

“From Europe’s Periphery to the Centre: Transnational Migration in the Context of the Greek Crisis”

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the most recent wave of emigration from Greece to EU member-states and Switzerland, often referred to as “New” emigration, taking place in the context of the recent intra-European migration during the current decade. Available data suggest that the number of Greeks who have been moving abroad has more than doubled as compared to pre-crisis emigration levels. The central idea explored here is whether and how has the pervasiveness and impacts of the severe socioeconomic crisis that Greece has been experiencing in the last ten years driven this migratory wave.

The paper consists of two parts aiming to characterise the key features of the new Greek emigration. The first part provides an overview of its portrayal across media and widely held public opinion and through social-scientific estimates from official data, and accounts in relevant academic literature.

The second part uses two unpublished sets of empirical evidence to build on features and patterns just identified and to re-examine the recourse formed so far. Responses drawn from 43 qualitative semi-structured interviews held between September and October 2018, and 229 persons undertaken in 2015, sheds light on migrants’ socioeconomic backgrounds, meanings prescribed to notions and practice of emigration, and the complex network of root causes of the Greek migration wave. Further analysis profiling interviewees and their responses has led to the formulation of a series of further hypotheses about the social composition of emigrants and the latent function of this migration.

The ultimate goals of this paper are firstly, to consider migrant socio-economic profiles as well as structural factors in order to ascertain both the social contexts and the reasons for which such migration occurs and thus be able to respond to questions such as: who are the migrants? What has been from the actors’ viewpoint, the impact of the crisis on themselves, and how do they account for their movement abroad? What specific factors facilitate the decision to migrate to EU-28 countries? Secondly, how does settlement abroad materialize, what is distinctive about living abroad and how do Greek migrants fare in terms of social inclusion/integration? And thirdly, what is, if any, the function of this migratory wave for the sending society at large?

Introduction

This paper has two parts. In the first part there is an overview of the discussion about the portrayal of the new emigration in media accounts and public opinion, social-scientific estimates and official data, which leads to an outlining of some of its basic features coupled with a related

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review of the literature. Specifically, the issue of the economic crisis of 2009-2019, which provides the overall context, is taken up by highlighting some of its effects, while it is argued the new emigration is one of its aftereffects.

This is followed by looking into the issue of the magnitude of this migratory wave. A definite answer to the question “how many have emigrated?” cannot be given however, as data are not systematically collected. Some of the difficulties involved are discussed with reference to available data from the UK, Germany and Sweden and other countries. However, it emerges that there is a good measure of indeterminacy on how many are those that have left Greece for such destinations. This condition provides fertile ground for usually inflated claims about the dimensions of this emigration. Such claims are communicated to the public at large by means of media news items, and it is at this level that a media-politics intermesh emerges that further blurs the picture. The outcome is the formation of a public opinion on the matter that tends to adopt the political-ideological rhetoric it receives tout court.

The claim about an intense public opinion interest in emigration from Greece is then looked into by recourse to two World Value Survey-7th wave related questions and the responses received. It emerges that among the general population antithetical views/values coexist at the value level, specifically with respect to one’s stand towards emigration at a time of crisis. However, a prioritization of individual choice, *inter alia* of individualism, emerges as the mainstream trend.

Given the noted indeterminacy there have been some academic attempts to arrive at estimates of the recent migratory waves from Greece in relation to particular time frames. These estimates for methodological reasons do not appear to provide a satisfactory answer. The next place to look is the official Eurostat data that refer to EU citizens residing in another than their own country. Such data combine information supplied from the EU’s various national statistical services and appear to have a more solid base than other information. They indicate that the number of Greek emigrants in the remaining EU countries for the period 2009-2018 is much less than the available academic or media reports have them to be.

The exploration of some basic characteristics of Greek emigrants follows on the basis of research that has been published. It emerges that the recent migratory wave from Greece to other EU countries of destinations exhibits a variable morphology that earlier migratory waves. The literature review identifies and describes some new/different elements compared to earlier or/and parallel migrations and puts forward related views on the matter. This exercise provides evidence that allow some comparisons and the formulation of further hypotheses about the main features and latent function of the recent Greek emigration.

Lastly for part I, the issue of remittances is taken up. Remittances are a universal element in migrations. Yet, there is clear evidence available showing that the recent migratory exodus from Greece departs from the norm. Such evidence is presented and discussed. They strengthen the evidence about emigrants’ variable social class background and refine the hypothesis about a latent function of this migratory wave.

The second part builds on patterns already identified, which are further probed into by recourse to two unpublished sets of empirical evidence. It looks at migrants’ background, profiles them in terms of education and social class and discusses the differentiated root causes of this migration, the actors’ meanings of it. This exercise leads to the formulation of a set of further hypotheses about the social composition of emigrants and the latent function of this migration. Responses are drawn from a set of 43 qualitative semi-structured interviews the author completed in September and October 2018, while an earlier study of 229 persons undertaken in 2015 is also considered.

PART I

Economic Crisis and Emigration

Greece has been hit hard by an unmatched in living memory economic crisis. The crisis was announced to exist in late September 2009 and declared to be over in mid-2008, although this has been intensely disputed. Today, in late September 2019, exactly ten years after the initial announcement of the existence of the crisis, and with a new government in office, most experts concur that on a formal level the crisis is over. The return to normalcy is signified by the resumption of the country's capacity to borrow at international money markets at "normal" rates.

