every time a different native population is taken as category of reference and compared to EU citizens residing in the country considered.

For both benefits analysed, two probit regressions are run in STATA with weight factors. A first probit corresponds to the basic 'raw' model, having only the dependent and independent variables. The second probit corresponds to the 'explained' model, and it includes also the control variables. Here below there are the explained equations:

$$\text{Prob. } \hat{y} \text{ (Unemployment Benefit)} = \beta 1 \text{ EUcitizen} + \beta 2 \text{ Gender} + \beta 3 \text{ Education} + \beta 4 \text{ Age} + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{Prob. } \hat{y} \text{ (Family Benefit)} = \beta 1 \text{ EUcitizen} + \beta 2 \text{ Gender} + \beta 3 \text{ Education} + \beta 4 \text{ Age} + \beta 5 \text{ Employment Status} + \beta 6 \text{ Household Structure} + \beta 7 \text{ Household Income} + \varepsilon$$

Gender, education and age are present as control variables in both equations, and in the case of family benefits three more variables are added, that are employment status, household structure and household income. It is important to specify that the probability to access unemployment benefits is assessed on a selection of the sample which includes unemployed individuals only. Differently, the probability to access family benefits is tested on the whole sample at household level, thus the variables refer either to the household or to the person identified as the household head[20]. The full tables of the predicted probability resulting from the explained probit regressions are shown in the annex (table 3.A7 and 3.A8).

Figures 3.10 and 3.11 show the predicted probabilities of EU citizens (red columns) and natives (blue columns) to access unemployment and family benefits, respectively. One can observe that, without controlling for any characteristic, the two populations present different rate of receipt of benefits in each country considered. For

[20] The household head has been defined considering both gender and age. It corresponds to the oldest man of working age (18-65 years old), otherwise the oldest woman of working age, otherwise the oldest man of age 65 or older, otherwise the oldest woman of age 65 or older.

instance, the gap in unemployment benefits is particularly wide in the UK while very small in Italy. A main difference between unemployment and family benefits is that the formers are generally accessed more by natives, while the latters by EU citizens. Moreover, the right part of figure 3.10 shows the decomposition of the population of European citizens into the three groups of origin EU15, EU10 and EU3. These groups of EU citizens can have similar rates of receipt of unemployment benefits as in the case of Austria and Italy, or quite different rates as the case of Hungary and the UK. Unfortunately, for family benefits EU-SILC does not allow to decompose EU citizens into these three groups of origin.

**Figure 3.10. Rate of receipt of Unemployment Benefits among unemployed natives and EU citizens**. Elaboration from EU-LFS, wave 2015. Not controlled for any variable nor weighted. EU citizens all together on the left, split into three groups of origin on the right.

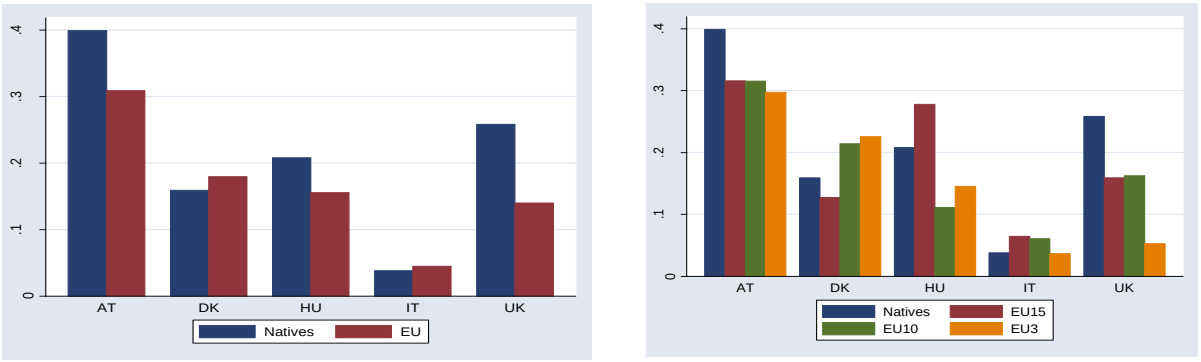
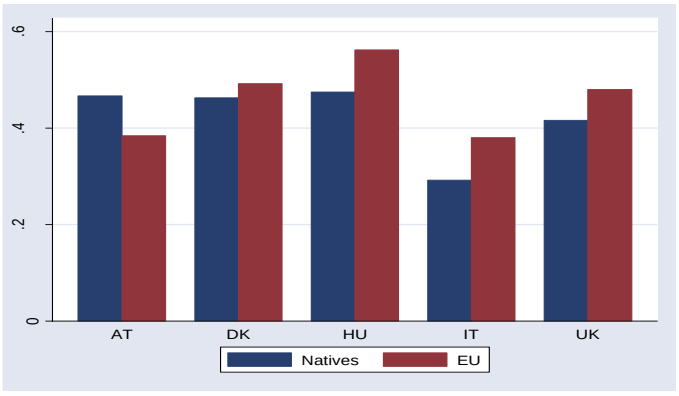



**Figure 3.11. Rates of receipt of Family Benefits among native and EU citizens' households**. Elaboration from EU-SILC, wave 2015. Not controlled for any variable nor weighted.




Figures 3.12 and 3.13 report the average marginal effects coming from raw (red columns) and explained (blue columns) models, comparing the population of natives (set as reference = 0) to the one of mobile EU citizens within each country. The bars of the chart inform about the marginal impact of being an EU citizen on the

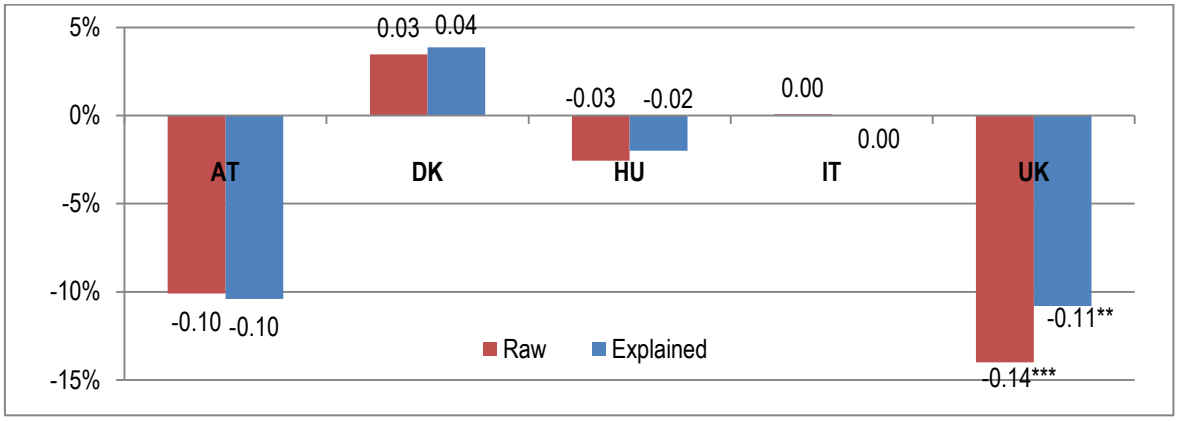
probability to access the benefit considered, following the examples by Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013: 19) and by Zimmerman et al. (2012: 45). For instance, figure 3.3 shows that in Austria mobile EU citizens are about 10 percentage points less likely to access unemployment benefits than Austrian natives. However, in contrast to previous literature, here the raw and explained estimations are shown one close to the other in order to highlight the role (if any) plaid by either individual or household characteristics of EU citizens.

According to figure 3.12, the probability of mobile EU citizens to receive unemployment benefits compared to nationals remains nearly the same also once controlled for individual characteristics. Indeed, the difference between red and blue columns never exceeds 5 percentage points. The widest gap is registered in the United Kingdom, where the probability of EU citizens to access benefits is 14% points lower than natives, and it is reduced to 11% points once controlled for gender, education and age. The average marginal effects for UK are also the only ones which are statistically significant. Overall, these estimates (ranging between +5% and -15%) are similar in size compared with those obtained for EU citizens accessing unemployment benefits by Zimmerman et al. (2012: 51) on 2007 wave (range ±20%), and by Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013: 20) on 2011 wave (range ±5%).

Moreover, a certain inconsistency might be due to either the use of a different database (here EU-LFS instead of EU-SILC) or a time effect. Over time the characteristics of the populations of mobile EU citizens might have changed, especially if the 2007 EU enlargement is taken into account. Furthermore, relevant changes might have occurred in welfare benefits and/or their eligibility conditions between the waves observed, that are 2007, 2011 and 2015. Looking at the recipient rates in Austria, Italy and the UK (which are the only countries present in all the three studies), these all go from an over to an under use of welfare over time. If a trend can be detected (and this should rather be tested with a specific research design) this goes in the opposite direction of the public concern, which start raising while the mobile EU citizens' access to benefits were decreasing.

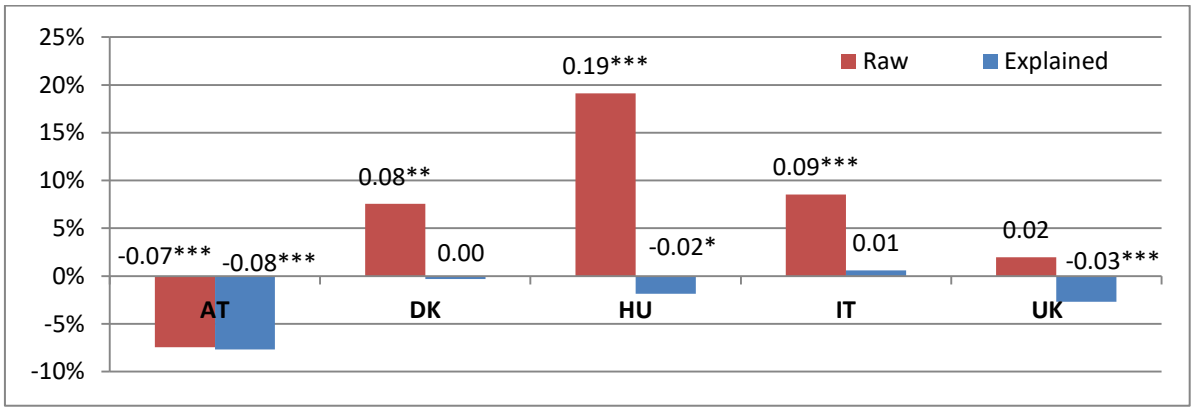
Regarding the probability to receive family benefits, figure 3.13 shows that the average marginal effect of being an EU citizen can change considerably once controlled for socio-economic characteristics. This time the control variables are referred either to the whole household (structure and income) or the household head (gender, education, age and employment status). In particular, in Denmark and Italy the effect of being an EU citizen after controls shrinks of about 10% points, while in Hungary about 20% points. Average marginal effects register a lower change in both Austria and the UK, where the explained results are also in line with the findings by Zimmerman et al. (2012:48) and Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013: 22). Interestingly, in both Hungary and the UK the sign of the effect changes from positive (raw model) to negative (explained), so that EU citizens become more likely to under-use rather than over-use family benefits. Overall, almost all estimation are statistically significant and suggest that, once controlled for household characteristics, being EU citizens has either almost no effect on accessing family benefits or it constitutes a penalty, as in the case of Austria (-8% points).

**Figure 3.12. Probability to access Unemployment Benefits of EU citizens versus Natives (ref.)**




Average marginal effects of probit regressions on unemployment benefit receipt (dummy dependent variable, equal to 1 when 'register' is equal to 1) for European citizens (independent variable) run separately for each country on the population of employed only. Reference category: Natives in each of the countries considered. Control variables: gender, education age. Individual weights applied (iw=coeff). Legend: ***The result is statistically significant at 99% level of confidence; ** at 95% level of confidence; * at 90% level of confidence.

**Figure 3.13. Probability to access Family Benefits of EU households versus Natives (ref.)**




Average marginal effects of probit regressions on family benefits receipt (dummy dependent variable, equal to 1 when 'hy050g' is different from 0) for households with at least one European citizen (independent variable) run separately for each country. Reference category: all Natives households in the country considered. Individual control variables (age, sex, level of education and employment status) are referred to the household head, corresponding to the oldest working age man, if absent woman. In addition, the model controls for household composition and household income. Household weights applied (pweight=db090). Legend: ***The result is statistically significant at 99% level of confidence; ** at 95% level of confidence; * at 90% level of confidence.

## 3.5. Conclusion

This paper provides a first attempt to link the socio-economic profiles of European citizens with their use of welfare in host member states, following the example of Huber and Oberdabernig (2016) on all migrants. Differently from the previous contributions on the use of welfare by European citizens (Medgyesi and Poloskei, 2013; Zimmerman et al., 2012), this paper focuses on a restricted selection of both benefits and countries of destination, in order to allow a more in depth analysis, middle way through between broad cross-country comparisons and case studies. Five member states are chosen (Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, and the UK), according to both the availability of data and the need to represent the whole variety of European welfare regimes. Similarly, the choice to focus on unemployment and family benefits is led by the findings emerged in the literature (Afonso and Devitt, 2016; Reyneri 2016; Rhus, 2015), and takes into account the comparability issues.

Regarding the first research hypothesis, the results confirm that the populations of European citizens present substantially different characteristics across host member states (hypothesis 1). Compared to the native populations, EU citizens are more likely to be women in all countries except in Denmark (figure 4). The general expectation that they are younger than natives is met only in Italy and the United Kingdom, where the inflows of EU citizens have been constant over years (figures 3.3 and 3.2). Differently, in Denmark three out of four European citizens arrived within the last 10 years. Conversely, in Austria and Hungary about half of the EU citizens have been residing in the country for 20 years or more. Concerning education, Hungary and especially Italy stand out for hosting the least educated populations of EU citizens (figure 3.5), and this might couple with the fact that they come mainly from EU3 countries of origin (figure 3.1). Nevertheless, this finding contradicts the expectation based on the welfare magnet hypothesis (Boeri 2009; Borjas 1999) according to which the least educated/skilled migrants go towards the most generous welfare states (1b).

With regards to the risk of unemployment, the hypothesis that the EU citizens more at risk of unemployment move towards most generous countries (1a) is not met in the data because in Austria, Denmark, and especially the UK European citizens are much less likely to be unemployed compared to Italy (figure 3.6). Furthermore, while having similar level of education, the European citizens in Italy and in Hungary are at two opposite extremes: in Italy they are much more likely to be unemployed than natives, while in Hungary even lower than natives. This means that one can expect EU citizens to be more in need, and then to access more unemployment benefits in Italy rather than in Hungary (2a). Nevertheless, this expectation is not confirmed in the second step of analysis since EU citizens access benefits as much as natives in Italy, while slightly less than natives in Hungary (figures 3.10 and 3.12). Overall, the findings on unemployment benefits suggest that the compositional factors are not able to explain the differences in welfare use observed between EU citizens and natives (hypothesis 2).

Concerning family arrangements, EU citizens are much more likely to have at least one child everywhere except in Austria (figure 3.9). In particular, in Hungary the most common household type is a couple with children, rather than 1 or 2 adults without children as in the other countries (figure 8). According to these premises, one would

expect that EU citizens in Denmark, Hungary, Italy and the UK would access family benefits more than in Austria because they have more likelihood to have children compared to natives (hypothesis 2b). Figure 11 confirms this hypothesis, showing that in the former four countries European citizens present higher rates of receipt than natives, in contrast with the latter country. Moreover, figure 13 shows that the over-use of family benefits by EU citizens disappears once controlled for household characteristics (gender, age, education and employment status of the household head, plus the household type and income).

The case of Austria is interesting because, even though the access to Familienbeihilfe is universal (table A6), EU citizens remain 8% points less likely to access family benefits compared to natives even once controlled for socio-economic characteristics (figure 13), in line with previous findings (Medgyesi and Poloskei 2013). Therefore, it might be possible that for family benefits the compositional factors are able to explain the over-use of welfare by EU citizens (2b), but not their under-use, which seems to be due to a specific 'migration effect', rather than to the characteristics of the population. This result is in line with the findings of Huber and Oberdabernig (2016), and suggests a novel interpretation regarding the difference between over and under use of welfare, so far treated together in the literature. If further research will follow, the approach suggested in this study might be a first step to build a broad narrative connecting European citizens' profiles with their welfare use. Eventually, this interpretation might lead to read the member states' positions towards free movement in the light of the competitive advantage to have an active and high educated/skilled population of European citizens rather than an inactive or low skilled one.

Before concluding, it has to be acknowledged that the anonymizing procedures in place on the databases sets important limitations to the scope of this analysis. First of all, the number of beneficiaries is low and do not allow for splitting the sample in order to analyse single groups of origin (for instance only EU15 or EU3). Moreover, the grouping of the variable related to the country of origin limits the measurement accuracy, not allowing for instance to distinguish between EU citizens from the 'old' Europe and the ones from the 'new' Europe in EU-SILC or between Southern and Central-Northern origins within the EU15 group in EU-LFS. Furthermore, the recoding of both the variables related to years since arrival and age into 5 years bans (not corresponding to each other) further limit the possibility to target the analysis towards the correct foreign populations. Thus, an improvement of the datasets that Eurostat provides to academics might allow further developments within the scope of this research.

Regarding possible directions for future research, the use of welfare by European citizens might be studied through a diachronic perspective, enlarging the present analysis to the previous waves of both EU-LFS and EU-SILC. For instance, one could check whether there has been any remarkable change following the 2004 and 2007 EU Eastern Enlargements. Moreover, possible convergences or divergences can be detected across countries, driven by changes of migrants' profiles and/or the share of benefits received. Most of all, it would be

interesting to know whether EU citizens are used to rely on benefits for long time or just temporarily, whether the duration of their welfare use differs from the one of nationals, and whether some of these features switched as a result of the 2008 economic crisis or remained stable over time.

The analyses of beneficiaries are a novel frontier of comparative welfare studies (Otto 2017; Van Oorschot 2013). In combination with the approaches relying on social expenditure (Bruzelius, Reinprecht and Seeleib-Kaiser 2017; Pacolet and De Wispelaere 2015) or social rights (Martinsen et al. 2017), the studies on the actual recipients of benefits can offer additional and useful insights on the impact of intra-EU mobility on national welfare states. Further research questions to answer in this field are: Do social benefits usually substitute or complement each other (i.e. welfare beneficiaries are used to enjoy more types of benefits or just one at a time)? Are they used to access it soon after their arrival or once spent a certain period of time in the host country? Are the universal/Beveridgean welfare schemes providing benefits to a wider share of EU citizens compared to the occupational/Bismarkian ones? How different combination of welfare regimes, capitalist models, skill production systems and labour market features contribute to both attract different types and sizes of EU citizens and to offer them different opportunities once arrived? Does national institutions matter in this case?

## 3.6 Annex

### Variable list:

- EU citizens individuals ('countryb' in EU-LFS) recoded into a dummy with values 'nationals' and 'EU citizens';
- EU citizens households ('rb090' in EU-SILC) recoded into a dummy with values 'household with nationals only' and 'household with at least one EU citizen and no extra-EU citizens';
- Years since arrival ('yearesid' in EU-LFS) recoded into 5 years bands so to have EU citizens arrived within the last 5 years, between 5 and 10 years, etc. up to the ones arrived since 20 years or more
- Gender ('rb090' in EU-SILC, and 'sex' in EU-LFS);
- Age ('rb020' continuous in EU-SILC, while 'age' already grouped into 5-year bands in EU-LFS);
- Level of Education ('pe040' in EU-SILC, and 'hatlev1d' in EU-LFS) recoded into three values corresponding to 'Up to lower Secondary', 'Upper Secondary' and 'Tertiary';
- Status of Employment ('rb090' in EU-SILC, and 'wstat1y' in EU-LFS) recoded into the three values 'Employed', 'Unemployed' and 'Inactive working-age population';
- Household Composition ('hx060' in EU-SILC only) recoded into '1+ adults over65, no child', '1+ adults lower65, no child', 'single adult, 1+ children', '2+ adults, 1 or 2 children', '2+ adults, 3+ children' and 'Other households with children';
- Household Income ('hx090' in EU-SILC only) distribution in each country split into the three bands 'lower than 60% of median', 'between 60% and 120% of median' and 'above 120% of median').