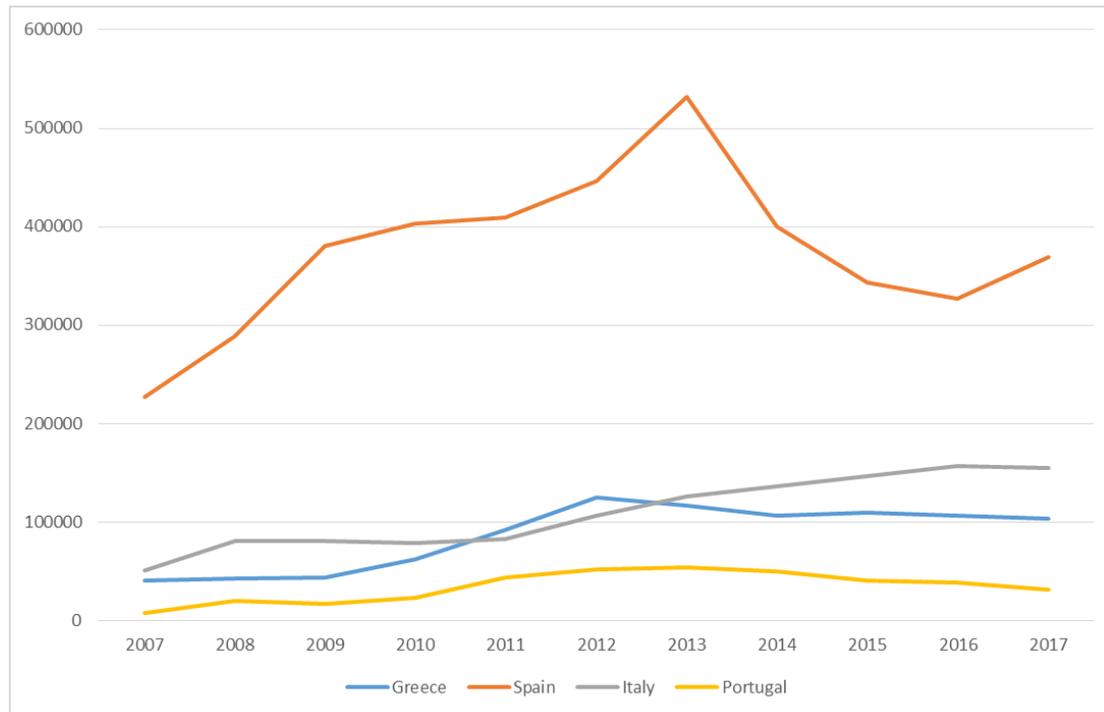
The crisis in Greece has been marked by a gamut of adverse effects. Perhaps the most poignant is the skyrocketing unemployment rate that peaked in 2013 with a 27,5% rate of the population of working age (ELSTAT 2019: 28-29). Then, two episodes of bank run occurred, wage and salaries were cut (about 25% in the public sector), there were widespread businesses closures and extensive redundancies, while the loss of the country's Gross Domestic Product was in excess of a quarter of its pre-crisis level (Karamouzis & Anastasatos 2019: 2). Also synonymous to such adverse developments was the manifest worsening of working and living conditions (for a relevant anthology, see Zambarloukos & Kousis (2014)). And while the condition that has been identified as crisis was/is mainly economic, and more implicitly institutional and political too, it permeates all areas of social life, and has been exacerbated by disorienting effects of a deteriorating lack of generalized trust.¹ Accordingly, the distance with other EU member countries on practically all and every measurable issue, worsened.

It has been in such a context that the emigration of Greeks abroad started picking up, which in turn became, and in fact remains a recurring political issue and definitely an ongoing media event. This emigration, dubbed "New" to distinguish it from earlier migratory waves (Damanakis *et al.* 2014), unfolded in line to similarly occurring developments from other Southern European countries and Ireland that had been facing a crisis so it has been referred as New Southern European emigration.

An overall picture is available in Graph 1 that portrays data on emigrants from the four main southern European counties of crisis-laden emigration (Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain), albeit not from Ireland. It is evident that the peak exodus country was Spain, although that the rise in emigration in the course of the 2007-2017 decade may have been a more general development. Besides, from this data in Table 1 it emerges that that the new Greek migration (itself part of the new intra-European migration) is real enough, but it appears that it is much more restricted than the numbers often cited in both the literature and the press, as it will maintained later in the paper.

¹ On trust in Greece and its significant absence, see Koniordos 2014.

Graph 1 - Emigration (total) from the main Southern European Countries (2007-2017)



Source: Eurostat (2018b)

How many have emigrated? The media-politics intermesh

There are two basic and alternative ways to identify a social problem or issue. The one is when there is significant discrepancy between the ideals of a society and its achievements. The other exists when a significant number of people hold that a particular condition is indeed a problem. Both of them are mediated by experts of various kinds (Coleman and Cressey 1999: 3). Emigration from the country has in general been perceived in Greece as an expression of a social ill that demonstrates social and societal impotence in sustaining its members. And a good number of people feel that it starves the country of its newer, more dynamic members. So, on both counts the new emigration from Greece is recognized and has emerged as a pointed social issue and problem.