**Table A3.1. Sample size of Individuals in EU-LFS, 2015 wave according to Country of Birth**

| COUNTRY | Natives | EU15 | EU10 | EU3 | EU28 | Non-EU | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Austria** | 149,075 | 6,209 | 3,577 | 2,381 | 12,167 | 12,639 | **173,881** |
| **Denmark** | 128,666 | 2,389 | 930 | 367 | 3,686 | 7,401 | **139,753** |
| **Hungary** | 241,090 | 410 | 402 | 2,229 | 3,041 | 933 | **245,064** |
| **Italy** | 545,143 | 5,314 | 1,774 | 9,934 | 17,022 | 35,707 | **597,872** |
| **United Kingdom** | 71,949 | 1,812 | 1,660 | 351 | 3,823 | 6,441 | **82,213** |
| **Total** | **1,135,923** | **16,134** | **8,343** | **15,262** | **39,739** | **63,121** | **1,238,783** |

**Table A3.2. Sample size of Households in EU-SILC, 2015 wave according to Country of Birth**

| COUNTRY | All natives | 1+EU (0 extraEU) | 1+ extraEU | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Austria** | 10,306 | 1,200 | 1,707 | **13,213** |
| **Denmark** | 12,527 | 502 | 940 | **13,969** |
| **Hungary** | 18,271 | 308 | 103 | **18,682** |
| **Italy** | 37,750 | 1,798 | 3,401 | **42,949** |
| **United Kingdom** | 17,267 | 1,353 | 2,611 | **21,231** |
| **Total** | **96,121** | **5,161** | **8,762** | **110,044** |

**Table A3.3. Descriptive overview on the population of EU citizens in 5 countries** from EU-LFS (wave 2015)

| **Individuals in 5 countries** | **Natives** | **EU15** | **EU10** | **EU3** | **All EU** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Rate of receipt** (among unemployed only) | | | | | |
| Unemployment benefits | 0.09 | 0.11 | 0.16 | 0.05 | 0.08 |
| **Gender** | | | | | |
| Female | 0.51 | 0.54 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 1.55 |
| **Age** | | | | | |
| Mean | 41.85 | 43.85 | 35.88 | 36.33 | 39.22 |
| **Education** | | | | | |
| Up to Lower Secondary | 37.27 | 22.12 | 17.50 | 30.35 | 23.21 |
| Upper Secondary | 40.32 | 35.56 | 51.25 | 52.75 | 45.71 |
| Tertiary | 22.42 | 42.32 | 31.25 | 16.90 | 31.08 |
| **Employment Status** | | | | | |
| Employed | 61.80 | 66.07 | 71.04 | 59.61 | 65.58 |
| Self-employed | 12.89 | 12.05 | 10.13 | 9.07 | 10.47 |
| Unemployed/Inactive | 9.58 | 7.42 | 5.44 | 17.95 | 10.19 |
| Retired | 15.74 | 14.46 | 13.40 | 13.36 | 13.76 |
| **Total sample** | | | | | |
| Share | 91.69 | 1.3 | 0.67 | 1.23 | 3.21 |
| Observations | **1135923** | **16134** | **8343** | **15262** | **39739** |

**Table A3.4.Descriptive overview on the population of EU citizens in 5 countries** from EU-SILC (wave 2015)

| **Households in 5 countries** | **Natives** | **EU Citizens** | (continue) | **Natives** | **EU Citizens** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Rate of receipt** | | | **Household type** | | |
| Family benefits | 0.37 | 0.41 | 1+ adult, no child | 42.2 | 42.4 |
| **Gender** | | | 1 adult, 1+ children | 4.1 | 4.2 |
| Female | 0.51 | 0.52 | 2+ adults, 1 or 2 children | 30.7 | 38.8 |
| **Age** | | | 2+ adults, 3+ children | 5.0 | 6.3 |
| Mean | 43.2 | 35.5 | 1+ elderly adult | 18.1 | 8.5 |
| **Education** | | | **Household Income** | | |
| Up to Lower Secondary | 40.3 | 31.0 | Low < 60% of median | 16.3 | 21.4 |
| Upper Secondary | 34.7 | 37.6 | Medium (60%< x <120%) | 46.5 | 46.1 |
| Tertiary | 25.0 | 31.4 | High (>120%) | 37.2 | 32.5 |
| **Employment Status** | | | | | |
| Working | 49.3 | 61.1 | **Total sample** | | |
| Unemployed/Inactive | 26.2 | 24.9 | Share | 87.3 | 4.7 |
| Retired | 24.5 | 14.0 | Observations | **96121** | **5161** |

**Table A3.5. Entitlement to Unemployment Benefits across 5 Countries**. Elaboration of MISSOC tables updated at 1st January 2015.

| | AUSTRIA | DENMARK | HUNGARY | ITALY | UNITED KINGDOM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Arbeitslosengeld + Notstandshilfe** | **Arbejdsløshedsforsikring** | **Álláskeresési járadék** | **ASpI + ASDI + Cassa Integrazione & Mobilità** | **Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance** |
| **Generosity** | Allowance of from 55% to 80% of the daily net salary (ceilings ranging from €7.43 to €48.30). Ceiling of €4,230 per month. Duration increase with insurance duration and age from 20 weeks (after 1 year of countribution) to 52 weeks (after 9 years).<br>+ Monthly allowance of 92% of the basic amount of unemployment benefit once it ends. Lower ceiling of €634 (€ 1,102 over50; €1,653 over55; increase of €275.50, €551 or €826.50 if dependent partner). Form max 52weeks, but prolonged if participation in training programme | Voluntary scheme for workers aged 18-62, having contrubuted x min 1 year<br><br>Monthly allowance:<br>90% of previous earnings (max €112/day) decreasing to 60% (or 80% if dependent children) x max 2 years<br>+ (once expired) monthly amount of €1,475 (€1,960 if <=1 child) | Compulsory social insurance scheme financed by contributions, covering employees and self-employed and providing earnings-related benefits.<br><br>The job-seeker benefit amounts to 60% of the beneficiary's earlier average wage, with a fixed maximum amount of €411 per mounth.<br>The amount does not diminish over time with the duration of unemployment, and it does not vary according to age or other factors. | Monthly allowance calculated as 75% of the average gross salary in last 4years (max €1,300, reduced by 3% every month since the 4th) x max 10 months. The duration of the benefit increases for over 50 + additional 6 months for over55 (ASDI), decreases for short-term contracts (mini-ASpI, Dis-Coll). Cumulable with child benefits (ANF) but not pensions.<br>+ Mobility allowance and earnings supplement: 80% of not worked hours x max 12 months (exceptions) | Monthly (= weekly x 4) allowance for singles:<br>€280 single aged 18-24<br>€356 single aged >= 25:<br>For couples with >=1 child:<br>€416 if both under 18<br>€556 over 18<br><br>Unlimited duration<br>Cumulation with earnings possible, but benefit deducted.<br>Possible cumulation with Child Benefits |
| **Eligibility** | NO (No waiting period)<br>+ MEANS-TESTED | VESTING PERIOD<br>(min 1year worked out of last 3) | NO | VESTING PERIOD<br>(ASpI 2 years, mini-ASpI 3 months) | MEANS-TESTED<br>(savings < €19,382/year) |
| **Funding** | CONTRIBUTION | CONTRIBUTION | CONTRIBUTION | TAXES + CONTRIBUTION | TAXES |
| **Coverage** | EMPLOYEES | EMPLOYEES<br>(voluntary for workers aged 18-62) | EMPLOYEES<br>and SELF-EMPLOYED | EMPLOYEES<br>(Dis-Coll for SELF-EMPLOYED) | RESIDENTS (>3 months) |

**Table A3.6. Entitlement to Family Benefits across 5 Countries**. Elaboration of MISSOC tables updated at 1st January 2015.

| | AUSTRIA | DENMARK | HUNGARY | ITALY | UNITED KINGDOM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Familienbeihilfe<br>+ Schulstartgeld + Mehrkindzuschlag + Kinderbetreuungsgeld** | **Børne- og ungeydelse+ Børnetilskud** | **Családi pótlék + Gyermekgondozást segítő ellátás** | **Assegno per il Nucleo Familiare + Bonus Bebè** | **Child Benefit<br>+ Child Tax Benefit** |
| **Generosity** | Monyhly allowance increasing with number of siblings and age:<br><3 years: €109.70 ; 3-9 years: €117.30<br>10-18 years: €136.20 ; >=19 years: €158.90<br>Up to 18 years of age (24 if in training, but from 20 the child total taxable income may not exceed €10,000 per year, otherwhise gradual reduction).<br>+ Annual School Start Allowance of €100 for each child 6-15.<br>+ Monthly supplement of €20 for families with >=3 children if annual income <€55,000.<br>+ Daily child-raising allowance of about €20 if annual income <€16,200. | Monthly allowance per child decreasing with family income and age:<br>0-2 years: €200<br>3-6 years: €160<br>7-17 years: €125<br>Gradual reduction when the yearly income exceeds €100000<br><br>+ Monthly allowance of €183 per child | Monthly allowance per child increasing with the number of children (independently from age):<br>1 child: €39, single parent €44;<br>2 children: €43/child, single parent €48;<br>3+ children €51/child, single parent €55.<br><br>+ Monthly allowance of €92 irrespectively of the number of children in the family. | Monthly allowance decreasing with family income and increasing with members. Ex. Family with 3 members & yearly income up to €14000: €137,50<br>Benefit decreasing up to 0 (for yearly income of €71000)<br>Children up to 18 (exceptions up to 21)<br><br>+ Annual allowance with the same mechanism. Ex. yearly income up to €25,000: €960 | Fixed monthly allowance for each child:<br>1st child: €109<br>2th child and sub: €70 each Children up to 16 (exceptions up to 20)<br><br>+ Monthly tax credit:<br>Family element: €55<br>Child element: €281 |
| **Eligibility** | NO<br>+ MEANS-TESTED | MEANS-TESTED<br>+ NO | NO | MEANS-TESTED | NO<br>+ MEANS-TESTED |
| **Funding** | TAXES | TAXES | TAXES | CONTRIBUTIONS | TAXES |
| **Coverage** | RESIDENTS | RESIDENTS | RESIDENTS | EMPLOYEES | RESIDENTS |

**Table A3.7. Explained probability of EU citizens to access Unemployment Benefits** in EU-LFS (wave 2015)

| | AT | DK | HU | IT | UK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **EU (Ref. Natives)** | -0.292 | 0.15 | -0.0811 | -0.00312 | -0.412* |
| | (-1.20) | -0.27 | (-0.14) | (-0.02) | (-2.16) |
| **Individual characteristics** | | | | | |
| **Female (Ref. Male)** | -0.204 | 0.129 | -0.0736 | -0.0778 | -0.205* |
| | (-1.13) | -0.4 | (-0.55) | (-1.10) | (-2.24) |
| **Education (ref. Lower Secondary)** | | | | | |
| **Upper Secondary** | -0.0672 | -0.121 | -0.317* | 0.0847 | -0.285** |
| | (-0.31) | (-0.30) | (-2.31) | -1.12 | (-2.96) |
| **Tertiary** | -0.225 | 0.0689 | -0.711* | 0.134 | -0.682*** |
| | (-0.80) | -0.16 | (-2.03) | -1.14 | (-5.07) |
| **Age (ref. 15-19)** | | | | | |
| **20-24** | 0.782 | -0.602 | 0.444 | 0.668 | 0.0824 |
| | -1.2 | (-0.69) | -0.7 | -0.87 | -0.44 |
| **25-29** | 1.14 | -0.266 | 0.635 | 0.903 | 0.308 |
| | -1.74 | (-0.35) | -1.01 | -1.18 | -1.55 |
| **30-34** | 1.267 | -0.197 | 0.63 | 1.078 | 0.013 |
| | -1.93 | (-0.24) | -1 | -1.41 | -0.06 |
| **35-39** | 1.401* | -0.168 | 0.637 | 1.207 | 0.365 |
| | -2.09 | (-0.21) | -1.01 | -1.58 | -1.58 |
| **40-44** | 1.409* | 0.177 | 0.573 | 1.304 | 0.500* |
| | -2.1 | -0.23 | -0.91 | -1.71 | -2.27 |
| **45-49** | 1.675* | 0.147 | 0.751 | 1.38 | 0.422 |
| | -2.56 | -0.19 | -1.19 | -1.81 | -1.95 |
| **50-54** | 1.648* | 0.198 | 0.775 | 1.485 | 0.653** |
| | -2.51 | -0.27 | -1.23 | -1.95 | -3.06 |
| **55-59** | 1.712** | 0.256 | 0.806 | 1.475 | 0.468* |
| | -2.62 | -0.34 | -1.28 | -1.93 | -2.08 |
| **60-64** | 1.18 | 0 | 1.321* | 1.379 | 0.195 |
| | -1.53 | (.) | -2.07 | -1.78 | -0.7 |
| **65-69** | 0 | 0 | 0.592 | 1.272 | 0 |
| | (.) | (.) | -0.39 | -1.45 | (.) |
| **Constant** | -1.312* | -0.978 | -1.361* | -3.023*** | -0.617*** |
| | (-2.20) | (-1.44) | (-2.28) | (-3.99) | (-3.70) |
| **Observations** | 3675 | 1422 | 13294 | 45724 | 1172 |
| **Pseudo R-squared** | 0.071 | 0.037 | 0.041 | 0.038 | 0.058 |

**Table A3.8. Explained probability of EU households to access Family Benefits** in EU-SILC (wave 2015)

| | AT | DK | HU | IT | UK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **EU (Ref. Natives)** | -0.501*** | -0.0511 | -0.244* | 0.0212 | -0.223*** |
| | (-6.64) | (-0.39) | (-2.02) | -0.49 | (-3.59) |
| **Characteristics of the Household Head** | | | | | |
| **Female (Ref. Male)** | -0.506*** | -0.288*** | -0.390*** | -0.435*** | -0.225*** |
| | (-8.61) | (-3.30) | (-5.35) | (-14.16) | (-3.62) |
| **Age (ref. 18-35)** | | | | | |
| **36-49** | 0.409*** | 0.764*** | 0.208** | 0.0471 | -0.156*** |
| | -7.51 | -10.46 | -2.96 | -1.45 | (-3.71) |
| **50-64** | 0.444*** | 0.410*** | -0.164* | -0.0602 | -0.105* |
| | -8.29 | -5.4 | (-2.40) | (-1.84) | (-2.09) |
| **65+** | -0.674*** | 0.218* | -0.461*** | -0.0998* | -0.421** |
| | (-6.07) | -2.23 | (-3.89) | (-2.11) | (-2.92) |
| **Education (ref. up to Lower Secondary)** | | | | | |
| **Upper Secondary** | -0.451*** | -0.122 | 0.0525 | -0.265*** | 0.0331 |
| | (-6.15) | (-1.91) | -0.8 | (-12.25) | -0.73 |
| **Tertiary** | -0.319*** | -0.00347 | -0.0564 | -0.519*** | -0.395*** |
| | (-4.07) | (-0.05) | (-0.68) | (-19.40) | (-8.36) |
| **Employment Status (ref. Working)** | | | | | |
| **Unemployed/Inactive** | 0.350*** | -0.153* | -0.00974 | 0.00744 | 0.279*** |
| | -4.81 | (-2.30) | (-0.15) | -0.26 | -4.72 |
| **Retired** | -0.436*** | -0.860*** | -0.322*** | -0.00278 | -0.475*** |
| | (-6.78) | (-11.08) | (-3.54) | (-0.08) | (-3.72) |
| **Household type (ref. Adult/s only)** | | | | | |
| **single adult, >=1children** | 2.731*** | 3.351*** | 0 | 1.226*** | 3.512*** |
| | -20.53 | -19.27 | (.) | -19.77 | -29.73 |
| **>=2adults, <=2children** | 2.580*** | 3.630*** | 3.942*** | 1.150*** | 2.880*** |
| | -48.75 | -52.11 | -37.63 | -49.53 | -53.98 |
| **>=2adults, >=3children** | 3.303*** | 3.893*** | 0 | 1.439*** | 2.889*** |
| | -25.25 | -32.07 | (.) | -28.95 | -40.57 |
| **Household Income (ref. Low < 60% of median)** | | | | | |
| **Medium (60%< x <120%)** | 0.841*** | 0.424*** | 0.073 | 0.298*** | 0.164** |
| | -10.24 | -4.84 | -0.87 | -11.25 | -2.72 |
| **High (>120%)** | 0.885*** | 0.145 | -0.212* | -0.129*** | -0.548*** |
| | -10.01 | -1.48 | (-2.33) | (-4.34) | (-8.04) |
| **Constant** | -1.380*** | -2.096*** | -1.201*** | -0.873*** | -1.271*** |
| | (-11.77) | (-16.74) | (-11.63) | (-21.37) | (-18.71) |
| **Observations** | 11506 | 12870 | 16181 | 39548 | 17925 |
| **Pseudo R-squared** | 0.566 | 0.827 | 0.754 | 0.2 | 0.671 |

# 4. Migration Neutrality in Accessing Welfare Across Europe

## 4.1. Introduction

Migrants notably face several difficulties in accessing welfare benefits, such as language and cultural barriers, limited awareness of their rights and related administrative procedures in the country of arrival, scarce integration into the relevant social networks, and so on. Furthermore, migrants might be entitled to a lower or different range of social benefits compared to the national population, and even be discriminated against in accessing those benefits. Conversely, the mainstream economics of migration hypothesizes that migrants coming from countries which enjoy comparatively low socio-economic standards are attracted by the generosity of welfare states typical of countries with higher standards (Boeri 2009; Borjas 1999). Therefore, migrants are expected to have an easy access to welfare benefits abroad, given that they would move exactly for this purpose.

Even considering the labour market outcomes of migrants, one can expect different and opposite effects on their access to welfare (Tamesberger 2017; Bratsberg, Raaum and Røed 2014). On the one hand, the general expectation is that migrants perform worse than natives in the labour market, especially at the beginning, for the imperfect transferability of human capital, lack of social networks or even discrimination (Fullin 2015). As a consequence, migrants are more likely to be represented among the beneficiaries of welfare benefits compared to natives. On the other hand, migrants might experience a more difficult access to welfare due to their lower capacity to claim social rights or even discrimination. Moreover, these labour market and welfare effects might work and/or interacts differently both across countries and over time.

Overall, do migrants have an easy or limited access to welfare benefits? Can differentiated accessibilities be detected across groups of origin and countries of destination? And if so, which criteria such variability depend on? These are the broad research questions which are inspiring a novel stream of literature focusing on the migrants' accessibility to welfare states (Eugster 2018b; Huber and Oberdabernig 2016; Maquet, Maestri and Thévenot 2016; Hooijer and Picot 2015). Building on these recent results, this paper adds an insight to the puzzle, by exploring the migrants' accessibility to welfare benefits over time. In particular, it builds on the concept of 'migration neutrality' proposed by Recchi (2016b) in order to test the relevance of migrant status on the accessibility to welfare state[21].

Given the limited availability of longitudinal data on migrants (especially cross-country) the strategy adopted by this study consists in comparing different categories of migrants (newly arrived, long-term residents and second generations) at the same time of observation, that is the 2011 wave of EU-SILC database. Moreover, their main

[21] As it will be explained later, the approach taken here differs by that of Recchi (2016b) in that the place of birth, not citizenship, will be considered to assess migration neutrality.

relevant socio-economic characteristics (gender, age, education, employment status and household structure) are controlled at household level. In this way, the observable compositional effects of the migrant population over time are taken into account across four welfare regimes (Continental, Southern, Liberal and Nordic) and twelve countries (Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

According to consolidated results (Medgyesi and Poloskei 2013; Juravle et al. 2013; Zimmermann et al. 2012), an overall scenario of migration neutrality emerges when comparing the use of welfare of migrants with the one of natives within each country. Indeed, the differences between natives and migrants come out to be either not significant, or, when statistically significant, substantially very small. Nonetheless, this picture may change if one considers different groups of migrants along the time spent in the country of destination, and even over generations. Therefore, this research is intended to fill in a lacking and potentially meaningful piece of the puzzle. Subsequent to this introduction, the paper will first present a brief literature review, and then a methodological section before showing the results of the analysis. Further empirical details are shown in the annex, after the conclusion.

## 4.2. Literature Review

The topic of migrants' access to welfare benefits has been first approached by several contributions in the field of migration economics, which originally focused on two main aspects. Firstly, the test of the so called welfare magnet hypothesis (Boeri 2009; Borjas 1999), according to which social benefits are expected to work as pull factors for migrants. Secondly, the estimation of the fiscal impact of migrants aggregated at national level across several countries (Osterman, Palme and Ruhs 2019; Nyman and Ahlskog 2018; ECAS report 2014). Nevertheless, a novel strand has been developing, specifically dealing with the use of welfare by migrants, which pivotal study has been the one of Zimmerman et al. (2012). Here the rates of benefits receipt among migrants (often distinguished between EU citizens and Extra-EU migrants) are compared to the ones among natives within each country.

Recently, also the comparative welfare studies have started exploring the data on actual recipients of benefits (Otto 2017; Van Oorschot 2013), thanks to the availability of large survey databases such as the *European Statistics on Income and Living Conditions* (EU-SILC). Cross-country analyses on beneficiaries are then a new and promising research frontier in this field, to be combined with more traditional approaches focusing on social rights data (Martinsen et al. 2017), and social expenditure data (Bruzelius, Reinprecht and Seeleib-Kaiser 2017; Pacolet and De Wispelaere 2015). For instance, these analyses have highlighted an interesting and unexpected result, which might be confirmed throughout further researches, that is the trade-off between generosity of welfare benefits on the one hand, and their accessibility by migrants on the other hand. This goes at odds with the

rationale of the ‘welfare magnet’ hypothesis, expecting that more generous welfare states attract and then provide benefits to more (and poor) migrants.