Further to the establishment of the new emigration as a social problem is to identify the dimensions of the problem, i.e. how many have emigrated, where, and so on. However, to estimate the overall number of new Greek emigrants during the 2009-2019 period, not to speak of specifics, is an inherently volatile exercise. The reason for this appraisal is that, on the one hand, there is no system that registers emigrants' that are nationals of an EU member-country that move to other EU countries at source, e.g., when they leave the country, or/and monitor thereafter associated transnational intra-European movement. On the other hand, available figures issued from several national statistical services, while they may provide some information on local registrations of foreign national from other EU member countries, they are usually silent about the number of migrants that are or remain in each country. Apparently, whether registered or not, foreign national that leave from an EU-member country for another

(intra-European mobility) are not officially counted either, or when they are this is done with significant delay and inconclusively.

Thus, we may and do have a clear picture idea of how many Greeks register in the UK for work purposes by looking at the NINo registrations that are compulsory for working in that country (see Appendix I).² From such records it emerges that with the crisis' onset the number of such registrations increased significantly to quadruple in more recent years when compared with the pre-crisis annual rates. However, these records are silent on whether those registered remain or not in that country or are indeed at gainful employment, about which there is no available information from the said or other official source.

A similar system of registering and recording, rather more comprehensive but certainly not airtight, exists for foreign nationals in Germany. An indication of this is the existence in Germany of a "Central Register of Foreigners". In fact, that country has the largest contingent of resident Greeks in Europe, which reflects the earlier migration of the late 1950's and early 1960's.³ Here too one may identify noteworthy annual increases in the number of Greeks that have moved in that country, since the crisis erupted (see Appendix II).

With respect to Sweden and Switzerland too, much smaller numbers of migrants from Greece are found there although substantial annual increases of them have been recorded. Such increases coincide with the crisis years, as corroborated by the official statistical services of these counties.⁴

Information on migrants from Greece from the official statistical services of other European receiving countries are either not collected (as in the Netherlands), or when available (e.g. from Belgium) requires more complex skills to extract them than are presently available. However, it is clear that the major countries in term of this specific intra-European migration are Germany followed by the UK. There is also the special case of Cyprus (special as it is primarily formed from ethnic Greeks) in which some tens of thousands of mainland Greeks work and live. Those Greek migrants that reside in Sweden, Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands, France or Austria involve smaller contingents measured in a few thousands; those in other EU counties measure in hundreds (e.g. Malta).

The same applies with nationals from other southern-European countries that have been affected by the economic crisis whose presence in the UK, or Germany or Sweden, or elsewhere in Europe has similarly been documented (see Appendix I, IIa.b, III). The presence of such migrants usually indicates lower rates of increase than the Greek ones. Therefore, what we have here is a solid indication of a migratory exodus that apart from Greece includes several Southern European counties, e.g., Italy, Portugal, Spain, Cyprus plus a non-southern-European country, namely Ireland that also suffered a crisis. The common denominator is the experience and the aftereffects of a serious economic crisis that has prompted the migratory exodus even though, again, the exact numbers involved are not clearly set, agreed upon or known.

² NINo is an acronym for National Insurance number allocations to adult overseas nationals entering the UK.

³ This is reflected in the substantial number of Greek nationals residing in Germany that have been born there. The latest available figure which is valid for the end of 2018, enumerates 363,205 Greeks living in Germany at the time, of which 73,780 or 20.3% of the total, were born there – see Appendix IIb.

⁴ For data from Sweden, see data presented in Appendix III. Available data from Switzerland also suggest that the population of Greeks residing in that country (and presumably most of them are working too) has more than doubled since 2008. According to the Swiss Federal Statistical Service the number of Greeks recorded to reside in that county more than doubled over the last years: from 6,088 in 2008 their number rose to 12,854 in 2017 (see relevant information in FSO (2019)).

It is in such a context of indeterminacy that the media in Greece (abroad too) have alluded or/and reported on this emigration on the basis of gross and by definition inaccurate estimates or claims. For purposes of illustration a sample of such reports follows: for instance, statements that “200,000 have emigrated so far, particularly young people, because of the crisis” (Dermentzoglou 2013), downgraded one year later to 100,000 (*Kathimerini* (Lakasas) 2014), abound with the figure of emigrants changing almost at will. In some more recent reports, the number of the new emigrants has been raised (and rounded) to 500,000 (*Antenna* 2016, *iefimerida.gr* 2016, *To Vima* 2017). According to another source that cites official ELSTAT data (out of context, I should say), 563,978 have emigrated during the period 2012-2016 period (*To Prwto Thema* 2018). Then, the figure of 600,000 (actually of 610,037) for the period 2010-2015 has also appeared (*Iskra* 2018), and this has been superseded by another claim that of over 700,000 have emigrated, according to a rather sensationalist internet medium (*Odos Drahmis* 2019), which also cites official ELSTAT inconclusive data. If such figures were true it would have meant that Greece, a country of just ten million, would have been population-wise squashed. However, definitely this has not been the case.

Such media reports often based on a piece of official information or a scholar’s estimate that are taken out of context and presented an exact figures. For instance, an estimation of how many people left for a particular European destination, is cited as a fact, while the number of returnees is set aside. It goes without saying that such media coverage is prone to exaggeration, gross overestimations and even sensationalism. It also appears to have been, in part at least, politically inspired too. In fact, as the issue of a renewed emigration became a political issue, all political formations were implicated, so much so that it looks as if there has been an interplay between the media and political formations or individuals. The usual procedure has been that the media report on a piece of information made available to them without scrutinizing it. Then such reports are picked by politicians provoking another round of media reporting. In fact, the topic of “youth leaving the country in search of a job and survival” has become a contested party political issue, and as such part and parcel of party political rhetorical exchanges from 2010 to this date.