Building on this hint, a third and last strand of literature, focusing on the poverty-reducing capacity of welfare states, provided additional insights on the welfare access by the migrant population residing within each country. Here for instance Huber and Oberdabernig (2016) showed that the use of welfare by migrants mostly differ from the one made by natives in respect to accessibility, rather than the generosity dimension. As a consequence, mostly the access, rather than the level of benefits, should be explored when dealing with migrants. Interestingly, Hooijer and Picot (2015) presented welfare generosity as a necessary but not sufficient condition for migrants’ access, to be activated by a combination of other factors such as the basic characteristics of welfare regimes (universal versus insurance-based), labour markets (degree of employment protection), and profiles of foreign population (humanitarian and family versus economic migrants).

Elaborating on the methodology and results provided by these three strands of literature (Economics of migrations, comparative welfare studies, and anti-poverty policies targeted to migrants), this paper discusses the opportunity to test the ‘migration neutrality’ hypothesis (Recchi 2016b) along the time spent by migrants in the country of destination. Right after such discussion, a justification of the choice of the two thresholds (over years of residence within the same generation and along generations) is proposed on the basis of both the legal framework in place within the European Union and the on-going academic debate. The research hypotheses are subsequently presented into the methodological section, together with the cases (benefits and countries) selection.

### 4.2.1 Migration Neutrality

The concept of ‘migration neutrality’ has been first introduced by Recchi (2016b) in order to test the irrelevance of national citizenship as a predictor of key social attainments in the country of destination. Differently from the notion of 'ethnic penalty' generally used in sociology of migration studies, ‘migration neutrality’ proposes citizenship instead of ethnicity as a reference point. The author measures it through odds ratios, so that a ‘migration neutrality’ equal to one corresponds to a substantial equality between nationals and migrants in respect to the outcome considered. Differently, a score either higher or lower than one corresponds to a situation of inequality between the two groups, and then to the relevance of citizenship as a criterion.

Notably, the seminal study by Chiswick (1978) describes the process of migrants’ entrance into a foreign labour market. Right after their arrival, migrants are expected to face an occupational downgrading, due to the fact that they only find lower skilled and/or lower paid jobs compared to the ones they used to perform in the country of origin. Indeed, initially the imperfect transferability of human capital together with a limited recognition of educational credentials, poor language skills and other barriers, prevent a properly assessed match between

labour demand and labour supply. Nonetheless, after a while, migrants are expected to upgrade their chances through the series of employment contracts obtained in the country of destination, so that they gradually manage to reach the same occupational level they enjoyed in the country of origin. This expectation is not always met, since there are also evidences of migrants who remain 'trapped' into low qualified jobs for long time, so that the skills they had in the country of origin are never recognised in the country of destination (Fellini and Guetto 2018).

Several studies have shown how deeply the labour market regulation on the one hand, and the welfare system on the other hand interact with each other in respect to the integration of migrants' and other vulnerable groups (Eugster 2018b; Tamesberger 2017; Bratsberg, Raaum and Røed 2014; Van Der Waal, De Koster and Van Oorschot 2013). Arguably, this hypothesis conceived for labour market access might work also for the migrants' access to the host welfare system. During the time spent in the new country of residence, along the sequence of jobs performed, migrants also face several situations (such as unemployment spells, pregnancy and then child-raising, income shortages and so on) which might raise the need for a benefit claim.

Migration neutrality as for access to welfare benefits is expected to come about after some years since the arrival in the host country. Indeed, recent migrants might be more in need of and, at the same time, experience a restricted access to welfare benefits. Nevertheless, their labour market outcome are expected to get better and they also get progressively to know the social rights they are entitled within the country of destination, so that they learn how to fill in the correct procedures to claim and then receive benefits. In other words, one would expect that migrants come closer to nationals in their use of welfare over time, so that to reach a situation of 'migration neutrality' not immediately, but only after a while. These types of expectations vary according to the welfare regime in place in the different EU countries and areas, as witnessed by a vast body of research (Schmitt and Teney 2018; Hooijer and Picot 2015; Eugster 2008; Morissens and Sainsbury 2005). In particular, it can be expected that migrants are granted wider access in more generous welfare regimes, while in less generous countries they are granted a restricted access to welfare benefits.

### 4.2.2 Along Years of Residence

Due to the scarce availability of longitudinal databases where migrant beneficiaries can be compared cross-country, the design of this analysis cannot be but cross-sectional. Therefore, the present study of migrants over time compares several migrant groups, which simultaneously (at the time of survey, *t*, that is 2011) face distinct phases along the same process of access to the welfare system. The use of welfare on the side of natives within each country is set as the reference point, meaning that if migrants show the same welfare use of natives, a condition of 'migration neutrality' is reached. However, by keeping natives as the reference category, one cannot use years of residence as an independent nor a control variable, because it is referred to the migrant population only. Therefore, a categorical independent variable is built, having natives as the first value (reference category) and different groups of migrants as the subsequent values.

As a threshold to distinguish groups of migrants over time, the first five years of residence are considered. Indeed, according to the EU legal framework, all the EU citizens who have been resided for five years are entitled to all social benefits, including social assistance. Even before being entitled to a full principle of equal treatment with locals, EU citizens who are active in the labour market and their family members can access all welfare provisions under the same rules for nationals, thanks to the Social Security Coordination System[22]. According to Verschueren (2007, p.37), this system, applying to all mobile EU citizens, is inspired by an 'immediate access' approach. Differently, the Residence directive[23], applying to both residents with EU and Extra-EU origin, follows a 'progressive access' approach, by preventing migrants to access social assistance for the first three months and allowing a full access only after five years.

**Table 4.1. European Legal Framework Regulating Migrants' Access to Welfare Benefits**

| Category of benefit / person | **WORKER** | **NOT worker / worked less than 1 year** |
|---|---|---|
| **Social insurance** | Gradual access by contributions | Indirect access as family member |
| **'Special benefit' (non-contributory)** | Immediate access by residence | Since 2010 IMMEDIATE access by residence |
| **Social assistance** | Immediate access as 'social or tax advantage' | Right to access only AFTER 5 YEARS of residence |

It is important to specify that social entitlements considerably vary cross-country, and the purpose of the European Union intervention is coordination, not harmonization. Nonetheless, given the significant differences expected in terms of both social rights enjoyed and migrant groups characteristics, the European Citizens (born in another Member State of the Union) are distinguished from the Extra-EU migrants. Consequently, the Native born population (reference category) is compared with the different groups of migrants, identified according to the double criterion of residence duration and country of origin. Therefore, as a criterion for residence duration, the first five years of residence are taken into account in order to distinguish between migrants who might have not access to social assistance (if not employed) from whom are entitled to.

### 3.2.3. Inter Generations

The intergenerational transmission of educational and labour market outcomes is widely recognized as a long-standing social policy issue. Therefore, the studies on migrants' economic and social outcomes should focus not only on first-generation migrants, but also on their descendants. Given that earlier studies on benefit receipt among second generation migrants (Zorlu 2013; Fertig and Schmidt 2001) have focused on few specific countries, there is still a lack of comparative studies in this field. According to Brunello and De Paola (2016), first and second generation migrants should be fully acknowledged as heterogeneous groups. As a consequence, the

[22] The EU Regulation n. 883/2004 which came into force in mid-2010, substituting the Reg. 1408/1971 (ex Reg. 3/1958).
[23] The so called 'Residence Directive' corresponds to Directive n. 2004/38/CE.

intergenerational perspective is included into the analysis so to test the migration neutrality hypothesis over a longer time span.

Several studies show that parental and child income are positively correlated to each other (Blanden 2013; Becker and Tomes 1986), and the likelihood of becoming poor is higher among those with parents from lower social classes (Whelan et al. 2013). There are various mechanisms that might explain the intergenerational correlation of social status and incomes. Education is a key determinant of success in the labour market. Thus, the effect of parental social status (education, employment, income) on child educational achievement is an important channel of status transmission between generations (d'Addio 2007; Haveman and Wolfe 1995). But even with similar educational backgrounds, children of low-income families might be less successful on the labour market and might have higher chances of becoming poor during the economic crisis.

An extensive literature has documented the fact that intergenerational correlations in welfare receipt exist (Black and Devereux 2011). This can be a consequence of the correlation between parent's and child's education or labour market status, and welfare spill-overs within families can also arise via the transmission of information, beliefs, or norms (Dahl and Gielen, 2018). If this is true, welfare receipt among second generation migrants might be higher in countries where first generation migrants are also more likely to receive benefits compared to natives. While over years since arrival migrants have been more exposed to host country institutions and social networks, the same mechanism is expected to occur also over generations.

Therefore, two main mechanisms can be detected over generations. As far as the labour market is concerned, there is an intergenerational transmissions of education affecting migrants' children labour market outcomes, and thus their need of welfare. Regarding instead the welfare access, the intergenerational transmission of beliefs, norms and information may affect the migrants' children capacity to claim social benefits. Again, these mechanisms can work to explain either an under or an over representation of second generation migrants among welfare recipients. Even though potential institutional changes occurred within countries over time cannot be accounted in this paper, the migrants' accessibility to welfare over time (along the length of stay within generations and over generations) is tested in a comparative perspective.

## 4.3. Research Design, Data & Method

### 4.3.1 The Hypotheses

'Migration neutrality' is expected to increase over the time spent by migrants in the country of destination, as hypothesized by Recchi (2016b: 191). In particular, this time span is analysed in this paper along two different dimensions. The first one is the length of residence, having the first 5 years since arrival (variable *rb031* in EU-SILC) as the relevant threshold. The second one corresponds to the shift from the first to the second generation of migrants. In particular, the 2011 wave of EU-SILC has been selected because the 2011 *ad hoc* module on

*Intergenerational Transmission of Disadvantages* is the only one which includes the relevant target variables for studying generations (that are the origin of father/mother, *pt060/pt090*)[24]. The hypotheses tested in this study are the following:

> H1) Migration neutrality is higher for *Long-term Migrants* (>= 5 years) compared to the *Newly Arrived* (< 5 years);
>
> H2*)* Migration neutrality is higher for *Second Generation Migrants* compared to the *First Generations;*
>
> H3*)* Migration neutrality is higher for *Nordic Countries,* intermediate for *Continental* and *Liberal Countries* while lower for *Southern Countries*.

Migration neutrality is operationalized as the gap between migrants and natives in accessing welfare benefits. It is important to specify that the comparison with natives of each country considered is always intended as a measure of proximity, with no specific hypothesis formulated in respect to the direction of the sign. In other words, it is searched whether migrants have a probability to receive either more or less benefits compared to natives. Generally speaking, the opposite of 'migration neutrality' might be the relevance of migrant status as a determinant of welfare use, and this holds both in the case that one expects migrants to overuse/abuse welfare (as for the 'welfare magnet' hypothesis) and in the case that migrants are expected to face accessibility barriers, and then to underuse the benefits they are entitled to.

In addition to the first two hypotheses, which represent a novelty in respect to previous literature, the subsequent one has been inspired by the comparative literature on migrants' access to the host welfare state (Osterman, Palme and Ruhs 2019). The general expectation is that countries with a more generous welfare are also more inclusive systems, and then they are more likely to present an equal treatment between migrant and natives, that leads to migration neutrality. Notably, Nordic countries have the most universal and generous welfare systems in Europe, while Southern countries are the least generous because they heavily rely on families' resources rather than state transfers. Continental and Liberal welfare regimes, even though quite different from each other, are expected to occupy an intermediate position with regards to migrant neutrality, being less inclusive either because they are developed on an occupational basis (Continental), or because they mainly target the poor through means-test benefits (Liberal).

[24] The previous *ad hoc* module on generations, collected in the 2005 wave of EU-SILC, is useless for this research because the information on parental country of birth are lacking. The later *ad hoc* module on generations (2019) is still in progress at the time of writing, and then data will be available only in the coming two years.

### 4.3.2 The Migrant Groups

As suggested by literature (Juravle et al. 2013; Zimmerman et al. 2012), different migrant groups (the mobile EU Citizens versus the Extra-EU migrants) are compared to each other, always keeping natives as the reference group. Following Medgyesi and Poloskei (2013, pg. 7), and differently from Recchi (2016b), country of birth (*pb210*), rather than citizenship (*bp220a*), has been taken into account. Indeed, both criteria might be biased: the citizenship because of cross-country differences in acquiring nationality, while the country of birth because of nationals born abroad, and then misclassified as migrants. Nevertheless, the latter misclassified cases are expected on average to be in lower numbers than the former, especially when taking into account a migrant population which has been residing for long in the destination country.

In practice, the key explanatory variable has been built containing the following four values: households in which everybody is a native (reference); households in which there is at least one newly-arrived EU Citizen (within the last five years from year of survey); households with at least one long-term EU Citizen (who have been residing in the country for five years or more); households with at least one native with EU-born parents (Second generation of EU Citizens). To organize the migrants group, it has been assumed that these are ordered such that long-term residents and second generations face relative smaller penalties compared to newly-arrived residents and first generations, respectively. Consequently, the whole household (with at least one foreign-born member) has been assigned to the group which the 'worst-off' member of the family belongs to. For instance, a couple composed by a newly-arrived adult and a long-term adult would be assigned to newly-arrived group.

For what concerns second generations households, differently from the variable detecting second generation individuals, it might not be sufficient to have at least one foreign-born parent in order to assign the whole household to second generations. This is the case for instance of a couple of two native-born adults, having overall three native parents and one foreign-born parent. Having one foreign-born parent out of four might not produce such a relevant penalty. Therefore, these cases have been assigned to all natives households by assessing the proportion of foreign-born parents over adults. Whenever the number of foreign-born parents is equal or higher to the number of adults within the household, then the household is assigned to the second generation category.

### 4.3.3 The Selection of Benefits

Previous examples of broad comparisons across countries (Medgyesi and Poloskei 2013; Zimmermann et al. 2012) analysed each cash benefit available in EU-SILC. Differently, Huber and Oberdabernig (2016) grouped all benefits into the two broad categories of contributory and non-contributory benefits, distinguishing the benefits provided on an individual basis on the one hand from the ones provided on a household basis on the other hand.

Above all, the benefits provided on household basis, and in particular family/child-related and housing benefits, stand out for presenting higher rates of receipts among migrants as compared to natives (Kaczmarczyk and Rapoport 2014). The general explanation proposed is that migrants are more represented among larger families with more children, and thus are more in need of welfare benefits.

Therefore this analysis will be run on household benefits, including both family and housing benefits but excluding minimum income schemes, which represent a smaller sample in the sample. Several control variables are used in order to take into account the relevant compositional effects (which distinguish the population of migrants from the one of natives). In particular, the variables age, gender, education and employment status (which need an individual unit) are referred to the head of the household[25]. Instead, the variable household structure is referred to the household as a whole, and includes four values: singles or couples without children; single parents; couples with one or two children; couples with three or more children.

### 4.3.4 The Selection of Countries

As far as the case countries are concerned, 12 destinations have been selected among Western Europe (Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom). Eastern EU countries have been excluded because they present very few migration in-flows, being mostly sending rather than receiving countries. As enlightened by recent empirical findings (Eugster 2018a), it is difficult to cluster the countries of destination according to well-known typologies such as the Welfare Regimes by Esping-Andersen (1990). Indeed, the relevant distinctions for welfare systems seem not to hold when dealing with migrants' accessibility to benefits.

Hooijer and Picot (2015) propose to gather countries according to a combination of factors, that are the main eligibility criterion for benefits (Insurance versus Assistance), the labour market regulation (Strict versus Flexible employment protection), and the dominant profile of migrants (either Asylum seekers or reunited Family members on the one hand versus Economic migrants on the other hand). Given that nor these findings nor previous explorations are conclusive, this paper checks in the end whether there are notable variations in line with the traditional welfare regimes classification, that is Continental countries (Austria, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland); Nordic countries (Finland, Norway and Sweden); Liberal countries (Ireland and the United Kingdom); Southern European countries (Italy and Spain).

Before concluding this methodological section and showing the results, it must be specified that that all standard errors have been calculated by taking into account the complex survey design of EU-SILC. Indeed, as Goedemé

[25] Definition of the Household Head (on the basis of Gender and Age): The oldest man of working age (18-65 years old); If any, The oldest woman of working age; If any, the oldest man of age 65 or older; If any, the oldest woman of age 65 or older. When more people equally qualify, the lowest personal ID number within the database is considered.

(2013) pointed out, the different procedures of sampling and data collection, first implemented at national level by each Member State and then harmonized into EU-SILC at European level, may strongly affect both estimated standard errors and confidence intervals. Therefore, the codes provided by Zardo Trindade and Goedemé (2016) for each wave of EU-SILC have been used in order to calibrate the sample according to the specific cross-country differences. Finally, the sample has been restricted to the 18-65 age group. Indeed, in the 2011 *ad hoc* module on generations, the country of birth of parents has been asked to individuals of working-age only.

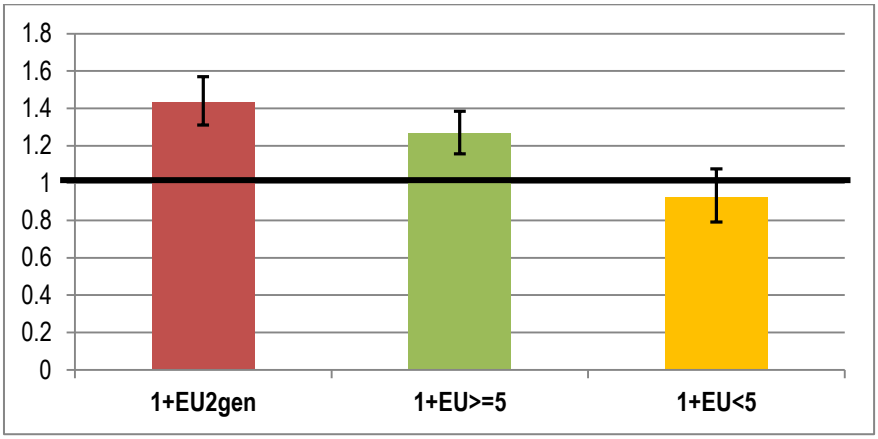
## 4.4. Empirical Results

The results shown in this section are intended to test the concept of 'migration neutrality' over time, that is both over years of residence and over generations. In addition, 'migration neutrality' will be tested across the welfare regime groups (Continental, Southern, Liberal and Nordic). The three hypotheses will be tested in two steps, consisting firstly in the odds ratios analysis as proposed by Recchi (2016b), and secondly in a logit regression that takes into account also the compositional factors, as suggested by Huber and Oberdabernig (2016).

### 4.4.1 Migration Neutrality Over Time

Figure 4.1 shows the odds ratios of migrants to access household benefits over time. Natives, as reference category, correspond to the value one, and all the 12 countries are analysed at once at this step, thus the values of both migrants and natives are calculated on a pooled sample. As a consequence, the third hypothesis referred to cross-country differences is not tested at this step, but at the next one. With reference to the first two hypotheses, the expectation would be that migration neutrality is more likely to occur along with the time spent in the country. Thus, looking at figure 4.1, a smaller gap between migrants and natives is expected on the left of the graph, and a progressively bigger gap between migrants and natives is expected while moving towards the right. Indeed, on the left there are the households composed by the second generation migrants, who spent more time in the country, while in the middle the long-term, first generation migrants and on the right the newly-arrived migrants.

**Figure 4.1. Odds Ratios to access Household Benefits Over Time and by Migrant Groups**




1= Migration Neutrality between migrants and natives; >1= migrants have higher access to benefits than natives; <1= migrants have lower access to benefits than natives. EU-SILC 2011 sample, all the 12 countries together, with filter for age 18-65. Odds ratios of logit regression on household benefits (dummy dependent variable) for the 3 migrant groups (independent variable). Reference category: natives in 12 countries. Confident Intervals are set at 95% significance level.