Further to this in such reporting the new emigration is linked to young people holders of a university or even post-graduate degree and this leads to accounts of a brain drain that reflect actual processes, but also reaches in media and daily accounts almost mythological dimensions that evidently have their ideological and political usages. In fact, this media-politics intermesh makes it difficult to dissect and analyze this problem situation. Nevertheless, it has been going and despite some sobering attempts to demythologize the situation, these over-bloated estimates have been perceived by the general public as the received truth and catch its attention.

Intense public opinion interest in emigration from Greece

The generated media lamentation *cum* discussion on the emigration of mostly young people from Greece to other EU countries and to the world has seized the attention of the public in the course of the decade. The general claim is that the crisis compels people to emigrate as they cannot get a job in the home country, and that among those that leave are the brightest, the more educated and the most-promising, which is a huge loss and burden for the country. The main culprits for this disaster are the crisis situation and those that caused it or cultivated it. Thus, the political element just cannot be missed in this rather simplistic and ideological portrayal and interpretation of events.

One outcome has been the formation of a public opinion, which considers that a crisis-triggered brain-drain type of emigration has been taking place in the course of the last ten years, which represents a huge loss to the country, to families, communities and individuals too. Such is the breath of such beliefs that it made sense to ask two related questions in the context of the World Value Survey – round 7 that was conducted in Greece in the fall of 2017.

The interviewees, which formed a representative sample of 1200, were presented a card that read as follows:

Given the financial crisis and the recession, many young people are fleeing Greece to find their fortune abroad. How do you feel about the following suggestions? Do you agree, disagree or neither agree nor disagree with each other?⁵

Following this, two questions were posed:

Question 294: When the country has spent on studying/raising someone it is her/his duty to help her.

Question 295: It is everyone's right to go abroad to make her/his life.

The first question measured the conformity to a statement that stressed the importance of remaining in the country so that collective expenses made for one's upbringing and education may be repaid in kind. Interestingly those that "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" with that position, i.e. negative responses, massed most of the responses, i.e. about 44% (see Table 1a). By contrast, those that "agreed" or "strongly agreed" collected 36.0% of the responses, while those that stood in-between formed a contingent of 26.6%. The picture that emerges from the processing of the responses obtained appears to be contradictory, although most of them are disagreeing that there was an obligation to remain to the country to repay one's debt and contribute to it.

The second question that prioritized individuality, received overwhelmingly positive responses ("agree" and "strongly agree") by 83.3% (see Table 1.b). Negative responses ("disagree and strongly disagree") formed a very limited segment of responses - 4.5% in all. It is evident therefore that at the public opinion level there is no serious moral or other obstacle in leaving the country. In fact, such a prospect is condoned as an appropriate way out of the crisis. This comes as no surprise from a population that has long traditions of emigrating. The overall picture therefore is quite clear: when in distress it is within one's right to emigrate to improve her/his lot; when in distress, emigration is a socially acceptable way out.

It may also be seen to imply that the reported phenomenon of the linked to the crisis renewal of emigration is an acceptable alternative to economic suffering. And it may also imply that the media lamentation of the migratory exodus has a superficial or cursory impact on peoples' viewpoints. Thus, moving abroad, emigrating, emerges in the Greek context as pragmatic hence as an acceptable practice and positive way to respond to difficulties, a value itself, whilst the verbal objection to emigration appears as a more cursory attitude.

⁵ This is exact translation of the relevant extract of the Greek survey in WVS-7 (card GR4); the questionnaire is available from the WVS Association. The particular survey is reported in Koniordos 2018.

Table 1a: Agreement level - Obligation to stay in Greece and help

	<i>n</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Strongly agree	96	8.0
Agree	220	18.3
Neither agree nor disagree	319	26.6
Disagree	385	32.1
Strongly disagree	141	11.8
DK/NR	38	3.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>1200</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: WVS-7, Greek survey data file (Koniordos2018).

Table 1b: Agreement level - Someone has the right to migrate to another country

	<i>n</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Strongly agree	461	38.4
Agree	539	44.9
Neither agree nor disagree	142	11.9
Disagree	40	3.3
Strongly disagree	14	1.2
DK/NR	4	0.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>1200</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: WVS-7, Greek survey data file (Koniordos 2018).

At the same time it emerges that antithetical views/values coexist at the value level among the general population, in this instance with respect to one's stand towards emigration at a time of crisis. The responses received do prioritize what can be described as individual choice vs the more collectivist idea of prioritizing the country. Accordingly, it surfaces that inter individualism is the mainstream value trend among Greeks in the particular context.

Estimates and official data

Statistical data on the Greek new emigration as already indicated are not systematically collected within the EU. So the relevant data have to be collected by other means, if possible. This gap leaves room for calculations and estimations that are not necessarily sound; there is ample room for ambiguity especially whenever the methodology used for collecting them is not explicit and clear. This difficulty is reflected in some pieces of research that make an attempt to give a global picture of the new emigration.

Thus, the research report in Labrianidis and Pratsinakis (2015a: 9, 2015b: 23) study cites Eurostat data for Greek emigrants for the period 2010-2013 that add up to 208,864. Then another estimate these authors have given is that of "222,457 Greek citizens emigrated from 2010 until early 2015" (*ibid*: 7). However, the projection entailed is not reliable so the above-mentioned estimate cannot be upheld.