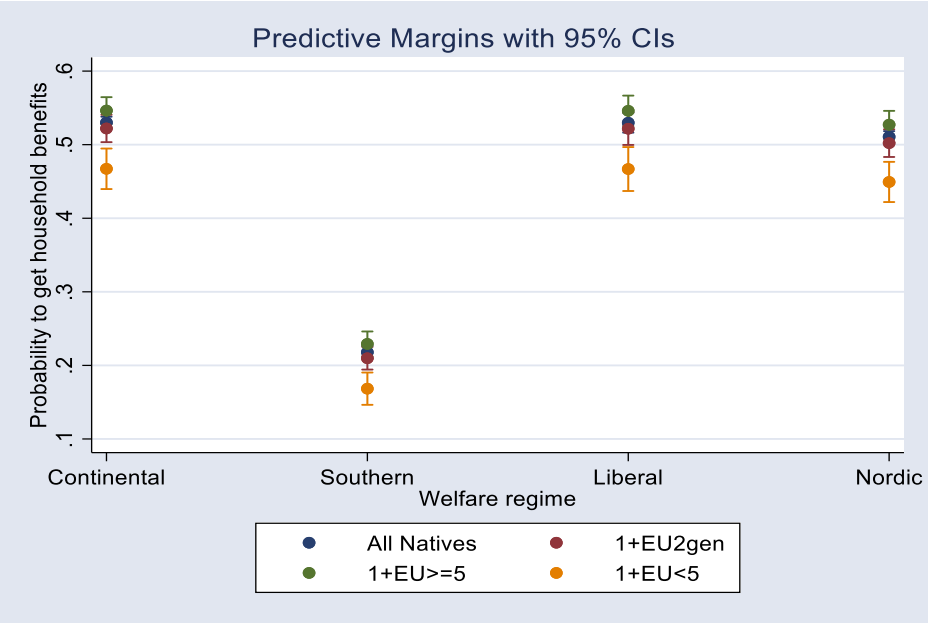
The results suggest a gradual increase of migrants' access to household benefits over time, even though the second generation (red bar) and long-term migrants (green) do not significantly distinguish themselves from each other according to confidence intervals (odds ratios correspond to 1.43 and 1.27 respectively, as shown in figure 4.A2 in the annex). In comparison to natives, these first two groups present a higher probability to access household benefits, while the last group of newly arrived migrants (yellow) present a lower probability to access benefits (odds ratio 0.92), even though its confidence interval overlaps with the value 1, and then the newly arrived migrants are not statistically different from natives. Overall, the first two hypotheses expecting a greater migration neutrality among mobile EU citizens over time seem to be disconfirmed at this step of the analysis. Indeed, migration neutrality holds for newly arrived migrants, while the other two groups (long-term and second generation migrants) show a higher probability than natives to access household benefits. Nevertheless, it is important to specify that odds ratios do not take into account compositional factors. In order to understand what lays behind this result, household characteristics will be taken into account in the next step.

### 4.4.2 Probability to Access Benefits Net of Compositional Factors

Figures 4.2 shows the predictive probabilities that native and migrant households access benefits over time by welfare regimes. The dependent variable used in the logistic regression is a dummy with value 1 corresponding to either family-child related benefits or housing benefits and value 0 corresponding to none of these benefits. The expression of the logit regression is the following:

$$\text{Prob. } \hat{y}\,(\text{Household Benefit}) = \beta_1 \text{Migrant Status} + \beta_2 \text{Gender} + \beta_3 \text{Education} + \\ + \beta_4 \text{Age} + \beta_5 \text{Employment Status} + \beta_6 \text{Household Structure} + \beta_7 \text{Welfare Regime} + \varepsilon$$

**Figure 4.2. Predicted Probability to Access Household Benefits by Migrant Group over Welfare Regime**




EU-SILC 2011 sample integrated with ad hoc module on Generations. 12 countries selected, with filter for age 18-65. Predicted probabilities from binary logit regression on household benefits (dummy dependent variable equal to 1 when the household receives either family benefits or social housing) for natives and 3 migrant household groups (2nd generation, 1st generation long term and newly arrived). Control variables: gender, age, level of education and employment status referred to the head of the household, plus the household structure and the welfare regime. Confident intervals are set at 95% significance level. The full regression is shown in the Annex.

As figure 4.2 shows, the newly arrived EU citizens (yellow dots) are the only group which consistently enjoys a lower probability to access household benefits, while second generation EU citizens (red) together with first generation, long term ones (green) do not distinguish themselves from each other nor from natives (blue) in the access to household benefits. This picture can be better clarified by looking at the test on the differences between the parameters of the independent variable (native and migrant households) within each welfare regime cluster. table 4.2 shows that the probability to access household benefits by newly arrived EU citizens is significantly different compared to the ones by each of the other three groups. Moreover, there is no significant difference among natives and the other two groups of migrant households, that are second generations and long term migrants. The only clarification that table 4.2 gives over figure 4.2 is that second generation migrants are marginally different from long term stayers.

**Table 4.2. Differences between Native and Migrant Groups within Welfare Regimes**

| | Continental | Southern | Liberal | Nordic |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Natives vs newly arrived | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| Long term vs newly arrived | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| 2nd gen vs newly arrived | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 |
| Natives vs 2nd gen | .388 | .230 | .388 | .349 |
| Natives vs long term | .086 | .135 | .086 | .077 |
| 2nd gen vs long term | .052 | .042 | .052 | .042 |

p(F(1, 28356)) Test on differences among parameters, interaction between household groups & welfare regimes.

As a consequence, the first hypothesis (on the difference between long-term and newly arrived EU citizens) can be confirmed, while the second hypothesis (difference between 1st and 2nd generations) is disconfirmed. Indeed, the length of residence – and in particular the threshold of the first five years – does matter for the accessibility to welfare. Instead, the other threshold, that is the one over generations, is less relevant and do not discriminate EU citizens chances to get family and housing benefits. Most importantly, after 5 years of residence in the country of destination, a situation of migration neutrality occurs, so that migrants enjoy the same probability to access household benefits than natives in all welfare regimes.

Concerning the welfare regimes, no substantive differences emerge among Continental, Liberal and Nordic regime, where both natives and migrant households enjoy a probability of about 50% to be covered by either family or housing benefits. Differently, in the Southern regime the probability to access household benefits is around 20% for both natives and migrants. This low coverage can be explained in the light of the familistic model of welfare typical of Southern EU countries, which notably rely on family resources rather than state transfers in order to address household needs. In addition, in Italy and Spain housing benefits are often provided through services in kind only, that are not registered by EU-SILC database, which focuses on in-cash benefits.

Disregarding the level of coverage, all welfare regimes present the same (relative) degree of migration neutrality, represented by the relative distance by the three migrant groups on the one hand and the group of natives on the other hand. Therefore, the third hypothesis is not supported by the data and it has to be disconfirmed, similarly to what found by Osterman, Palme and Ruhs (2019). This suggests that a higher generosity of the welfare state (as notably in Nordic welfare regimes) does not translate into a higher accessibility of social benefits by mobile EU citizens as compared to natives. This result adds evidence to the thesis by Hooijer and Picot (2015), according to which the generosity of the welfare state by itself is not a sufficient condition for migrants to access welfare benefits.

All welfare regimes present a situation of migration neutrality after 5 years, while mobile EU citizens within the first five years face a non-neutral situation. Interestingly, if one takes into account compositional factors, the picture related to migration neutrality is reversed (figure 4.2 as compared as figure 4.1): no more are the newly

arrived migrants equal to natives, but the long-term and the second generation migrants. This might be explained through the fact that migrants, compared to natives, show a higher proportion of households with children (see table A4.2 with descriptive statistics in the annex). Having more children, migrants are more in need for household benefits, and then there is a higher proportion of beneficiaries among migrant groups (figure 4.1). Nevertheless, when compositional factors are controlled for, migration is no more a relevant predictor of welfare access (migration neutrality) except for the first five years of residence (figure 4.2).

## 4.5. Conclusion

This chapter proposes a migration neutrality approach (Recchi 2016b) to comparative studies on welfare beneficiaries (Medgyesi and Poloskei 2013; Zimmermann et al. 2012), by testing the EU citizens' accessibility to social benefits. In particular, 'migration neutrality' is expected to increase over time, both inter and intra generations. On the one hand, the access to benefits by migrants is explored along years of residence, picking the first five years as a relevant threshold due to the EU legal framework. On the other hand, the welfare use of first generation migrants is compared to the one of second generation migrants, corresponding to natives with foreign-born parents.

The study is run on the 2011 wave of *European Statistics on Income and Living Conditions* (EU-SILC) survey on the population aged 18-65, corresponding to the sample for which the information on parents' origin are available. Two household cash benefits among which migrants are generally overrepresented are analysed, that are family/child-related benefits and housing benefits. Moreover, twelve European countries have been selected among the main destinations for both mobile EU citizens, representing four welfare regimes: Continental (Austria, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland), Southern (Italy and Spain), Liberal (Ireland and the United Kingdom) and Nordic (Finland, Norway, Sweden).

The analysis consists in two subsequent steps. Firstly, the 'migration neutrality' in respect to welfare accessibility is calculated through odds ratios, as proposed by Recchi (2016b). In particular, the odds of migrant households are calculated over years of residence (before and after the first 5 years) and generations (first versus second generation). Overall, the first two hypotheses of greater 'migration neutrality' over time (years of residence and generations) cannot be confirmed at this step. Rather, odds ratio seem to suggest the opposite, that is newly arrived migrants are closer to natives in their use of welfare, while second generation and long term migrants present a higher probability to access household benefits compared to natives.

In the second step of the analysis, a logit regression is run in order to estimate the probability that each migrant household group receives at least one benefit among the family and the housing ones. The estimations are controlled for migrants' characteristics, in particular gender, age, education, employment status and household structure. This time, the predicted probabilities allow to confirm the expectation of greater 'migration neutrality' over time. In particular, newly arrived migrants (who have been resided for less than 5 years) distinguish

themselves from natives and the other two groups of migrants (long term migrants and second generations). Therefore, after the first five years, if one consider compositional effects, the condition of 'migration neutrality' is realized in the sense that migration is no more a key predictor for differentiated access to household benefits.

Differently from Osterman, Palme and Ruhs (2019) who do not detect differences across welfare regimes, the findings suggest a significantly lower access to benefits in Southern countries as compared to the other countries. This difference does not impact on 'migration neutrality', because also natives have a reduced access to household benefits in Southern Europe. This can be explained through the higher reliance on family resources instead of state transfers typical of the Southern, familistic model of welfare. Furthermore, the concept of 'migration neutrality' does not inform about which mechanism may lead migrants to access benefits more (because more in need?) or less (because of legal, social, cultural barriers or discrimination?) compared to natives. This research explored only the household characteristics which (at least partially) explain the observed overuse of household benefits by mobile EU citizens.

Before concluding, it must be acknowledged that the strategy adopted in this analysis might be biased due to a series of aspects: self-selection of migrants who stay longer in a country of destination; changes in migrants' unobservable characteristics over time; changes of eligibility criteria for welfare benefits and/or the policy interplay over time. For instance, changes in either the welfare system or labour market regulation might have occurred for the whole population within each country, thus affecting both nationals and migrants. Moreover, visa and integration policies specifically targeted to the migrant population might have changed, so that a group of people coming to the same country might have faced different scenarios even five years before or later. Notwithstanding all these limitations, it is worthwhile to start exploring the use of welfare by migrants over time.

## 4.6 Annex

**Table A4.1.** EU-SILC, 2011 **Sample size of Households by Groups of Migrants**

| | All Natives | 1+EU2gen | 1+EU>=5 | 1+EU<5 | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Continental | 35,548 | 4,448 | 4,043 | 910 | **44,949** |
| Southern | 41,268 | 632 | 1,516 | 526 | **43,942** |
| Liberal | 10,034 | 712 | 1,420 | 327 | **12,493** |
| Nordic | 18,730 | 482 | 868 | 655 | **20,735** |
| **Total** | **105,580** | **6,274** | **7,847** | **2,418** | **122,119** |

**Table A4.2.** EU-SILC, 2011 **Descriptive Statistics of the households** by native and migrant groups in the sample (the individual variables gender, age, education and employment status are referred to the individuals identified as the household head)**.**

| | Natives | 2°gen | 1°>=5 | 1°<5 | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % Female | 9.4 | 13.3 | 11.5 | 8.9 | **9.8** |
| Average Age | 42.0 | 41.9 | 42.8 | 38.6 | **42.8** |
| % Up to Lower Secondary | 27.8 | 15.9 | 23.0 | 25.1 | **26.9** |
| % High School Diploma | 40.2 | 46.1 | 38.6 | 37.0 | **40.3** |
| % Tertiary Degree | 32.0 | 38.0 | 38.4 | 38.0 | **32.8** |
| % Working | 79.8 | 84.2 | 76.1 | 77.7 | **79.7** |
| % Unemploied/Inactive | 13.8 | 11.7 | 17.0 | 18.1 | **14.0** |
| % Retired | 6.4 | 4.1 | 6.9 | 4.2 | **6.3** |
| % No children | 57.3 | 57.0 | 54.5 | 54.8 | **57.0** |
| % Single parent | 2.1 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 1.2 | **2.2** |
| % 2 parents, 1 or 2 children | 35.3 | 34.2 | 37.3 | 38.9 | **35.5** |
| % 2 parents, 3+ children | 5.3 | 4.8 | 6.2 | 5.1 | **5.3** |
| **Total** | **105580** | **6274** | **7847** | **2418** | **122119** |

**Figure A4.1.** Logit regression

```
Number of strata   =       158                  Number of obs     =    122,119
Number of PSUs     =    29,220                  Population size   = 121,791.11
                                                Design df         =     29,062
                                                F(   3,  29060)   =      28.35
                                                Prob > F          =     0.0000
```

| B | Coef. | Linearized Std. Err. | t | P>\|t\| | [95% Conf. | Interval] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| hcb4 | | | | | | |
| 1+EU2gen | .3611117 | .0458129 | 7.88 | 0.000 | .2713164 | .450907 |
| 1+EU>=5 | .2352923 | .0458053 | 5.14 | 0.000 | .1455119 | .3250727 |
| 1+EU<5 | -.0807939 | .0784206 | -1.03 | 0.303 | -.2345018 | .072914 |
| _cons | -.39784 | .0118137 | -33.68 | 0.000 | -.4209954 | -.3746845 |

**Figure A4.2.** Odds ratios

```
Number of strata   =       158                  Number of obs     =    122,119
Number of PSUs     =    29,220                  Population size   = 121,791.11
                                                Design df         =     29,062
                                                F(   3,  29060)   =      28.35
                                                Prob > F          =     0.0000
```

| B | Odds Ratio | Linearized Std. Err. | t | P>\|t\| | [95% Conf. | Interval] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| hcb4 | | | | | | |
| 1+EU2gen | 1.434924 | .065738 | 7.88 | 0.000 | 1.31169 | 1.569735 |
| 1+EU>=5 | 1.265279 | .0579564 | 5.14 | 0.000 | 1.156631 | 1.384131 |
| 1+EU<5 | .9223838 | .0723339 | -1.03 | 0.303 | .7909648 | 1.075638 |
| _cons | .6717695 | .0079361 | -33.68 | 0.000 | .6563931 | .6875061 |

**Figure A4.3.** Logit regression with compositional factors

```
Number of strata   =       158                Number of obs     =    118,193
Number of PSUs     =    28,514                Population size   =  117,868.6
                                               Design df         =     28,356
                                               F(  16,  28341)   =     451.86
                                               Prob > F          =     0.0000
```

| B | Linearized Coef. | Std. Err. | t | P>\|t\| | [95% Conf. | Interval] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| hcb4 | | | | | | |
| 1+EU2gen | .0810501 | .0592398 | 1.37 | 0.171 | -.0350628 | .197163 |
| 1+EU>=5 | .0078933 | .0617682 | 0.13 | 0.898 | -.1131753 | .128962 |
| 1+EU<5 | -.5187776 | .0990657 | -5.24 | 0.000 | -.7129511 | -.3246041 |
| hhdsex | | | | | | |
| Female | -.1480839 | .0449361 | -3.30 | 0.001 | -.2361607 | -.0600071 |
| hhdageg | | | | | | |
| 36-49 | .0669615 | .0389511 | 1.72 | 0.086 | -.0093844 | .1433075 |
| 50-64 | -.0354201 | .0406852 | -0.87 | 0.384 | -.1151649 | .0443248 |
| hhdedu | | | | | | |
| Medium - Upper Secondary | -.2015461 | .0408963 | -4.93 | 0.000 | -.2817048 | -.1213875 |
| High - Tertiary | -.4499892 | .0430165 | -10.46 | 0.000 | -.5343037 | -.3656747 |
| hhdempg | | | | | | |
| Unempl/Inactive | .5960707 | .0456951 | 13.04 | 0.000 | .506506 | .6856353 |
| Retired | .1378227 | .0857933 | 1.61 | 0.108 | -.0303362 | .3059816 |
| hdst | | | | | | |
| single adult, children | 3.139646 | .0762211 | 41.19 | 0.000 | 2.990249 | 3.289043 |
| 2 or more adults, 1 or 2 children | 3.12777 | .0445436 | 70.22 | 0.000 | 3.040462 | 3.215077 |
| 2 or more adults, 3+ more children | 4.108681 | .0853786 | 48.12 | 0.000 | 3.941335 | 4.276027 |
| group | | | | | | |
| Southern | -2.315431 | .0556786 | -41.59 | 0.000 | -2.424564 | -2.206298 |
| Liberal | -.0022094 | .0496567 | -0.04 | 0.965 | -.0995389 | .0951202 |
| Nordic | -.1264715 | .0347834 | -3.64 | 0.000 | -.1946486 | -.0582943 |
| _cons | -.8241066 | .0526713 | -15.65 | 0.000 | -.9273449 | -.7208684 |

# 5. Is Intra-EU Mobility beneficial for Social Mobility?

## 5.1. Introduction

Significant differences of socio-economic status have been observed among Eastern EU citizens who reside in different Western European countries (Recchi 2016a; Kogan 2007). The academic literature has tried to explain this evidence by stressing alternatively either the role of contextual factors in the country of destination (Fellini, Guetto and Reyneri 2018; Ballarino and Panichella 2015 and 2017) or individual characteristics of migrants who chose different destinations accordingly (Andrén and Roman 2016; Ambrosini et a. 2012). This chapter aims to study the interaction between the status attainment model, based on individual characteristics as social origin and education (Blau and Duncan 1967), and the context where the person resides, either the country of origin or a different destination.

More specifically, the emigration of Romanian nationals towards Western Europe has been selected as a case study, on the basis of multiple reasons. Firstly, when considering multiple countries of destination, it is preferable to select a single country of origin in order to have a so called Single Origin – Multiple Destinations (SO-MD) design (Panichella 2018). A frequent alternative is to group migrants coming from broader areas of origin (for example, all Eastern European countries at once) or to treat them all together as 'migrants'. However, this approach is not without troubles, since it does not allow to keep under control group-specific characteristics, such as national culture and language, which might affect the status attainment process of migrants in each different country of destination (Fellini and Guetto 2018).

Secondly, Romania has been chosen as country of origin because its diaspora is currently the most important in Europe, both in absolute size and in proportion with respect to the national population (Barbulescu, Ciornei and Varela 2019). As a matter of fact, according to Eurostat (2019a), in 2018 the Romanians who reside in another EU member state overcame 2,5 millions, accounting for about 20% of the total working-age population of Romanian nationals. At the same time, Romanian outflows do not concentrate towards one or few countries, rather they are widespread throughout all Europe. In particular, sizable Romanian communities are present in both 'old' and 'new' countries of destination, allowing a sound comparison of migrants' status attainment across contexts which the literature on sociology of migration has identified as structurally different (Reyneri and Fullin 2011; Kogan 2007).

Furthermore, many migration studies have been designed with a focus on the countries of destination, rather than those of origin, exactly because data are usually collected by the former, with little attention to information on the latter. Conversely, the dataset chosen for the present analysis (the EUCROSS database) is one of the few

sources following the same origin population towards a variety of destination countries in Europe. The data stem from thousands of in-depth interviews taken in 2012 on migrant population coming from Romania and residing in five different countries of destination. In addition, the nationals in the country of origin have been interviewed as well, so that the group of migrants can be compared with a control group of 'stayers'.

In order to explore the interactions between individual and contextual factors affecting the status attainment of Romanians, a theoretical framework has been devised that bridges sociology of migration and social stratification studies. Among the individual factors, this research focuses mainly on social origin, which is traditionally expected to play a major role in the status attainment process, according to the vast social stratification literature[26]. In order to measure both the respondents' and their parents' socio-economic status across countries, the International Socio-Economic Index (ISEI-08) is taken into account (Ganzeboom 2010). The role of further individual characteristics such as age, gender and especially education has been assessed, together with three migration-related variables (the main reason to migrate, the time spent in the country of destination and the knowledge of the foreign language spoken there at the time of arrival).

With regards to contextual factors, the status attainment of Romanians is studied within three different contexts and along two steps. On one side, the group of 'stayers' in Romania is compared to all Romanian migrants residing abroad, without distinguishing them by the foreign country of residence. This way, social mobility is analysed in respect to the choice of migrating rather than staying. On the other side, the pool of Romanian migrants available in EUCROSS dataset is split into two different areas of destination, corresponding to Southern Europe (Italy and Spain) on one hand, and Central and Northern Europe (Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom) on the other hand. Hence the migrants' status attainment process in 'old' receiving countries (Central and Northern EU) can be compared to the one occurring in 'new' migration receiving countries (Southern EU), addressing the on-going debate among sociology of migration scholars (Reyneri and Fullin 2011; Favell 2008).

The research questions that this paper aims to answer are: Does social origin affect the choice between migrating or staying? Does the choice to migrate instead of stay pay back in terms of social mobility? Are there areas of destination where migrants are clearly better off as compared to other areas? If so, how social origin affects the migration rewards (or penalties) within each area? Once controlled for social origin and main individual characteristics, is there a residual effect which can be attributed to the area of destination? How individual and contextual factors interact with each other, contributing to explain the status attainment of migrants living in different areas of destination?

The following section contains a review of the academic literature which inspired the analysis and an overview of Romanian emigration towards Western Europe, together with the structural differences already observed between the two areas of destination. Section 5.3 is dedicated to the theoretical framework adopted, the research

[26] See, among others, Blau and Duncan (1967); Duncan (1979); Treiman (1977); Featherman and Hauser (1978); Lin, Ensel and Vaughn (1981); Treiman and Ganzeboom (1990); Breen (2004); Scherer, Pollak, Otte and Gangl (2007); Corten, Maas and Snijders (2013); Bernardi and Ballarino (2016).

hypotheses emerged from the literature and the objectives of the paper. The research design, the characteristics of the database and methodologies are presented in the fourth section. The fifth section shows and comments the empirical analyses and results. The sixth and conclusive section discusses the findings and how they contribute to the current academic debate, providing suggestions for further research on migrants' status attainment in a comparative setting.

## 5.2. Literature Review

This paper stands in between two streams of academic literature within the field of sociology, namely sociology of migrations and social stratification studies. In the European context, migration scholars focused on the status attainment of nationals compared to non-nationals in a single country (Fellini, Guetto and Reyneri 2018; Barbiano di Belgiojoso 2017) or in multiple migrants' destinations (Ballarino and Panichella 2015 and 2017; Kogan 2007). Instead, stratification scholars explored how the social structure has been changing over decades and across groups of countries (Bernardi and Ballarino 2016; Meraviglia and Buis 2015; Esping-Andersen 2015; Yaish and Andresen 2012), their main objective being to test whether the industrialization process led towards a more meritocratic society, based more on personal achievement rather than ascription.

However, the specific link between migration and social mobility is still little explored in the academic literature. On one hand, the topic requires a comparative approach, while migration studies face serious issues with cross-country data availability. The analyses on status attainment of migrants are generally limited to one or few case studies, which correspond to the countries of destination where data are collected. Nevertheless, these often lack crucial information to assess the social mobility of migrants, as their social origin or working history preceding migration. Only few and recent studies could take advantage of detailed longitudinal databases which follow the same individuals both in the country of origin and in the subsequent country (or countries) of destination (Fellini and Guetto 2018; Chiswick et al. 2005).

Notwithstanding the fact that the academic literature on social mobility is inherently comparative[27], when migration is called into question, stratification research tends to consider it as a given, as in the case of ethnic minorities coming from a colonial past and already established within the territory of a nation-state. While race/ethnicity has been regarded as a possible source for social inequalities (Hurst, Fitz Gibbon and Nurse 2016) less attention has been paid to on-going migratory flows. Nonetheless, migrants may qualify as a group by themselves because of their experience of migration, even when they do not belong to an ethnic or religious group which can be easily identified as a minority in respect to the majority within the host country.

[27] See, among others: Lipset and Bendix (1959); Giddens (1973); Hazelrigg (1974); Hazelrigg and Garnier (1976); Hardy and Hazelrigg (1978); Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero (1979, 1982); Tyree, Semyonov and Hodge (1979); Simkus (1980); Shavit and Blossfeld (1993); Breen (2004).

A transnational definition of social inequalities has been proposed by Faist (2016, p. 325) as an "uneven distribution of costs and benefits with respect to goods among social units such as individuals, groups, organizations, regions and *states*". Faist (2014) has theoretically explored how the Union among European countries has contributed in reducing, reproducing and producing new social inequalities, sometimes fostering while other times inhibiting social mobility across the continent and across borders. In particular, the implementation of the principle of Freedom of Movement within Europe allows European Citizens to move and reside in other EU member states. Thus, if it is true that social stratification patterns vary across national contexts (Yaish and Andersen 2012; Esping-Andersen and Wagner 2012), then mobile EU citizens can experience opportunities of social mobility which may be different (either higher or lower) from the ones of stayers in their origin country.

Some recent empirical studies focused on the social mobility effects of either interregional (Panichella 2018) or international migrations (Zuccotti et al. 2015). The main novelty brought about by these analyses consists in comparing migrants sharing the same origin either among themselves or to their stayers peers, instead of with the nationals of the country of destination. In particular, Zuccotti et al. (2015) compared the social mobility trajectories of Turks who migrated towards Western Europe to those of Turks who did not migrate. Instead, Panichella (2018) compared the occupational outcomes that migrants from Southern Italy achieved in Northern Italy to the ones that migrants from the same origin (Southern Italy) achieved in a different destination (Germany). These approaches de facto overcome the well-established practice of migration studies, that considers the nationals in the destination country as the natural benchmark of migrants (Recchi 2016b), and move towards a redefinition of who should be compared to whom.

As pointed out by Lucas (2008, 2013), in any group comparison one must be careful when selecting the population of reference to which the group of interest is to be compared. Stratification research traditionally compares socio-economic outcomes, educational achievement or mobility chances of women to those of men, as well as Blacks to Whites, or migrants to nationals. Nevertheless, it must be considered that men, Whites and nationals might not be the appropriate counterfactuals for women, Blacks and migrants respectively, for both substantive and methodological reasons. On the latter ground, as it is well known, a counterfactual unit is a unit that resembles the observational unit in every relevant respect, safe the treatment (Morgan and Winship 2007). When speaking of status attainment in a migration setting, for example, one may want to assess whether migrants would have fared better, had they not be migrants. The counterfactual condition of not being a migrant, however, is being the very same person who did not migrate – not being a national of the hosting country.

On a substantial ground, and at the same time, changing the term of comparison as Lucas (2008) suggests two relevant corollaries. First, ceasing doing as if nationals (or men, or Blacks, in other pertinent examples) are the norm to which everybody else has to be compared, then removing the subtle and implicitly colonialist (or ethnocentric, or patriarchal) stance according to which nationals (or Blacks, or men) are the only meaningful term of comparison. Secondly, by doing so, relaxing an implicit constraint in traditional models, that is the occupational

or educational outcome of nationals is untouched by inequality, as if they would live in countries where migration does not affect at all labour market, educational system and ultimately society as a whole. Conversely, Lucas (2013) finds that, in social contexts where gender or ethnic discrimination is high, all social groups are affected and loose from it, while in low discrimination contexts all groups gain. Therefore, choosing the appropriate counterfactual dismantles a stereotyped way of designing stratification research, and opens up the door to findings that are not pre-established. In accordance with this perspective, in this chapter Romanian migrants are compared to natives of their own country of origin, i.e. Romanian stayers, rather than to the population of nationals in the country of destination.

### 5.2.1 The Romanian Emigration

The Romanian diaspora has been recently explored by a series of single case studies (Barbulescu, Ciornei and Verela 2019; Andrén and Roman 2016; Ambrosini et al. 2012; Sandu 2005). This academic interest follows from the fact that, within the first two decades of the XIX century, Romanians were the most mobile European citizens, both in relative and absolute terms. According to Eurostat (2019a), in 2018 a fifth (21.3 %) of Romanian population in the working age (20-64) was residing abroad, most of them in another member state of the Union. In the same year, Romanian citizens accounted for by far the biggest group of intra-EU migrants (2 524 000 persons), followed by Poles (1 666 000 persons) and Italians (1 133 000 persons). Notwithstanding the magnitude of these numbers, the mass emigration of Romanians towards Western Europe is quite a recent phenomenon.

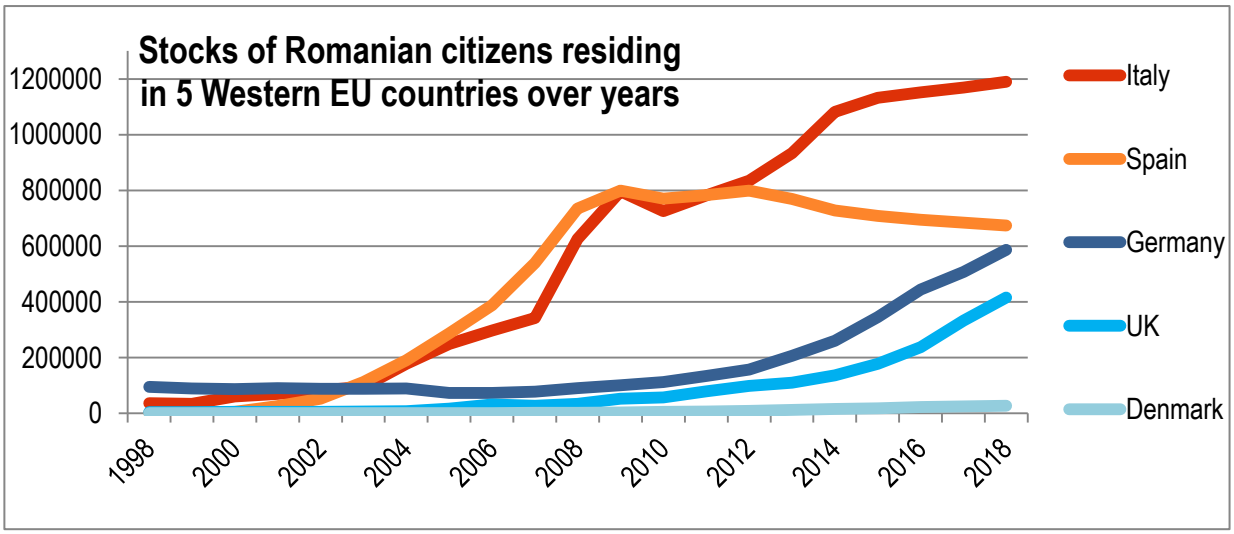



**Figure 5.1**. Data extracted from Eurostat (code migr_pop1ctz) on July 2019. The data available online (since 2009) have been integrated with the ones provided by Fic et al. (2011, 17) in table 3.1 for the precedent waves from 1998 onwards.

The data provided by Kahanec et al. (2016, 11) show that, after a timid start right after the fall of the Ceaușescu's government in 1989, the yearly outflows of Romanians remained below 50 000 for all the 1990s, with an isolated peak of 150 000 in 1992. Sizable Romanian outflows started to be registered only since 2000s, once that the transition from a communist to a capitalistic economy has been completed, and Romania accessed to free circulation within the Schengen area (Sandu 2005). This explains why the Romanian communities living in Western Europe are still made by first generation migrants, who left their country mainly for work-related reasons (Andrén and Roman 2016).

A major peak of 600 000 outflows has been registered in 2007, when Romania became a member of the European Union together with Bulgaria (Kahanec et al. 2016, 11). Subsequently, most of the 'old' EU Member States adopted transitional provisions in order to restrict the freedom of movement of the 'new comers' among EU citizens up to 2014. Moreover, several returning flows have been observed in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis (Barbulescu, Ciornei and Verela 2019; Castro-Martin and Cortina 2015; Ambrosini et al. 2012). Instead of facing unemployment in Western Europe, many Romanians came back home, also facilitated by the relative short distance and low cost of the journey.

Therefore, the population of Romanians actually residing in different European countries is the result of different waves of coming and returning flows. As shown by Figure 1, according to Eurostat (2019b) data, Italy and Spain are the preferred destinations by Romanian citizens, followed by Germany and the United Kingdom. Denmark, which is shown here for comparative purposes, lags behind in this ranking after other five destinations, namely France, Belgium, Greece, Portugal and Ireland. It is worthwhile to mention that the frouth country of destination in absolute terms (the UK) more than tripled the fifth (France) in most recent years (Eurostat 2019b).

Even though the size of these stocks significantly changed over time, since 2014 Italy has been standing out as the main country of destination of Romanian migrants. In 2018 Italy hosted 1 190 091 Romanians, accounting for the largest community of European citizens residing in another EU Member State (Eurostat 2019a). While the Romanian community in Italy kept growing almost constantly since 2000, the one in Spain, which was the biggest in 2007, first stabilized and then shrinked in the afthermath of the 2008 crisis (Castro-Martin and Cortina 2015, 112). Indeed, in 2018 the number of Romanians in Spain (673 593) got closer to that of Romanians in Germany (586 594) and in the United Kingdom (416 092) (Eurostat 2019a). The diverging trends of Romanian migration towards Italy and Spain after the 2008 crisis are probably explained by the gendered and sectoral diversity of occupations that they perfrorm in the two countries: while Romanian women kept being employed as elderly care workers by Italian families, Romanian men typically employed in constraction in Spain preferred coming back home instead of facing unemplyment.

### 5.2.2 Migration towards Where: Two main Areas of Destination in Europe

The academic studies focusing on Romanian diaspora have observed that Romanian migrants in Southern Europe tend to perform lower skilled occupations when compared to Romanians in Northern and Central Europe (Andrén and Roman 2016; Ambrosini 2012). This findings are confirmed by figure 2, which shows the most recent Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS, wave 2017) micro-data on migrants' socio-economic status. Even though it is not possible to isolate individuals coming from Romania only[28], the EU3 group of country of origin (including Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia) can be considered a good approximation, given that Romanian emigration flows is by far the most relevant among the three countries. The figure shows the average International Socio-Economic Index (ISEI)[29] of Romanian stayers (column in red) and the one of EU3 migrants across five destinations (columns in blue).

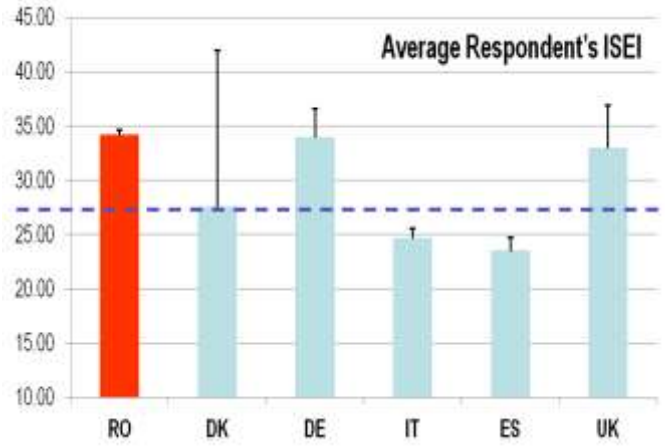



**Figure 5.2**. Populations of nationals in Romania compared to EU3 migrants residing in five countries. The dashed line corresponds to the average ISEI of EU3 migrants in the whole sample (26.73). Data elaborated from EU-LFS for wave 2017, with individual weights (iw=coeff) and upper confident intervals at 95%.

The dashed horizontal line represents the average ISEI score of the total pool of EU3 migrants across the five countries of destination, in order to facilitate its comparison with the average ISEI of stayers (in red). As expected, Romanian migrants in Southern European countries enjoy a lower-than-average ISEI score, while those in Germany and the United Kingdom enjoy a higher-than-average status[30]. This suggests that the choice to migrate might not be beneficial in terms of social mobility, leading to similar opportunities in both Germany and the United Kingdom (close to 35 average ISEI score), but to comparative lower socio-economic status both in Italy and Spain (below to 25 average ISEI score).

Furthermore, a preliminary descriptive analysis has been run on EUCROSS database (shown in the appendix), in order to compare Romanians ISEI scores across generations and, for migrants only, also with the ISEI of the nationals in the country of destination. The analysis confirms the expectation that Romanian migrants in Southern Europe: 1) enjoy on average a lower socio-economic status as compared to the Italian and Spanish nationals; 2)

[28] Indeed Eurostat group together the values of both country of birth and citizenship into broad areas such as EU15, EU10 and EU3.

[29] The ISEI score has been computed on the basis of the ISCO-08 3 digits variable available in the EU-LFS database provided by Eurostat, following the procedure and codes suggested by Ganzeboom (2010).

[30] The estimated average ISEI score of Romanian migrants in Denmark is not reliable, as is shown by the wide confidence interval. Probably the sample is small as a consequence of the smaller population of migrants residing in Denmark compared to the other four destinations.

their average ISEI score is even lower compared to the one of Romanian who stayed in their country of origin (figure A5.1).

Several scholars attempted at explaining such divergences in the occupational attainment of intra-EU migrants across different countries of destinations. Favell (2008) observes that Italy and Spain, as 'new' receiving countries might offer to migrants different structures of occupational opportunities and constrains compared to 'old' immigration countries, which long ago implemented specific integration policies to deal with migrants over time. Moreover, the comparative studies in the field of sociology of migration which focus on Europe highlight that 'new' and 'old' countries of destination differs on the basis of a structural trade-off between employability and quality of jobs (Reyneri and Fullin, 2011; Kogan 2007).

Indeed, on one hand, in Southern Europe migrants are found to face the same unemployment rates than natives but a comparatively higher proportion of unskilled jobs. This means that they are not particularly disadvantaged when looking for a job, but the job they find is more likely to be a low qualified one. Moreover, due to the comparatively higher segmentation of labour market (Piore 1979), migrants in Southern EU run the risk to remain 'trapped' into the secondary labour market, characterized by a lower level or even absence of employment protection, with a typically low pay and low skilled jobs – the so called three 'D' (dirty, dangerous and demeaning) jobs (Fellini and Guetto 2018; Barbiano di Belgiojoso 2017; Ambrosini 2001).

On the other hand, in Central and Northern European countries migrants face higher unemployment rates compared to natives. However, they are also more likely either to find a more qualified job than their Southern European counterparts at the entrance in the labour market, or to progressively upgrading the quality of their occupation along a series of subsequent jobs. In the latter case, migrants end up to be 'assimilated' into the host labour market as the length of their stay increases, as expected by Chiswick et al. (2005). Therefore, Southern EU and Central-Northern EU would present opposite and symmetrical trade-offs to migrants: either an easy chance to get a job, but of low quality; or lower employability chances, even though coupled with more qualified occupational opportunities.

When it comes specifically to Romanian migrants, who settle more often in Southern rather than Central-Northern European countries, despite the above mentioned trade-off, academic scholars offer different explanations. According to Ambrosini (2012), Romanians might migrate towards different destinations according to their individual characteristics. For instance, Andrén and Roman (2016, 256) found that Romanians who migrate to Italy and Spain get comparatively lower status occupations there because they are the least educated among the total pool of Romanian migrants. Following this rationale, it might also be hypothesized that migrants who move towards Southern rather than Central and Northern Europe come from a comparatively lower social origin. All these arguments suggest that the population of migrants in each destination might be self-selected according to individual characteristics, so that they present compositional differences across countries.

Nevertheless, the set of opportunities and constraints offered to migrants in a country of destination (net of compositional characteristics of the migrant population) can be attributed to a second type of explanation, that is a contextual one. Indeed, one could argue that migrants enjoy a comparatively lower socio-economic status in Southern Europe because they are more likely to find lower qualified jobs there, regardless of their education and skill level. Conversely, in Central and Northern Europe migrants might enjoy a higher-than-average status thank to the higher quality of occupational opportunities they found there. Clearly, both individual factors (migrants' socio-economic characteristics) and contextual factors (specific of the area of origin/destination) can affect the status attainment process of migrants.

## 5.3. Theoretical Model and Research Hypotheses

The aim of this paper is to assess whether the choice to migrate has been beneficial in terms of social mobility for Romanian population, and whether there is any difference – as for the status attainment process – between migrant who reside and work in different European countries. Thus, the broad research questions are the following: Are there significant compositional differences among the Romanian populations who reside in Romania and each other European country? Is the influence of social origin on social destination equally strong across country? Is the status attainment process of migrants affected by contextual differences between countries, over and above possible self-selection mechanisms into the hosting countries?

By answering these questions, this study intends to contribute to the current debate on social stratification and sociology of migration by bridging some novelty on two grounds. Firstly, as anticipated, Romanian migrants are compared to Romanian stayers, instead of to nationals of the countries of destination, overcoming in this way a common approach of migration research, that is considering nationals in the host country as the norm or the standard to which migrants should be compared with. Secondly, the simplified version of Blau and Duncan's (1967) Origin-Education-Destination (OED) model, used in stratification studies[31] to describe the process of status attainment, has been integrated with the area of residence as a mediating variable.

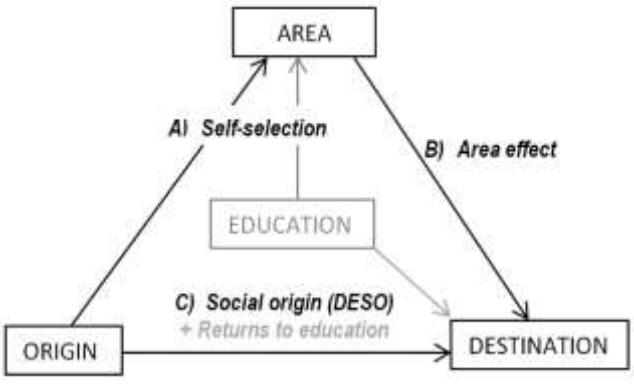



**Figure 5.3**. Status attainment model integrated with Area

Arguably, the area of residence can contribute to explain the observed differences in social destination between migrants and stayers on the one side, and between migrants residing in different European countries on the other side. However, Romanian population may not be randomly assigned to each area, and individual characteristics (such as social origin and

[31] See, among others, Ganzeboom and Luijkx (2004), Bernardi and Ballarino (2016), Meraviglia (2017).

education) might play a role in the decision to either stay or migrate, and migrate towards where. More specifically, the model of status attainment proposed is illustrated in figure 5.3, having along the black path C the Direct Effect of Social Origin (DESO) on the achieved social position, net of the mediating role of education (Bernardi and Ballarino 2016). Returns to education are explored as well, as a factor contributing to explain, together with social origin, the socio-economic status of Romanians within each national context (path C in grey).