A not entirely dissimilar problem has cropped up with S. Lazaratou's claim that from year 2008 until 2016 inclusive "more than 427,000 Greeks belonging to the 15-64 age cohorts have left the country". This she maintained alluding to Bank of Greece data, about which no further information was provided. In fact, in her relevant article (Lazaretou 2016), no specific information appeared.

To decide on the unsubstantiated estimates problem it is pertinent to turn to official statistics; here to Eurostat data.

A first point worth making is that the number of those Greeks that have moved to another country within the EU, is significantly less than the figures usually cited (and have been very much implicated in the blame-game among political rivals in that country). In fact, Eurostat data, which are the most reliable available,⁶ indicate that for the age-group 20-64 (i.e. those of working age), the percent of Greek nationals living in another EU member state in 2017, as a percent of home-country resident population in the corresponding age group was 6.0%. This corresponds to a rough 600,000 persons. This figure includes *all* Greek nationals, i.e. both new and earlier arrivals, residing in the EU. The 2017 figure indicates an increase of 1.4%, over the 4.7% of Greek nationals of working age (20-64) living in another EU member state, which was the proportion registered in, both, 2012 and 2007; the increase corresponds, *very roughly*, to 140,000 persons. This increase although not insignificant is much less than the increases recorded for other EU counties, including some that have undergone an economic crisis. It also stands very close to the EU average (see, Eurostat 2018: 4).

Further, according to more recent Eurostat data (Eurostat 2019a), i.e. data on EU citizens living in another Member State released in 2019 (17 July 2019),⁷ Greece had in 2018 a 6.7% of its active population in another EU county. This indicates that there has been an increase of 0.7% over 2017 when it was at 6% or roughly 600,000 persons (as indicated above). This percentile figure added to the 1.4% for 2017 (which was the difference over the figure given for Greeks living in another EU country for both 2007 and for 2012), gives a total increase of 2.1% over the pre-crisis period. In numerical terms this 0.7% is equivalent to about 70,000 persons. When added to the percent and figure for 2017, it gives a 2.1% increase that corresponds roughly to 210000 persons in 2018, which is the most reliable figure on hand.⁸

Secondly, there are two other traits that emerge from the above-mention data set, in relation to Greek migrants. The one is that the employment rate among Greeks that reside abroad (persons aged 20-64) is significantly higher for other EU citizens residing in other than their own EU countries. Thus, mobile Greeks taken as a whole are employed by a rate of 77.3%, against a backdrop of 57.8/% that are in employment in the country, in relation to its total population. The difference stands at 19.5 percentile points, which is the highest recorded in the respective comparison of amongst mobile and stationary citizens of EU member states. It also indicates that finding gainful employment is a major factor for emigrating for Greek nationals (see, *ibid*: 6).

⁶ Eurostat, the EU-28 statistical service collects its information from the various national statistical services on the basis of common criteria and methodologies, which it oversees. It also draws in information that are not available in all member countries – for instance about the local registration of migrants. Thus, it is in a position to produce the most comprehensive sets of evidence on intra-European migration. However, at this point it is appropriate to note the more generic difficulty in obtaining a reliable picture of migration flows using official statistics and thus the need for caution as Enrico Pugliese has noted with reference to the new Italian emigration (Pugliese, 2018: 23-48), which is a point that has broader applicability.

⁷ This data is accessible at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU citizens living in another Member State - statistical overview](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_citizens_living_in_another_Member_State_-_statistical_overview) . See also Eurostat 2019b.

⁸ It is perhaps ironic that as these figures indicate, the previous government (out of office only about four month ago) which held high in its rhetoric the claim that “brain drain” would be one the ills it will redress, not only failed to perform on this front while in office, but ended up by having one-third more people leaving the country!

The other trait is that the proportion of Greek mobile citizens (i.e. emigrants) taken as a whole that have tertiary educational attainment is slightly more, i.e. at 2.0% for those abroad (which stands at 31.4%) than those in the home country (the national average, which is 29.5%). Again, other countries that have suffered a crisis exhibit significantly higher percentages of mobile citizens (see, *ibid*: 5).

Features of the New Greek Migration

That a new emigration is unfolding is confirmed by the available, truncated as they are official evidence, and by experts' analyses that identify it and attempt to analyze it. Therefore, it is clear that while the exact dimensions of this migratory exodus cannot be accounted for with a degree of precision, it entails at least the doubling of emigrants compared to the pre-crisis period. Furthermore, as with all migrations, it is an all too complex social phenomenon and a definite episode of change for those implicated. The particular migratory phenomenon under examination exhibits some distinct characteristics.

A first element is *destination*. It is quite clear that this migration is mostly oriented towards other European countries. Indeed, a key feature that differentiates this emigration from earlier ones is that it takes place at a time that Greece is for long (since 1981) an EU member country. The implication is that visa restrictions do not apply, while movement across member-countries is free and without time limitation. It is also "easy" and rather inexpensive to travel and move to other EU-countries due to the availability of low cost-flights (Williams and Baláž 2009), communications means are inexpensive (Dekker and Engbersen 2014) and in terms of proximity, it is closer to home comparable than overseas destinations. Then, minimal social and welfare provisions plus a modicum of citizenship rights are available for citizens of EU countries when living in another EU member-country.⁹ Overseas counties of "traditional" Greek

⁹ There several "pull" factors for someone from a less developed EU-country to move for work purposes to another more advanced one over moving to an overseas destination. Here is a brief list of these.

Distances involved: Physically, they are markedly smaller when compared to than transatlantic emigration or other oceanic emigrations. The longest air travel from capital to capital within the EU is 3.5 hours.

Traveling: Due a set of institutional, technical and commercial developments, travelling within the EU is markedly easier and inexpensive than in the past and by comparison to other overseas migrant destinations.

Availability of jobs; working conditions: Many jobs are available in a variety of sectors, in the western and norther parts of the EU. Often, working conditions are among the best available globally

Barriers to travelling and settling to another country: Practically none. Travelling is uninhibited.

Communications: They are markedly easier than in earlier migratory waves (to overseas of within Europe), and markedly inexpensive too. This relates to more conventional as well as more technologically advanced communication means. It is due to both institutionally promulgated changes (e.g. no roaming charges within the EU), and to technological developments and changes that have an elective affinity to analogous life-style changes. For instance, the widespread use of Skype and Messenger video/telephone systems or of WhatsApp, Viber, Facebook, and other systems, which are freely available.

Political rights: Some rights exist for intra-European emigrants, simply by means of possessing the citizenship of an EU country. Thus, intra-European emigrants may vote in local elections in the host EU country and participate in Euro elections too. They cannot vote in the host country's national elections, which imply that they are not part of a specific to the county national constituency.

Social rights: A set of social rights are available linked/reflecting as they are to the *Acquis communautaire* (EU law). Four relevant areas of social rights are the following: Firstly, access to *medical*

emigration, namely the US, Canada, Australia & New Zealand or Southern Africa impose entry restrictions and quotas or other prerequisites (e.g. the depositing of sums in certain circumstances), and most importantly do not convenience emigrants in the way intra-European mobility does. Some emigration towards the later destinations does occur but it pales into insignificance when compared with the intra-European one (for official data or official estimates, see HuffPost Greece 2016)).

A second element is that there is consensus in the social-scientific literature that the new emigration has been largely *caused* and *triggered* by the crisis Greece has been experiencing. This is a point raised by Labrianidis & Vogiatzis (2013), Labrianidis (2014), Labrianidis & Pratsinakis (2016a, 2015b), Triandafyllidou and Gropas (2014), Gropas & Triandafyllidou (2014a, 2014b), Theodoropoulos *et al.* (2014), Lazaretou (2016), Marinakou *et al.* (2016), Koniordos (2017), and Giousmpasoglou & Koniordos (2017), and others too.

In fact, a number of social-scientific pieces of work have on the basis of observations and *ad hoc* samples corroborated the existence of such a new emigration wave and moved to identify some of its main features (Labrianidis and Vogiatzis 2013, Burgi 2013, 2014, Labrianidis 2014, Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2014, Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2014a, 2014b, Tamis 2014, and Koniordos & Maddaloni (2019). These authors are in unison in that there has been a shift between the current and earlier instances of emigration from Greece (in the late 1950s and early-mid 1960s): the new/on-going one is marked by the participation of educated youths, highly educated professionals and skilled people, which is exactly what was unavailable in earlier migratory waves. Accordingly, it involves a *brain drain*, and again that is linked and triggered by the economic crisis and its effects.

Indeed, as Labrianidis and his associates maintain (Labrianidis & Vogiatzis 2013, Labrianidis 2014), drawing from a large sample of emigrating professionals collected just before the eruption of the economic crisis there has been a disparity between, on the one hand, the labor market structure in Greece and its “needs” and the availability-*cum*-specialties of the numerous highly educated Greeks, on the other. This suggestion/interpretation closely follows a similar viewpoint expressed earlier by Pasmazoglou (1987), namely that there is a disproportion between the country’s labor market structure and needs and the high numbers of highly educated Greeks. In other words, the complementarities between them are limited and narrow (Labrianidis & Pratsinakis 2015a: 16). So, while the Labrianidis and associates research does not relate with the crisis related-emigration *per se*, it provides a useful frame and backdrop for appraising the emigration of professionals since the crisis erupted. Accordingly, this mismatch is but an *underlying* structural factor that leads educated people to seek a job and a career abroad, whenever the situation is more opportune and promising. My own comment is that this perspective does relate to the situation of the labor market in Greece before the crisis and even

facilities/treatment is available at the base level available for national of a country to other EU member state national that find themselves to any EU country. Secondly, within an EU member-state, the nation-specific minimal *pay levels* and *working conditions* apply to all EU citizens working there. Thirdly, at all levels of *education* access to such services is equally available, and under the same conditions, to all EU member-state citizens residing in any other EU country; that is services on a par to those available to the citizens of the host county. Of no less importance fourthly, is the fact that pension rights are fully transferable to the remaining EU countries and pensions too.

Economic rights: All these impinge and interconnect to economic rights that are part of the four EU freedoms. Indeed, extensive economic rights are available to all EU citizens, the most iconic of which is, probably the single currency, the Euro. In fact, the Euro is the form of money currently takes in 19 out of 28 EU member countries. The Euro is most useful in facilitating money transfers across countries at minimal costs, and has an overarching impact upon migrants from other EU counties.

after, and it correctly directs attention to the upsurge of a highly educated exodus from the country.

However, to the extent that it adopts the economistic fallacy (Polanyi 1977) it falls short of providing a comprehensive account of the phenomenon. The economic fallacy in this context considers decision-making, such as to emigrate or not, as the result of rational yet atomized individuals seeking the maximization of their own personal interest. This it may well be. Yet, such calculations are just not taken in social isolation. Instead, they are taken by individuals that are embedded into specific networks of social relations, which relate with particular cultural and life-style currents that confer meaning to their actions, and which intervene in the decision process and beyond it (Granovetter 1985, Portes 1988). Hence, emigration is much more than the disparities already referred to; by extension, and it is much more than the outcome of economic crisis pure and simple.