Since social mobility pathways vary across countries (Yaish and Andersen 2012; Esping-Andersen and Wagner 2012), it is arguable that country specific institutions such as the labour market, the welfare state, and so on, intervene in shaping such pathways. Ideally, every relevant national feature (GDP pro capita, income inequality, unemployment level, etc.) should be included in the model so to assess its impact on the status attainment of nationals as well as migrants. However, such research design would require a high number of countries to be compared with each other, so to allow the national institutions and features to vary at the second level of analysis. Similar multilevel approaches are very promising (see Kogan 2007), but they have been little explored by academic literature for the moment, due to the difficulty to find proper datasets.

In this study, the area of residence is assumed to summarize all these specificities which are expected to mediate between social origin and education on the one hand, and social destination on the other hand. In particular, a self-selection mechanism into the area occurs first, and then the same area affects the status attainment process by influencing the social destination. Therefore, the present analysis is composed by two consecutive steps, corresponding to path A (effect of social origin and education on the selection into the area) and to path C, net of path B (effect of social origin and education net of the effect of the area).

Within the first step of analysis, two research hypotheses are formulated in accordance with both the exploration of most recent EU-LFS data (2017) showed in figure 5.2 and the main findings in the academic literature (Andrén and Roman 2016; Ambrosini 2012). The general expectation concerning the self-selection mechanism (path A in figure 5.3) is that migrants, as compared to stayers, have comparatively more resources, both in terms of social origin and education. Indeed, migration involves a cost to pay (at least at the beginning) which cannot be afforded by everyone. Moreover, according to human capital investment and rational choice theories (Borjas 1987), the decision to move is taken by the ones who expect higher returns to education, i.e. the highest educated. Thus two hypotheses can be formulated:

H1) *Romanians with a higher social origin are more likely to migrate instead of stay*

H2) *Romanians with a higher education are more likely to migrate instead of stay*

A second step of analysis explores the status attainment of Romanians in their country of origin and within two areas of destination. According to the industrialisation and modernization theory (Lipset and Bendix 1959; Treiman 1977; Featherman and Hauser 1978), one would expect social origin to play a major role in comparatively less economically developed countries (Bernardi and Ballarino 2016; Esping-Andersen and

Wagner 2012), where modernization has not yet deployed its full potential and ascription may still play a role. This is the case of Mediterranean countries as compared to Central and Northern European ones, which fare economically much better than the former, and which enjoy higher levels of material wellbeing, individualization and secularization (Scruggs and Allan 2008).

Furthermore, migrants are generally expected to rely less on parental resources once left their country of origin (Zuccotti et al. 2015, 104), since they left their family networks behind. Paradoxically, even though migrants are expected to have comparatively higher resources (Borjas 1987), in the case of social origin they might exploit these resources less once abroad. Moreover, the context where migrants reside might play a role in the sense that the process of status attainment in place for nationals might either apply or influence migrants too. As a consequence, the role of social origin in the status attainment process within the three areas, net of self-selection mechanisms, is expected to work as follows:

H3) *Social origin has a stronger effect on Romanian stayers rather than migrants*

H4) *Social origin has a stronger effect on Romanian migrants in Southern Europe rather than Central and Northern Europe*

## 5.4. Research Design, Data & Method

The research design chosen to explore Romanians' status attainment across Europe is a 'Single Origin – Multiple Destination' (SO-MD) one. As anticipated and following recent scholarship (Panichella 2018; Zuccotti et al. 2015), Romanian migrants are compared on the one side to their national peers staying in Romania and, on the other side, among themselves, across Central-Northern versus Southern European countries. The data come from EUCROSS database, which is one of the few sources offering detailed information on migrants going from a single country of origin towards several countries of destination. Indeed, large cross-country databases such as EU-LFS usually group together migrants coming from more countries, so that it is not possible to control for national-specific features of the country of origin (language, culture, institutions, etc.) which might affect the status attainment process of migrants in the destination country.

The team of international experts who built the EUCROSS database (among which Adrian Favell, Ettore Recchi and Dimitru Sandu) selected the countries of destination according to both the size of the Romanian communities they hosted and the location of their own research institutes, so to better validate the quality of the data at national level (Pőtzschke 2015). Hence, five countries have been chosen (Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom), and then grouped into two main areas in order to address the on-going academic debate comparing the 'new' receiving countries (i.e. Italy and Spain for Southern Europe) on the one hand, and the 'old' receiving countries (i.e. Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom for Central-Northern Europe) on the other

hand (Reyneri and Fullin 2011; Favell 2008; Kogan 2007). Hereafter, the single countries within each area of destination will be treated together as a united group.

**Table 5.1. Composition of the Selected Sample**, including individuals aged 18-65 years interviewed in 2012

| ROMANIANS | in Romania | in Southern EU | Central-Northern EU | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Males** | 48.5 | 18.4 | 33.1 | 100 |
| **Females** | 38.6 | 28.2 | 33.2 | 100 |
| **Total** | 43.7 | 23.2 | 33.1 | 100 = **2116** |

The EUCROSS database has been built through thousands of in-depth CATI interviews to both migrants and nationals of the five selected countries of destinations. The migrant population is of either Romanian or Turkish origin. Accordingly, the nationals correspond to the stayers in Romania and Turkey, but also to the nationals of the five countries of destination considered, that are Italians, Germans and so on. While nationals are a random sample extracted through random digit dialling, for the sampling of migrants a linguistic screening of names in telephone directories (onomastic procedure) has been used (Pőtzschke 2015, 13). On total, 9247 adult individuals (over 18 years old) where interviewed between 2012 and 2013.

The present analysis focuses on a selection of the cases available in the database, in order to include working-age (18-65) Romanian citizens only, accounting for a total of 2116 interviews taken in 2012. Table 5.1 shows the relative composition of the valid sample by gender and country of residence (table A1 in the annex shows the corresponding frequencies). A first step of the analysis consists in running a multinomial logistic regression in order to test the first two hypotheses, that is whether Romanians with a higher social origin (H1) or a higher education (H2) are more likely to migrate instead of stay. The dependent variable has three outcomes, corresponding to the three areas where Romanians reside (Romania as stayers plus either Southern Europe or Central-Northern Europe as migrants). The aim is to calculate the probability that a random individual within the whole Romanian sample is assigned to each of these three areas according to his or her social origin and education.

The compositional differences of these three populations of Romanians are then interpreted as a result of self-selection, that is the process linking social origin and education to the area of residence, as described by path A of figure 5.3. According to rational choice and human capital investment theories (Borjas 1987), migrants are positively selected because they can invest comparatively higher parental and educational resources abroad, where they expect to have higher employability and quality of job opportunities, so to have higher returns. As a consequence, when comparing the population of migrants to that of stayers as for their achieved socio-economic status, it is important to take this self-selection bias into account.

The approach proposed in this study consists in introducing the probabilities of Romanians to reside in each area, as calculated in the first step of the analysis, directly into the second step as sample weights[32]. The aim is to estimate the status attainment process, net of self-selection. Indeed, the second step consists in a series of nested OLS regression models, which test the role played by social origin on an individual's status achievement in different territorial and/or institutional contexts. Here the expectation is that social origin, net of self-selection mechanisms, has a stronger effect on the status attainment of stayers as compared to migrants (H3). Instead, for migrants in Southern EU, social origin is expected to have a stronger effect as compared to migrants in Central and Northern Europe (H4). The dependent variable used in these models is the respondents' ISEI (International Socio-Economic Index, calculated on the basis of ISCO-08), which is already available in the EUCROSS dataset.

The main independent variable are parental ISEI and respondent's education. The former refers to the socio-economic status of the parent who has been identified by the respondent as the one contributing the most to the household economy when he or she was 14 years old. In order to allow the comparison among coefficients, parental ISEI has been standardized into z-scores. Education is operationalized as the highest educational level attained as declared by the respondent, comparing the steps of the Romanian educational system with the international ISCED scale. The effect of both independent variables (social origin and education) is interacted with the three groups of Romanians (stayers, migrants in Central-Northern Europe and migrants in Southern Europe).

The age of the respondent is always present as a control variable, and all models are run separately for men and women, in accordance with the literature which has highlighted significant differences between the two genders with respect to the attainment of migrants (Ballarino and Panichella 2017 and 2015; Zuccotti et al. 2015). For the test of the last hypothesis (H4), three migration-specific variables are included as controls. The first of such variables accounts for whether the Romanian citizens who moved to either of the two European areas had any previous knowledge of the language spoken in the country of destination, with 1 meaning at least a poor knowledge at the time of arrival, while 0 meaning no knowledge at all. A second migration-specific variable is the length of stay in the host country, that is a dummy with value 1 corresponding to 10 or more years since arrival, and value 0 corresponding to less than 10 years. Finally, the reason to migrate was taken into account again as a dummy variable with value 1 comprising all working-related reasons (job seeking, posted-work, self-employment, etc.) while value 0 addresses all the other reasons (study, family ties, health and well-being, asylum seeking, etc.)

[32] The EUCROSS database does not have sample weights and it is not possible to extrapolate population weights from EU-LFS because there is no information on socio-economic status of the parents (social origin), which is instead a crucial variable for the self-selection mechanism detected.

## 5.5. Empirical Findings

As anticipated, the present analysis is composed by two subsequent steps. First, possible self-selection mechanisms are explored (corresponding to path A in figure 3). The aim is to check whether the population of Romanians residing within the three areas (Romania, Southern Europe and Central-Northen Europe) are statistically different according to demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Indeed, provided that significant compositional differences have emerged among the three populations (see figure 5.2 concerning social origin), the probability of Romanians to reside in each area might be partially explained by their individual characteristics. In particular, a multinomial logistic regression allows to asses the probability that Romanians with a certain social origin and education reside in each area, net of all the other factors.

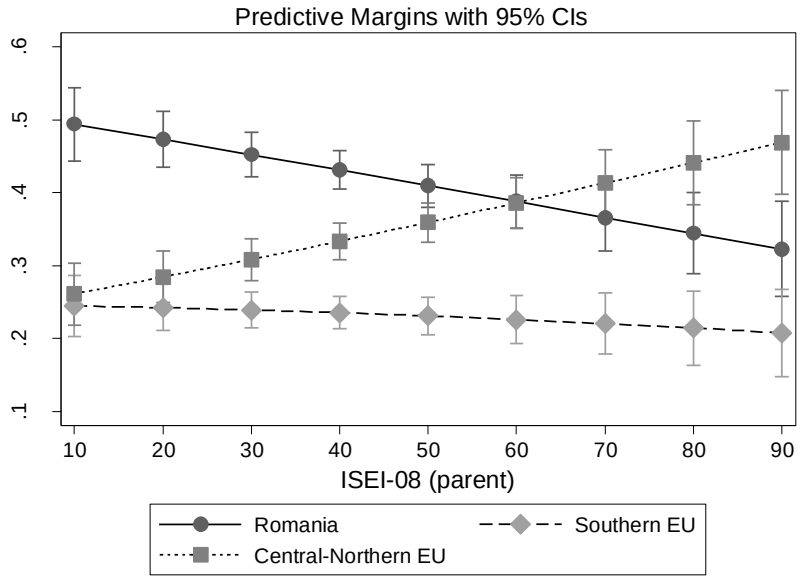
In a second step the process of status attainment of Romanians is assessed. This time the comparison is run between two groups at a time, in order to clarify the different mechanisms at play. Initially Romanian stayers are compared to all Romanian migrants, regardeless of the country of destination where the latter reside. Subsequently, only the pool of Romanian migrants is taken into account, so that the migrants who reside in Southern Europe are compared to the ones who reside in Central and Northern Europe. In both cases, several linear regressions are run, having the socio-economic index (ISEI) of Romanian respondents as the dependent, continuous variable. The indipendent variables are the same (social origin, education, age) except for three additional migrant-specific variables which are included in the second comparison only, that is the one among Romanian migrants.

### 5.5.1. Self-Selection

In order to build figures 5.4 and 5.5, a multinomial logistic regression have been estimated with a dependent categorical variable having three values. The first value corresponds to Romanian stayers, who are treated as the reference category, while the other two values correspond to Romanian migrants in Southern Europe and Romanians in Central-Northern Europe, respectively. The independent variables are social origin and education, while gender and age are added as controls. The results are then showed separately for men and women, in order to highlight the gender differences which might be relevant, as in the case of migrants residing in Southern EU. The following equation estimates the probability of self-selection into three areas (Romania, Southern Europe and Central-Northern Europe), assuming that these are independent and unranked categories:

$$\text{Prob. } \hat{y}\,(\text{Area}) = \beta_1 \text{Parental ISEI} + \beta_2 \text{Education} + \beta_3 \text{Age} + \beta_4 \text{Gender} + \varepsilon$$

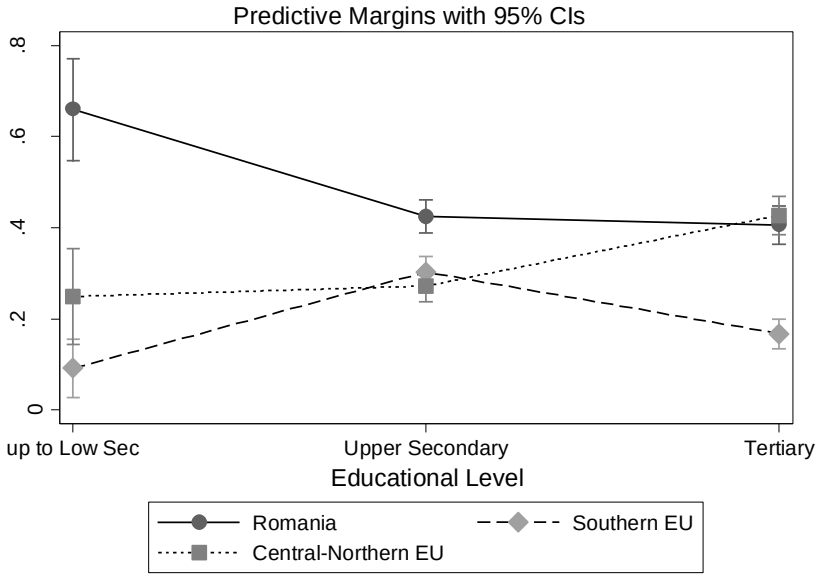
**Figure 5.4. Self-selection according to Social Origin**




Predicted probabilities of the multinomial logistic model which estimates the probability of a random Romanian in the sample to reside in each of the three area according to parental ISEI.

Figure 5.4 shows the association between social origin (corresponding to parental ISEI) and the area of residence for Romanians. In particular, among Romanians a comparatively higher social origin is associated with a significantly higher probability to migrate towards Central-Northern Europe (dotted, increasing line). Differently, the pool of Romanians who migrated towards Southern Europe show an equal probability to come either from a poor or from a rich social background (dashed, nearly horizontal line with overlapping confidence intervals). Finally, Romanians with a comparatively lower social origin are more likely to stay in Romania rather than migrate (continuous, decreasing line). Therefore, the first hypothesis *Romanians from higher social origin are more likely to migrate instead of stay (*H1) can be confirmed only with regards to migration towards Central-Northern Europe.

**Figure 5.5. Self-selection according to Education**




Predicted probabilities of the multinomial logistic model which estimates the probability of a random Romanian in the sample to reside in each of the three area according to Education.

Figure 5.5 shows the probability to reside either in Romania, Southern Europe or Central-Northern Europe according to education. The highest educational level variable (ISCED 1-7) already available in the dataset has been grouped into three values, corresponding to 'Up to lower secondary', 'Upper secondary' and 'Tertiary' education, taking into account the Romanian educational system[33]. Romanians who did not reach an upper secondary degree have a significantly higher probability to stay in the origin country rather than migrate, and this trend remains significant also for those who got an upper secondary degree, even though with a reduced strength. Instead, among Romanians with a tertiary degree there is an equal probability to either stay or migrate towards Central-Northern Europe, while a comparatively lower probability to go towards Southern Europe.

Moreover, according to figure 5.5, Romanians in Southern Europe are more likely to have an upper secondary degree rather than a tertiary degree; indeed, migrants who hold an upper secondary degree are equally likely to move towards both Central-Northern and Southern Europe, being at the same time even more likely to stay in the

[33] When collecting educational data, EUCROSS interviewers asked to migrants whether they completed their education in the country of origin or in the country of destination and recorded the information according to the corresponding system (Pőtzschke 2015, 17). Unfortunately, the country where the education has been completed has not been converted into a variable of the dataset.

origin country. As a consequence, the second hypothesis *Romanians with a higher education are more likely to migrate instead of stay* (H2) has to be rejected in the case of Romanian migrants in Southern Europe. Overall, these findings suggest that mechanisms of self-selection (corresponding to path A in figure 3, and comprehending both the black arrow from social origin and the grey one from education) do are in place. This is why the compositional differences of the three groups of Romanians (residing in Romania, Southern Europe and Central-Northern Europe) have emerged to be significant in respect to both social origin and education.

At this point, once acknowledged that Romanians in the three areas considered are at least partially self-selected, it is crucial to take the relevant variables under control (social origin and education, but also age and gender) when studying the Romanians' status attainment across the three areas. Substantially, linking back to figure 5.3., the focus of this research now shifts from path A (self-selection) to path C, net of path B, i.e. the direct effect of social origin (DESO). If B, corresponding to the 'area effect', would not be controlled for when assessing social destination (individual ISEI), one would not be able to distinguish the contribution of social origin (parental ISEI) from the one of the area of destination.

### 5.5.2 Social Mobility Patterns

The second step of analysis consists in a series of nested ordinary linear regression (OLS) models, that progressively add the variables which have been identified as the most relevant according to the literature on status attainment (among others, see Blau and Duncan 1967). These are: (1) social origin, measured through ISEI built on ISCO-08 codes; (2) tertiary education, corresponding to the highest educational level achieved[34] recoded into a dummy (3) age (in 2012, i.e. the time of the interview) as a continuous variable ranging from 18 to 65 years old. Moreover, all regressions are run separately by (4) gender, provided that the literatures on both migrant penalties and social stratification have highlighted significant diverging occupational outcomes between the genders (Ballarino and Panichella 2017 and 2015; Zuccotti et al. 2015).

According to the industrialisation and modernization theories (Lipset and Bendix 1959; Treiman 1977; Featherman and Hauser 1978), social origin is expected to play a major role in comparatively less economically developed countries (Bernardi and Ballarino 2016), where modernization has not deployed yet its full potential, and ascription may still play a role. For instance, this is the case of Mediterranean countries as compared to Central and Northern European ones, which fare economically much better than the former, and enjoy relative higher levels of material wellbeing, individualization and secularization (Scruggs and Allan 2008).

[34] The EUCROSS database does not provide information on the year when the highest level of education was achieved, thus it is not possible to establish whether education has been completed prior or post migration. Nevertheless, all individuals in the sample are over 18 years old, so one can reasonably assumes that they completed their education in Romania and migrated after having reached adulthood.

In addition, as anticipated, migrants are generally expected to rely less on parental resources once left their country of origin (Zuccotti et al. 2015, 104), since they left behind their social networks and family ties. Therefore, is it confirmed that *social origin has a stronger effect on the status of Romanian stayers, as compared to migrants* (H3), as suggested by the third hypothesis? Table 5.2 shows a series of four nested OLS regression models through which the contribution of social origin and education is assessed either individually (M2 and M3) and jointly (M4). Age and age squared are present in every model as control variables, and the same analysis is replicated for both genders.

**Table 5.2. ISEI of Romanian Migrants**. Four OLS nested models with Romanian stayers as reference category.

| Dependent Variable: | ***Men*** | | | | ***Women*** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Respondent ISEI*** | **M1** | **M2** | **M3** | **M4** | **M1** | **M2** | **M3** | **M4** |
| ALL Romanian Migrants | 0.26 | -2.71** | -2.20* | -3.37*** | -2.74** | -6.70*** | -4.76*** | -5.42*** |
| | (1.17) | (1.13) | (1.14) | (1.19) | (1.33) | (1.27) | (1.37) | (1.44) |
| Parental ISEI | | 6.43*** | | 3.35*** | | 6.68*** | | 2.93*** |
| | | (0.81) | | (0.77) | | (1.13) | | (1.06) |
| Migrants*Parental ISEI | | 0.75 | | 1.76 | | 1.46 | | 2.73** |
| | | (1.18) | | (1.15) | | (1.39) | | (1.34) |
| Tertiary Education | | | 19.63*** | 17.39*** | | | 25.45*** | 23.91*** |
| | | | (1.49) | (1.62) | | | (1.80) | (1.94) |
| Migrants*TertiaryEdu | | | -2.37 | -2.72 | | | -6.57*** | -8.84*** |
| | | | (2.17) | (2.32) | | | (2.41) | (2.57) |
| Age (18-65) | 0.53 | 0.85 | 1.10** | 1.20** | 0.93 | 1.48** | 1.83*** | 1.96*** |
| | (0.56) | (0.53) | (0.52) | (0.50) | (0.61) | (0.59) | (0.57) | (0.56) |
| Constant | 42.02*** | 44.30*** | 36.26*** | 38.11*** | 45.11*** | 47.59*** | 37.53*** | 39.07*** |
| | (0.97) | (0.95) | (0.88) | (0.97) | (1.23) | (1.19) | (1.12) | (1.22) |
| **Statistics** | | | | | | | | |
| Observations | 1,086 | 1,086 | 1,086 | 1,086 | 1,030 | 1,030 | 1,030 | 1,030 |
| R-squared | 0.01 | 0.12 | 0.24 | 0.28 | 0.01 | 0.12 | 0.29 | 0.32 |

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; Significance levels *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Nested OLS Regression Models: M1=Migrant+Age; M2=M1+Migrant*Pisei; M3=M1+Migrant*Edu; M4=M1+Migrant*(Pisei+Edu). Parental Isei (Pisei) and Age have been standardized in order to allow the comparison among coefficients. Tertiary Education is a dummy with value 1 corresponding to values 4 and 5 of ISCED 1-5 levels.

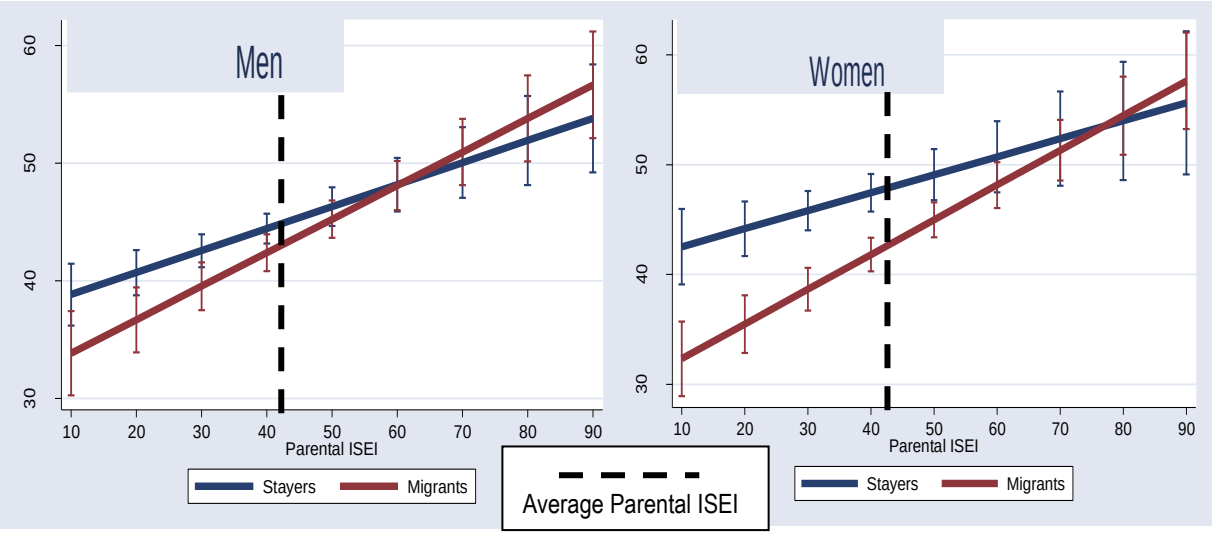
Starting from the base model (M1), the effect of being a migrant on the individuals' ISEI (dependent variable) emerges to be slightly positive but not significant for men (0.26), while negative and significant for women (-2.74). The last result is in line with the sociology of migration literature (Fellini and Guetto 2018; Chiswick et al. 2005), which expects migrants being initially disadvantaged compared to stayers due to the imperfect transferability of their human capital. Indeed, educational levels being equal, a newly arrived migrant might struggle in order to find a job matched with his or her skills because of problematic recognition of educational credentials, language and cultural barriers, lack of social networks, direct or indirect discrimination by employers, etc.

The next model of table 5.2 introduces social origin (M2) in order to explore the social mobility patterns of Romanian migrants as compared to the ones of stayers (who correspond to the reference category). We see that being a migrant is significantly detrimental for the individual's ISEI in the case of men (-2.71), and even more so in the case of women (-6.70). This penalty is partly reduced by the effect of social origin, which plays a relevant role in the status attainment of both migrants and stayers (6.43 ISEI points for men, 6.68 for women), therefore partially compensating the loss of socio-economic status associated with migration. Indeed, given that the interaction of parental ISEI with the migration status is not significant, and in absolute terms almost negligible, in M2 social origin does not change its effect as a consequence of being a migrant rather than a stayer. Tertiary education proves to be an even more effective antidote to the penalty generated by migration, as M3 shows, for both men and women, but particularly for the latter (coefficients of 19.43 and 25.45 respectively). This means that the returns to education are particularly high for women, although they pay a price when migrating instead than using their educational credential in their origin country.

Regarding the last model (M4), which combines both social origin and education, Romanian migrants come out to be significantly disadvantaged as compared to stayers for both genders, but particularly in women's case. Indeed, they experience a higher migration penalty (-5.42 versus -3.37 for men), a weaker effect of social origin (2.93 vs 3.35 for men), nonetheless compensated by an increased influence of parental background in case they move to another country (interaction effect between migration and parental ISEI = 2.73). As for education, it plays on average a higher role for women than men (23.91 versus 17.39), while it has the same role for both migrant men and women, given that in women's case the higher absolute effect of holding a tertiary degree is compensated by a statistically significant reduction in migrants' case. Interestingly, in M4 the R-squared is about 0.30 for both genders, meaning that social origin, education and age together are able to explain about 30% of the variance observed in the respondent's ISEI.

Figure 5.6 shows the predicted probability of respondent's ISEI given their social origin (parental ISEI). Romanian migrants (in red) present steeper lines than stayers (in blue), suggesting that social origin has – on average – a stronger effect on migrants than stayers; among women the trend is also significant (interaction effect corresponding to 2.73 points in table 5.2). Indeed, the confidence intervals suggest caution in drawing this conclusion in men's case, since they overlap widely for all values of parental ISEI. In women's case, they do so starting with a parental ISEI of about 50 points, signifying that migrant women with low to average socio-economic origin are significantly penalized by the migration process, as compared to their stayer counterparts, while for medium to high ISEI scores the difference between migrant and stayer women disappears. As a consequence, the expectation of the third hypothesis, that is *social origin has a stronger effect on stayers* (H3), can be rejected in women's case. Indeed female Romanians who decide to migrante present a significantly higher influence of parental resources at least for the lower strata of social origin. Instead, the men's results are in line with the ones obtained by Zuccotti et al. (2015, 115), who do not found any interaction between parental ISEI and migrant status in the case of Turks.

**Figure 5.6. Interaction effect** between respondent ISEI and parental ISEI. Romanian migrants versus stayers




Note: Predicted probabilities calculated on the basis of the regression model n. 4 = Migrant + Age + Pisei + Edu + Migrant*(Pisei+Edu). The average parental ISEI (for the whole sample of Romanians) is 41.47 for men and 42.13 for women, right below the interaction between stayers and migrant lines.

Moreover, figure 5.6 clarifies that, for both genders, the average parental ISEI of the total sample of migrants (around 41 ISEI scores) remains far below the point where the two lines converge. This means that the great majority of Romanians (who have a lower-than-average or an around average social origin) enjoy more chances of upward social mobility by staying in Romania rather than migrating. Therefore, among individuals with a lower-than-average social origin, stayers are more likely to achieve a higher socio-economic status compared to migrants. And this is particularly true for Romanian women, whose interaction occurs at higher levels of parental ISEI scale (around 75 ISEI scores, while around 60 for men). On a substantive point of view, among Romanians with a very low parental ISEI, the difference between stayers and migrants is about 5 ISEI scores for men and 10 ISEI scores for women, age and education being equal. Even though in the highest strata of social ladder migrants overtake stayers, this condition have very few (not significant) chances to become true.

**Table 5.3. ISEI of Romanian migrants in Southern Europe**.

Five OLS nested models, with Romanian migrants in Central and Northern Europe as reference category

| Dependent Variable: | *Men* | | | | | *Women* | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Respondent ISEI*** | **M1** | **M2** | **M3** | **M4** | **M5** | **M1** | **M2** | **M3** | **M4** | **M5** |
| Migrants to South EU | -14.46*** | -11.78*** | -9.22*** | -8.14*** | -8.25*** | -11.32*** | -7.05*** | -6.09*** | -4.44** | -3.22 |
| | (1.70) | (1.83) | (1.61) | (1.85) | (2.14) | (1.72) | (1.74) | (1.98) | (2.14) | (2.44) |
| Parental ISEI | | 6.29*** | | 4.41*** | 4.94*** | | 7.75*** | | 5.72*** | 5.94*** |
| | | (1.07) | | (1.07) | (1.11) | | (1.06) | | (1.05) | (1.12) |
| Migr SouthEU*Parental ISEI | | -1.86 | | -1.54 | -2.09 | | -1.34 | | -1.50 | -2.50 |
| | | (1.79) | | (1.76) | (1.97) | | (1.77) | | (1.75) | (1.80) |
| Tertiary Education | | | 17.51*** | 15.47*** | 14.65*** | | | 18.62*** | 15.15*** | 14.85*** |
| | | | (1.94) | (1.99) | (2.18) | | | (2.18) | (2.19) | (2.40) |
| Migr SouthEU*TertiaryEdu | | | -5.60* | -4.70 | -3.46 | | | -2.40 | -1.03 | -0.89 |
| | | | (3.26) | (3.40) | (4.16) | | | (3.38) | (3.52) | (3.95) |
| Age (18-65) | 1.40 | 1.32 | 1.73** | 1.66** | 0.74 | 1.11 | 1.49* | 2.68*** | 2.73*** | 3.28*** |
| | (0.87) | (0.84) | (0.82) | (0.80) | (1.10) | (0.81) | (0.77) | (0.79) | (0.76) | (1.00) |
| **Migration-Specific Variables** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Knowledge of Foreign Language | | | | | 3.00* | | | | | 2.90 |
| | | | | | (1.69) | | | | | (1.81) |
| Long Stay (>=10 years) | | | | | 3.78* | | | | | -1.75 |
| | | | | | (2.20) | | | | | (1.98) |
| Reason to Migrate: Work | | | | | -2.28 | | | | | -3.32* |
| | | | | | (1.85) | | | | | (1.89) |
| Constant | 48.17*** | 47.04*** | 39.06*** | 39.35*** | 38.58*** | 48.44*** | 46.06*** | 37.08*** | 37.52*** | 37.58*** |
| | (1.46) | (1.45) | (1.52) | (1.53) | (2.60) | (1.51) | (1.46) | (1.81) | (1.75) | (2.55) |
| **Statistics** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Observations | 559 | 559 | 559 | 559 | 481 | 632 | 632 | 632 | 632 | 507 |
| R-squared | 0.12 | 0.19 | 0.27 | 0.31 | 0.33 | 0.07 | 0.18 | 0.23 | 0.28 | 0.29 |

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; Significance levels *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Nested OLS Regression Models: M1=Migrant+Age; M2=M1+Migrant*Pisei; M3=M1+Migrant*Edu; M4=M1+Migrant*(Pisei+Edu); M5=M4+ three Migration-specific variables. Parental ISEI (Pisei) and Age have been standardized in order to allow the comparison among coefficients. Tertiary Education is a dummy with value 1 corresponding to values 4 and 5 of ISCED 1-5 levels.

Table 5.3 shows a set of models following the same logic presented in table 5.2, with the addition of two novelties. Firstly, the population analysed include migrants only (and not stayers in Romania any more). Indeed, the purpose consists in comparing the population of migrants in two different areas of destination, that are Southern and Central-Northern Europe. Following the literature (Recchi 2016a; Kogan 2007) and observations from EU-LFS (figure 5.2), which identifies migrants in Mediterranean countries as more disadvantaged than those migrating to other European areas, the focus here is on the group of Romanian migrants who reside in Southern Europe, by keeping Romanian migrants residing in Central and Northern Europe as a reference category.

Secondly, an additional model (M5) assesses the impact of three migration-specific dummy variables on migrants' ISEI. These are: (1) a previous knowledge (even very basic) of the foreign language at the time of

arrival (with value 1 corresponding to yes); (2) the duration of stay (with value 1 corresponding to ten or more years); (3) the main reason to migrate (with value 1 corresponding to work-related reasons, including job search). Table 5.3 shows that both male and female Romanians in Southern Europe are significantly disadvantaged, with -14.46 and -11,32 ISEI points difference respectively from migrants in Central-Northern countries (M1). This result is in line with the expectations of the literature (Reyneri and Fullin 2011), highlighting that in Southern Europe migrants find lower quality jobs, and thus they reach a lower socio-economic status, as compared to migrants in Central and Northern Europe.

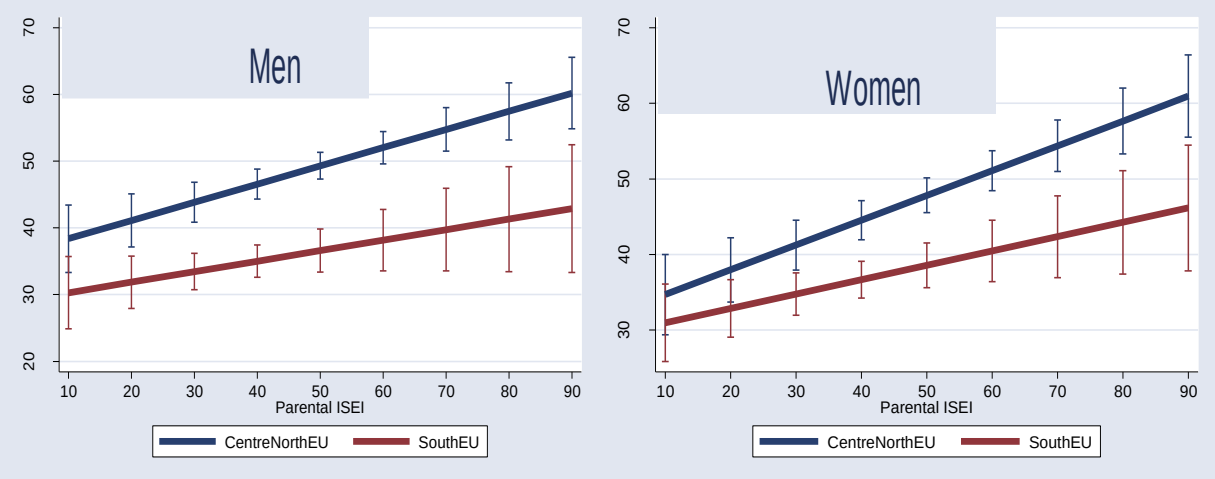
Interestingly, while the penalty for Romanian women progressively shrinks and lose statistically significance, from M1 to M5, the penalty for men persists, though reduced, even once controlled for migrant-specific variables. Therefore, while Romanian women migrating to Southern countries do not seem to be penalized as compared to those in Central-Northern countries, once control factors are taken into account, Romanian men migrating to Southern countries face a penalization, even when compositional differences are controlled for. This is a relevant gender difference, which has not emerged in the literature so far. Further research is needed in order to say whether it is a peculiarity of Romanian migration or a structural feature of migrants in Southern versus Central-Northern Europe. A possible explanation can be the notorious segregation of genders into labour market sectors, making migrant men and women in a same country of destination experience different working conditions. For instance, Romanians in Italy are much more likely to work in care sector when women, while in agriculture and construction when men (Barbiano di Belgiojoso 2014; Ambrosini 2001).

As far as interaction effects are concerned, the only significant one is between Romanians in Southern Europe and tertiary education in men's case (M3), which reduces by -5.60 ISEI points the returns to education for migrants to Southern countries compared to Romanians in Central-Northern Europe. However, once that social origin is included in the model (M4 and M5), this effect loses statistical significance, although retaining an appreciable absolute size. Even though not significant, all the interaction coefficients between Romanians in Southern Europe and parental ISEI have a negative sign. This means that social origin has a weaker effect on Romanians' ISEI in Southern Europe as compared to Central and Northern Europe.

With regards to the migrant specific variables introduced in M5, it is interesting to note that the ones which are significant for men does not result significant for women, and vice-versa. Indeed, for male migrants both a previous knowledge of the foreign language and the length of stay have a positive significant impact on the individual ISEI. Conversely, for female migrants the only significant migration-specific variable is work as the main reason to migrate, and it affects negatively the individual ISEI. On the one hand, both a previous knowledge of the foreign language and a longer stay are factors which are expected to improve the socio-economic conditions of migrants according to the literature (Fellini, Guetto and Reyneri 2018). In particular, the assimilation hypothesis proposed by Chiswick et al. (2005) suggests that migrants progressively upgrade their occupation along the duration of stay. However, it remains unclear why these two migrant-specific variables should help improving the ISEI for male respondents only. On the other hand, a possible explanation in the case of the reason to move for

women is that they might be mostly 'tied-movers', who migrated in order to follow the occupational career of the husband. As noticed by Ballarino and Panichella (2017), these type of migrants are likely to find worse working conditions compared to the women who move in order to look for their own job. An alternative explanation could be that women migrating to Southern Europe are on average employed in lower status occupations than those in Central-Northern countries (as these models show), therefore migrating for work reasons – instead than as tied-movers – exposes them to lower prospects of status attainment, net of their education and social origin (Fellini and Fullin 2018).

**Figure 5.7. Interaction effects** of respondent and parental ISEI. Southern versus Central-Northern Europe




Note: Predicted probabilities calculated on the basis of the regression model n. 5 = Migrant + Age + Pisei + Edu + Migrant*(Pisei+Edu) + 3 Migration-specific variables.

According to figure 5.7, representing Romanian migrants in the two areas of destination, we see that the line of migrants in Southern Europe (in red) is slightly less steep than the one of migrants in Central and Northern Europe (in blue). This result, even though not statistically significant, suggests that social origin may have a stronger effect for migrants in Central-Northern Europe rather than in Southern Europe. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis according to which *social origin has a stronger effect on Romanian migrants in Southern Europe rather than in Central and Northern Europe* (H4) has to be rejected. Indeed, the data seems to suggest the opposite, that is parental ISEI matters more in Central and Northern Europe. The wide ISEI gap observed between the migrants residing in the two areas is probably led by self-selection mechanisms (path A in figure 5.3) instead of an effect of the area (path B). In other words, Romanians in Southern Europe are negatively self-selected with respect to both parental and educational resources (figures 5.4 and 5.5). Nevertheless, Southern Europe does not impede them from mobilizing the resources they have (parental or educational) more than Central-Northern Europe does.

## 5.6. Discussion and Conclusion

The main objective of this paper consists in exploring the social mobility patterns experienced by Romanians across Europe. The case of Romanian emigration has been chosen because it represents the most important and widespread example of intra-European mobility nowadays (Eurostat 2019a; Castro-Martin and Cortina 2015). A single country of origin (Romania) has been selected in order to control for the main country-specific components of human capital supply (such as national language and culture) which are expected to affect migrants' socio-economic status in the destination country (Ambrosini 2012; Borjas 1987). Moreover, a variety of destinations is functional to test whether the parental status produces different effects in different contexts, as suggested by stratification scholars (Yaish and Andersen 2012; Esping-Andersen and Wagner 2012).

Therefore, a 'Single Origin – Multiple Destination' (SO-MD) design has been adopted, following the way suggested by recent studies (Panichella 2018; Zuccotti et al. 2015). In particular, the Romanian population has been compared across three areas, corresponding to their country of origin and two different groups of destination countries (figure 1). On the one hand, the 'old' migration countries of Central and Northern Europe, including Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the 'new' migration countries of Southern Europe, comprehending Italy and Spain. Indeed, the sociology of migration literature (Ballarino and Panichella 2015 and 2017; Reyneri and Fullin 2011; Kogan 2007) has identified these two areas as structurally different in respect to migrants' occupational outcomes (figure 2).