Apart from this structural incongruity between labor market requirements and available skills and specialties, the observed exodus has been seen to form an *escape* from the crisis and its adverse impact; a “voting with one’s feet” reaction, as Triandafyllidou and her associates note. These researchers draw from an e-survey they undertook that provides comparative evidence on the new emigration of mostly highly educated/skilled professionals. These migrate from countries suffering from economic crises. They do point out that the Greek migrants sampled (N = 919) are degree-holders, or/and have acquired specializations in the higher professions. The more highly educated amongst them tend to move abroad or remain there after having concluded their studies in a foreign country. So, there is a continuation of migration, but also transformation of student migration into work migration. It is also quite evident that the new migration is not a repetition of the earlier type of inter-European migration that included poor city dwellers with minimal skills or hard-stressed peasants that were functionally unskilled for urban type of jobs. It is noteworthy that such new emigrants possess developed foreign language skills, often are computer literate, and are young in age, i.e. in their late 20’s and early-mid 30’s, or/and early in their careers (Triandafyllidou & Gropas 2014, Gropas & Triandafyllidou 2014a, 2014b).

That emigrants are preeminently of young productive ages and also often hold a first university degree or additional educational credentials, knits well with one of the major changes that have been taking place since the 1960s in Greece; globally too. I refer to the augmentation of investments in higher education and consequent increases of students and awards of university degrees. An outcome in itself of the adoption of the “human capital” logic, pioneered by Gary S. Becker (2009 [1964]), which has been followed by host of international organizations (e.g. OECD, World Bank, UN, etc.), and national governments, including the Greek one, and of voters pressure too. In fact, university degree-holding increased dramatically in Greece from a mere 1.8% in 1961 to 27.7% of Greece’s population in 2018.¹⁰

¹⁰ Characteristic of the high growth rate of university education in Greece was that in 1961, 1.8% of Greece’s general population had a first degree; this rose in 1971 this to 2.9%, and in 1981 to 5.9% (mentioned in Lambropoulos and Psacharopoulos 1990: 201). By contrast, the percent of the population that had obtained tertiary education credentials reached 22.2% in 2011. Thereafter, there has been a continuation of a steady annual increase: it was 22.9% in 2012, 24.0% in 2013, 24.6% in 2014, 25.4% in 2015, 26.4% in 2016, 27.2% in 2017 and 27.7 % in 2018 (Eurostat 2019).

Motives for leaving the country

Why new emigrants leave the country according to the published literature? When considering the compendium of push and pull factors, it emerges that disappointment with the lack of meritocracy in Greece ranks high amongst them. Next, negative emotions run high in relation to the level of corruption, while frustration is expressed about the pervasiveness of clientelism and party political-related negative social capital networking. Respondents were also discouraged by the lack of job opportunities and/or career development prospects, while job insecurity and precarious working conditions such as low pay or undeclared work, were considered widespread and most negatively appraised. Furthermore, among the reasons given that drove them to emigrate, the following were acknowledged: to improve academic/professional training, enjoy a better quality of life and have better business opportunities abroad. In this sense, motivations for moving abroad included both economic as well as post-material concerns in roughly equal dosages, and this was the case irrespective of gender (Triandafyllidou & Gropas 2014, Gropas & Triandafyllidou (2014a, 2014b), Bartolini, Gropas & Triandafyllidou (2017).

In broad outline these findings have been independently corroborated by other studies involving a multiplicity of samples, i.e. those of Labrianidis & Pratsinakis (2016a, 2016b) – ($n = 75$), Marinakou *et al.* (2016) – ($n = 35$), and in the second part of the present paper (two samples, the 2018 one with $n = 43$ and in 2015 with $n = 229$). Indeed, the identification of a significant proportion of highly skilled/educated among migrants has prompted other researchers (Marinakou *et al.* 2016, Giousmpasoglou and Koniordos 2017, Koniordos 2017) to concentrate in the element of brain drain in the specific emigration. In particular Marinakou *et al.* (2016) researched a segment of Greek university lecturers working. She reported that these identified the lack of jobs, the lack of opportunities and the low-level of salaries as the main factors pushing them abroad. Inversely, they were attracted in moving abroad (pull factors) mainly by the higher salaries, the better working conditions and better quality of life conditions.

In his paper Koniordos identified the brain drain segment in the New Greek migration as coming from the significant numbers of young Greeks studying abroad at postgraduate level, and from those that obtained higher academic credentials in Greece. Further, the particular brain drain segment is linked to the middle class. If the brain-drain is to take root it requires migrants in possession of sufficient linguistic expertise and educational resources/specialties, which nevertheless signal an elective affinity to middle class membership (Koniordos 2017).

Some unpublished pieces of research are currently in the process to get published. They concern specific professional categories among highly trained Greek migrants, such as medical doctors or those working informatics (NEM 2017; A. Golfinopoulos paper), adaptations and coping among Greek workers in catering and restaurants abroad (Ch. Giousmpasoglou & E. Marinakou), and a close examination of the preparations Greek migrants undertake before moving abroad in three destinations (joint project of E. Tastsoglou, S. Koniordos and N. Alexiou). Patently, they indicate a measure of speciation in the study of the current Greek migratory wave.