The dataset chosen in this study, namely the EUCROSS database, presents a rather small sample size, especially once that the cases are selected according to the relevant variables (table 1). Indeed, it has been realized in order to study the behaviour and attitudes of EU citizens in respect to the freedom of movement, instead of social mobility. Conversely, data sources with many cases, such as for instance the EU-LFS, refer to a slightly different population (Romania is grouped together with Bulgaria and Croatia in EU3). Unfortunately, Eurostat does not provide researchers with detailed information on the single country of origin of migrants in the survey. Nonetheless, as far as more and higher quality data sources come to be available, SO-MD analyses emerge as a promising frontier for combining sociology of migration and social stratification studies.

According to the theoretical model proposed in this research (figure 5.3), a main focus is placed on the direct effect of social origin (DESO), which is expected to be the main factor influencing Romanians' socio-economic status. Moreover, the interplay between the status attainment model (Blau and Duncan 1967) and the specificities of the two areas of destination (Southern versus Central-Northern Europe) have been explored by adopting two types of strategies. First, by analysing the effect of social origin and education on the allocation of Romanians to the area, the so called self-selection mechanism (path A in figure 5.3). Second, by assessing the contextual effect of the area of destination on the status attainment of Romanians (path B), controlling for the compositional differences which their population presents across the three areas.

In the first step of the analysis a multinomial logistic regression is run in order to estimate the probability that a random Romanian in the sample resides either in Romania, Southern Europe or Central-Northern Europe. The dependent variable has three values corresponding to these areas, while the independent variables are parental ISEI and education, plus age and gender as controls. The results suggest that migrants present a higher social origin then stayers only when residing in Central-Northern Europe (figure 5.4). Therefore, the first hypothesis *Romanians from higher social origin are more likely to migrate instead of stay* (H1) can be confirmed for migration towards Central-Northern Europe only. Similarly, the second hypothesis *Romanians with a higher education are more likely to migrate instead of stay* (H2) cannot be confirmed with regards to migration towards Southern Europe (figure 5.5).

These findings put into question the general expectation that those who migrate are the ones with higher parental resources (Zuccotti et al. 2015; Borjas 1987), because this does not hold in the case of Romanians moving towards Southern Europe. Rather, a mechanism of negative self-selection of migrants towards Southern Europe seems to be in place with regards to both social origin and education, as suggested by Ambrosini et al. (2012). As a consequence, taking into account self-selection when assessing migrants' status attainment comes out to be important, especially when more countries of destination are compared. In this respect, the present study proposes to use the predicted probabilities of Romanians to reside in each area (resulting from a multinomial logit in section 5.5.1) as individual weights for assessing status attainment (through a series of linear regressions in section 5.5.2). In this way, the social mobility of Romanians across the areas is estimated taking into account also their self-selection towards each area.

According to the models presented in the second step of the analysis, social origin has a stronger effect on the status attainment of migrants rather than stayers, even though the result is significant for women only (table 5.2). Interestingly, not only migrant women present a positive effect of social origin on ISEI (2.73), but also a negative effect of education (-8.84). Thus, it seems that migration reduces the power to emancipate themselves through education other than reinforcing the influence of parental resources. Therefore, the third hypothesis *social origin has a stronger effect on stayers* (H3) can be rejected. If confirmed by further research, such finding may question the industrialization theories and the role of migration as a possible way out from ascription (Bernardi and Ballarino 2016; Zuccotti et al. 2015). However, the role of political regime could be at stake here, over the one of economic development. Indeed, Yaish and Andersen (2012, 537) found a weaker intergenerational socio-economic index (SEI) association in former Communist regimes as compared to established democracies, as the ones of Western Europe. In other words, post-communist societies, such as the Romanian one, enjoy higher social mobility opportunities as compared to Western European countrires because of their past, when the status scale was very squeezed due to the state planned economy.

Finally, contrary to the fourth hypothesis, *social origin* does not *have a stronger effect on Romanian migrants in Southern Europe rather than in Central and Northern Europe* (H4). Indeed, the interaction effect between social origin and the area of destination is not significant (figure 5.7). However, a strong penalization in terms of ISEI is

registered for male migrants in Southern Europe (table 5.3). The latter result does not come unexpectedly, considering the strong dualization typical of the Southern European labour markets (Ballarino and Panichella 2015, 2017) and the observed gap between migrants residing in the two areas in terms of job quality (Reyneri and Fullin 2011; Kogan 2007). Indeed, whatever the social origin and education assets are for migrants, they might be confined into secondary labour markets (Piore 1979), without chances to push forward their socio-economic status. However, the absence of an additional penality in terms of hindered social mobility for Romanian migrants in Southern Europe (table 5.3 and figure 5.7) comes unexpected, considering that this area has found to be less socially mobile (Esping-Andersen and Wagner 2012).

To conclude, the most salient finding of this chapter is that intra-EU mobility turns out not to be beneficial for social mobility, at least in the case of Romanian emigration towards Western Europe in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis. While the choice to migrate seems detrimental for social mobility (figure 5.6), further research is required to test whether, among movers, migrants in Central-Northern Europe are better-off owing to either a positive self-selection mechanism or a set of comparatively higher social mobility opportunities offered by the hosting countries. Academic research in this field encounters major obstacles due to the limited availability of suitable data. Nonetheless, this study offers fruitful insights to both sociology of migration and social stratification scholars, by enlighting the potentials of self-selection mechanisms on the one hand, and stressing how status attainment processes can vary across countries of origin and destination on the other hand.

## 5.7 Annex

**Figure A5.1**. **Average ISEI** of Romanian respondents (stayers in Romania and migrants elsewhere) compared to the national population within each country on the left and their parents on the right. The red columns are identical in both graphs. Elaboration of EURCOSS data (2012).

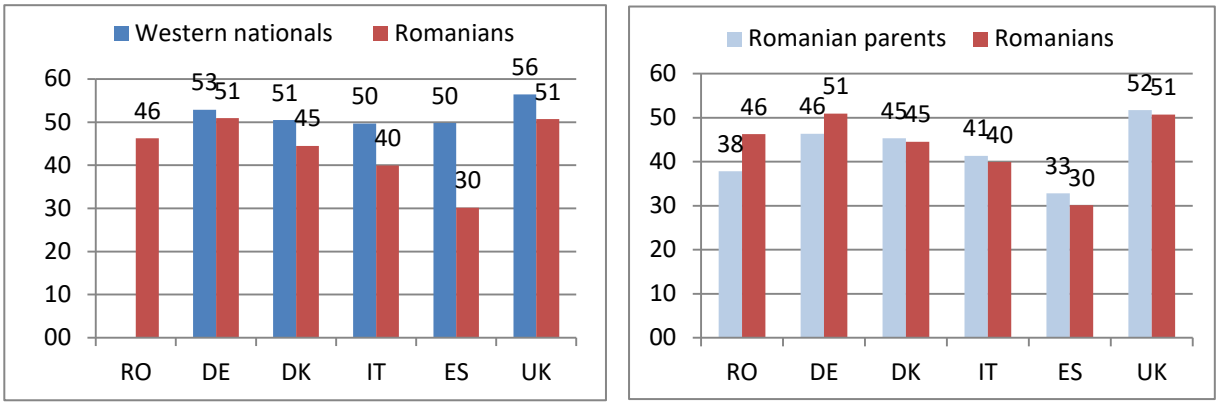



**Table A5.1**. **Composition of the selected sample** of Romanians aged 18-65 by area and gender.

| ROMANIANS | in Romania | in Southern EU | Central-Northern EU | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Males** | 527 | 200 | 359 | 1086 |
| **Females** | 398 | 290 | 342 | 1030 |
| **Total** | 925 | 490 | 701 | **2116** |

**Table A5.2**. **Descriptive Statistics** (respondent's and parental average ISEI, education and age cohorts) of the un-weighted valid sample of Romanians by migration status and gender.

| ***Individual Characteristics*** | ***Men*** | | | ***Women*** | | | ***Total*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Stayers in Romania | Migrants in South EU | in Centre-North EU | Stayers in Romania | Migrants in South EU | in Centre-North EU | |
| ***Socio-Economic Index*** | | | | | | | |
| Respondent's average ISEI | 44.7 | 33.2 | 47.7 | 47.9 | 35.1 | 48.1 | 44.0 |
| Parental average ISEI | 38.4 | 36.8 | 46.8 | 37.3 | 37.4 | 48.8 | 41.0 |
| ***Education*** | | | | | | | |
| Up to lower secondary | 8% | 3% | 4% | 14% | 3% | 4% | 7% |
| Upper secondary | 55% | 68% | 41% | 50% | 67% | 36% | 52% |
| Tertiary | 37% | 30% | 54% | 36% | 30% | 61% | 42% |
| ***Age*** | | | | | | | |
| 18-39 | 50% | 51% | 69% | 50% | 49% | 65% | 56% |
| 40-54 | 33% | 45% | 20% | 34% | 45% | 24% | 32% |
| 55-65 | 33% | 45% | 20% | 34% | 45% | 24% | 32% |
| | | | | | | | |
| Total | 100 = 527 | 100 = 200 | 100 = 359 | 100 = 398 | 100 = 290 | 100 = 342 | 100 = **2116** |

# 6. Final conclusion

The interest in this study has been inspired by the amazing opportunities generated by freedom of movement within Europe and the variety of its national welfare states. In some way, one could argue that the European Union challenges the well-known position of Freeman (1986), who excluded that national welfare systems could resist to the introduction of freedom to move across several states. According to the social rights granted on paper, all mobile European citizens today can potentially claim any benefit, even social assistance ones, under the same conditions (equal treatment) of the nationals in the member state of residence. Nevertheless, the system of social security coordination is complex and often present hurdles. Moreover, the choice to migrate might not be advantageous in the long run.

While the European institutions presented the free movement principle as a great achievement for all member states, some national leaders started blaming it because of alleged welfare frauds and abuses. Most importantly, free movement lost consensus as soon as it did not appear as a fair mutual exchange among member states any more. Indeed, as long as some member states are richer and offer more and/or better job opportunities, social rights and quality of life compared to other member states, then migration flows will follow one direction only, rather than two ways round. De facto, high skilled workers tend to follow some trajectories while low-skilled workers follow some other ones. Moreover, some member states are mainly sending workers, while others are mainly receiving them. And even if all member states would receive the same sizes and profiles of EU citizens, these might generate different impact according to the national institutional arrangements (Osterman, Palme and Rhus 2019).

Similar unbalances risk to put into question the whole system of European social sharing. The present research has tried to enlighten two different aspects which might create tensions among member states and unequal treatment for European citizens. These are the mobile EU citizens' access to welfare benefits on the one hand, and their social mobility opportunities on the other hand. Indeed, hosting different populations of EU citizens with a differentiated access to welfare benefits may generate different competitive dis/advantages among the receiving countries. In addition, by adopting the point of view of a main sending country (Romania), this study has tried to assess also the pros and cons of intra-EU mobility for the 'new' EU member states.

The literature review in the second chapter presents the academic contributions dealing with the tensions occurring at both national and supra-national level. At national level, the calculation of the fiscal-impact does not allow to identify relevant divergences across countries, since the EU citizens' impact on national budget is generally positive and small in every EU member state (Nyman and Ahlskog 2018). Even though any negative impact on nationals' labour market (Cattaneo, Fiorio and Peri 2013) nor welfare retrenchment (Fenwick 2019) has

been found across countries, chauvinist attitudes keep reducing consensus on free movement and EU citizens' access to welfare benefits (Geddes and Hadj-Abdou 2016). Moreover, national institutions such as welfare regimes, capitalist models, skill production systems and labour market features may generate different competitive dis/advantages for member states in respect to free movement (Afonso and Devitt 2016). At supra-national level, the European Court of Justice has narrowed the interpretation of EU citizens' rights, acknowledging the change of political climate after the 2008 economic crisis and the EU Eastern enlargements (Giubboni 2017). Nevertheless, the European Union as a novel and unique example of supra-national level of governance may resist and ultimately win the challenge of shifting the solidarity link beyond the national level.

Against this 'macro' background, the research on 'micro' data focused on the EU citizens' socio-economic profiles and their chances to access welfare benefits. By observing the EU citizens' occupational outcomes, a trade-off emerged between Central-Northern European countries which present higher quality of jobs but lower employability on the one hand, and Southern European countries which present lower quality of jobs but higher employability on the other hand (Reyneri and Fullin 2011). Moreover, young and female EU citizens may be discriminated in accessing social benefits because they are overrepresented among informal and low-paid sectors (as workers) or inactive population (as family members and students) (Luppi, Santero, Naldini and Knijn 2018). Nevertheless, sometimes European citizens have been found to be over-represented among 'visible' dimensions of welfare benefits such as the unemployment, family and housing benefits (Kaczmarczyk and Rapoport 2014).

In order to address this issue, the empirical analysis of the third chapter tests whether the differentials in rates of benefits receipt between mobile EU citizens and natives can be explained through compositional factors. Firstly, it explores the characteristics of the populations of European citizens across five countries (Austria, Denmark, Hungary, Italy and the United Kingdom), and different profiles emerge in respect to origin, wave of arrival, gender, age, education, employment status, skill level, household type and average number of children (hypothesis 1). In particular, the welfare magnet theory (Boeri 2009; Borjas 1999) expects that most generous countries attract unemployed/inactive (1a) and lower educated/skilled (1b) EU citizens. Conversely, according to data the least educated and most at risk of unemployment EU citizens are found in Hungary and Italy, which are comparatively less generous welfare states.

Concerning the other hypothesis, that is EU citizens' characteristics contribute to explain the gap with natives in accessing welfare (2), a mixed scenario emerges. With regards to unemployment benefits, the rates of receipt remain similar also once taken into account the compositional differences. The expectation that in the countries where EU citizens are more at risk of unemployment (compared to natives) they access more unemployment benefits (2a) is not supported by data. For instance, in Italy EU citizens present rates of benefits receipt similar to natives while having a much higher risk of unemployment. Regarding family benefits, compositional factors seem to play a role instead. In countries where EU citizens have more children than natives (Denmark, Hungary, Italy and the United Kingdom) they access more to family benefits (2b).

Also the fourth chapter explores the rates of receipt of benefits but in a chronological perspective. The selection of benefits shifts to family and housing benefits, analysed jointly as household benefits. The selection of countries is enlarged to include 12 countries grouped into 4 clusters: Continental (Austria, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland); Nordic (Finland, Norway and Sweden); Liberal (Ireland and the United Kingdom); Southern European (Italy and Spain). Moreover, the aim is to test the irrelevance of EU citizenship as a criterion to access benefits, building on the concept of 'migration neutrality' introduced by Recchi (2016b). In particular, migration neutrality is expected to be higher after the first 5 years of residence (1) and for the second generation as compared to the first generation (2).

However, the data confirm that, once controlled for compositional factors, there is no difference between the first and the second generation of European citizens. The only relevant threshold to access household benefits corresponds to the first 5 years of residence, that is when EU citizens gain an unconditioned access to social rights according to the EU legal framework. The expectation that migration neutrality is higher for Nordic countries (3) is not met because no significant difference emerges across welfare regimes. Nevertheless, Southern European countries present a reduced access to welfare for all categories of EU citizens and natives, suggesting that a familistic model of welfare goes along with a higher reliance on family resources rather than household benefits.

As anticipated, the fifth chapter adopts the point of view of a sending country instead of the one of receiving countries. In particular, it assesses whether intra-European mobility is beneficial for the social mobility of Romanians, who are the most mobile population in Europe nowadays. Three populations of Romanians are compared, that are stayers in Romania, migrants in Central-Northern Europe (Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom) and migrants in Southern Europe (Italy and Spain). In this way a 'correct counterfactual' approach is implemented, which has been recently introduced in sociology of migration literature (Zuccotti et al. 2015; Panichella 2018) and constitutes an important achievement for social stratification studies (Lucas 2008, 2013).

The expectations that Romanians with a higher social origin (1) and education (2) migrate instead of stay are confirmed for Central-Northern Europe only. Indeed, Romanians in Southern Europe emerge to be negatively self-selected in terms of both social origin and education. The hypothesis that social origin has a stronger effect for Romanian stayers rather than migrants (3) can be clearly rejected in the case of women. Indeed, while migrating women not only are more subjected to the influence of social origin, but they also lose capacity to emancipate themselves through education. Overall, the choice to migrate emerges to be detrimental in the case of Romanian population, probably because of the comparatively higher social mobility currently experienced by post-communist societies, due to their limited social mobility in the past (Yaish and Andersen 2012). Finally, Romanians in Southern Europe, notwithstanding their higher penalty, do not experience a stronger effect of social origin as compared to Romanians in Central-Northern Europe (4).

The results of this PhD projects provide small pieces of information that can be collected together in a broader picture. A main question that guided my researches comes from the 'political economy' approach to the matter (Ruhs and Palme 2018). The question is what explain the variety of responses that the national governments adopted in respect to free movement in the aftermath of 2008 economic crisis, when the fundamental principle of the Union started to be attacked, becoming also one of the reasons why the United Kingdom wanted to leave the Union. At the time, several leaders alleged mobile EU citizens of 'benefit tourism', that is migrating with the main purpose of accessing welfare benefits (Cameron 2013; May et al. 2013). Now we know that, if compositional factors are taken into account, then European citizens present the same probability to access benefits of natives, or even less, especially during the first years of residence.

A striking example is the one of Austria which campaigned to reduce EU citizens' access to its family benefits even though according to data their chances to access them in Austria are significantly lower compared to natives. While this result is in line with previous findings (Medgyesi and Poloskei 2013), the novel contribution provided by the present research consists in linking the welfare use of EU citizens with their socio-economic profiles. As saw in the third chapter, in the case of family benefits European citizens access welfare more in countries where they present a higher number of children. This approach may inaugurate a novel stream of research which maps the socio-economic characteristics of EU citizens across countries and connect them with their welfare use.

Another novelty in respect to the previous literature proposed by this thesis consists in studying the EU citizens' access to welfare in a diachronic perspective. The concept of 'migration neutrality' first introduced by Recchi (2016b) is explored over time, by comparing migrants with different length of residence and over generations. The finding that the first five years of residence are a relevant threshold for EU citizens' access to welfare should be confirmed by further research. However, if this holds true, it constitutes a critical piece of information also for the political debate. It means that, even though mobile EU citizens under certain conditions have granted equal treatment to nationals even before the first five years of residence, de facto they do not access welfare as much as nationals before five years.

Finally, this thesis has highlighted an additional potential shortcoming of migrations within Europe. Several 'dark sides' of intra-EU mobility can be identified, as for instance the substitution of national workforce in low-skilled jobs. Migrants are generally paid less and/or agree to worse working conditions compared to the nationals in the destination country, because the pay – in absolute terms – is higher compared to the one that they would receive in the origin country. However, in this way a form of 'social dumping' is realized at the expenses of nationals of receiving countries. Another con of intra-EU mobility is that it has meant also to address shortages of skills and absorb unemployment shocks, but these mechanisms work only if the member states' needs are complementary. Conversely, the 2008 economic crisis has hit all countries in a similar way, unemployment grew everywhere and thousands of EU citizens had to come back to their origin country once lost the job.

Moreover, a neglected part of the story involves the sending countries, that before were the Southern European ones and now are mainly the Eastern European ones. From a 'macro' political economy perspective, the sending member states often lose a young, skilled workforce which would be employed in the country otherwise. In the case of Romania, Eurostat (2019a) estimated that a fifth of the working age population is currently residing abroad. From the point of view of the origin country, private remittances which have a positive effect on consumptions may not counterbalance the public investment in education and the lack of a significant and vital part of the population.

And from an individual point of view? This thesis assessed whether migration is beneficial for intergenerational social mobility, which is an issue so far disregarded by both migration and stratification scholars. In doing so, it proposed an updated version of the status attainment model (Blau and Duncan 1967) which takes into account the mechanisms of self-selection into an area (A) and the effect of this area on the social destination (B). The same model works for both migrants and stayers, who are selected as the group of reference so to adopt a correct counterfactual approach (Lucas 2008). Unfortunately, it emerges that the choice to migrate might be detrimental for social mobility, and this is a result that, if confirmed, would be particularly interesting for both the academic and the public debate.

Before concluding, a mention has to be done to the role of Southern EU member states as 'new' receiving countries. Even though these continue to be also origin countries, sending thousands of skilled workers towards Central and Northern Europe, their importance as countries of destination for Eastern European citizens has grown fast since the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements. Sociology of migration literature (Reyneri and Fullin 2011) has highlighted how Southern Europe distinguishes itself for offering migrants jobs of a comparatively lower quality, often on an informal basis. In addition, the present research has shown that migrants (as natives) in Southern Europe access less to benefits compare to other areas. Nevertheless, while natives can rely on family resources as typical of Southern EU welfare regime, migrants cannot. Moreover, this study suggested that mobile EU citizens in Southern Europe are negatively self-selected in terms of both social origin and education. As a consequence, this trajectory of intra-EU mobility seems to be a low rather than a high way towards emancipation. If further research will come, it would be interesting and useful to map the main trajectories characterizing intra-European mobility nowadays, not only in terms of the socio-economic characteristics of migrants but also in terms of welfare access and social mobility.

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