Theoretical explorations

Looking at recent empirical results as well as the public debate, it seems that new Greek migrants largely behave as rational actors when pushed by a series of factors operating from Greece (unemployment, bad jobs, lack of meritocracy, etc.) and pulled by other factors operating from the country of destination (better job opportunities, better salaries and working

conditions, possibility to advance their careers, etc.). Decisions for migration are made after weighing up the pros and cons of such a choice. However, this interpretation offered by the push-pull (neoclassical) framework seems to be too simplistic and obscure some of the features of new intra-EU mobility of Southern Europeans (King 2017).

In his recent effort to theoretically frame intra-EU “mobilities”, King (2017) reconsiders and analyses various theoretical interpretations, concluding that

none of the theoretical frames is sufficient in itself to fully ‘explain’ and that it is necessary that these theories are “taken in various combinations appropriate to each of the types of migration (students, higher vs. lower skilled workers) and sensitive to the varying geographies and temporalities of the flows, circuits, and exchanges, the frameworks presented help us to understand more deeply the dynamics at play (King 2017:10).

He further suggests that the “core-periphery” theory taken from Marxist or Marxist political economy can provide understandings with regard to the migration from Southern European countries. According to this approach, those European countries with more dynamic economies may attract migrants with different levels of education and skills, because they are conceived as “upward social class escalator”. Indeed, various studies show that countries such as Germany or the UK – and especially their capitals – are able to attract individuals from poorer economies. These subjects move with the desire to find better job opportunities, to increase their cultural capital, to explore new social environments and to gain experiences (Gropas & Triandafyllidou 2014; King *et al.*, 2016). Although this framework considers that some factors push and other pull individuals when deciding to migrate or not, it seems to disregard that such mobilities are “liquid” as proposed by Engbersen and colleagues (2013), who apparently follow Zygmunt Bauman’s related notion of “liquid mobility” (Bauman 2006), which in itself is dubious. According to these authors, current mobility rarely responds to family needs, but is characterized by individuality, flexibility and unpredictability. In fact, the most recent studies show that Southern European migrants move due to temporary motivations and are open to different social and spatial mobility, since it is facilitated (as already noted) by low travel costs (Lulle *et al.* 2017). In this sense, their migratory patterns reflect the characteristics of a “liquid migration”.

Another model emphasizes the role of transition mechanisms in intra-European mobility: from school to work, from unemployment to employment or from youth to adulthood. The relevance of the transition as a theoretical model finds resonance with regard to Southern European migration in the process of adulthood transition that is as a functional mechanism of “not being young anymore”. Indeed, some studies confirm that in the South-European context migration can be a practice of passage to adulthood and is connected to the desire to acquire economic independence (Santoro 2017: 159, Dimitriadis *et al* 2018), which is another way to bring in to the discussion agency.

Moreover, youth mobility is shaped by lifestyle reasons. This approach focuses on young migrants who move for variable periods to destinations that can offer a “better” way of life. Favell (2008) calls these young people “Eurostars”. They are highly-skilled and multilingual workers who opt for “Eurocities” (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, London, Paris, and others) and get jobs in prestigious sectors. This theoretical framework is rather circumscribed and does not seem to find resonance in the most recent research (King 2017).

The migrator phenomenon has been seen to have a network structure therefore any changes in these structures are significant. More generally human beings do not stand out as isolated (rational or not) individuals, but are enmeshed and indeed embedded in networks of

continuous social relations with others (Granovetter 1985) some of which are extremely significant for them. Accordingly, the network dimension in the new emigration is worth pondering into since it appears that there are differences between high- and low-skilled migrants. Thus, the networks which the latter mobilize emerge as more individualized and are energized at *ad hoc*. At least this is the view of Gropa & Triandafillidou (2014) and King *et al.* (2016) too. Accordingly, exploring the nature of these individual/personal ties and their role in supporting, incentivizing or reproducing emigration is highly relevant for understanding the unfolding of the phenomenon.

Then, available studies are rooted on a diversity of *ad hoc* and variable sampling frames that makes comparisons very difficult. Findings are by definition limited and fragmented; they are also rather descriptive. Moreover, there has been an emphasis in the literature on high skill migration (HSM). Important as HSM may be, other more conventional kinds of migration, be that circular, short-tem, or/and low skilled, also occur and should be studied too. Besides, the differentiation of motives, meanings, contexts, networks, and the social standing of emigrants have not really been explored until now. It is with respect to such limitations and in an attempt to overcome them that the empirical work presented in the second part is analyzed by adopting a comprehensive approach in terms of what it hypothesizes and asks and which incorporates the “embeddedness” problematic (Granovetter 1985).

Remittances

Remittances are a hallmark of migration. People in the contemporary period leave one place to move to another for a host of reasons, often quite complex themselves. But it appears that migration tied to the prospect of improving one’s economic position, is paramount amongst them. And migrants consistently have been found to attempt to spread to their close ties a part of the economic benefits that migration may bring about to them. Thus, as one moves and leaves others close to her/him behind, s/he as a rule sends back monies – remits them. Recent World Bank data on remittances indicate that they have reached an all-time high. In fact, the World Bank estimates that global remittances, which include flows to low- and middle-income as well as high-income countries, grew 7 percent to \$613 billion in 2017, from \$573 billion in 2016 (World Bank 2018a: 4).

While taking this into account it is of interest to have a look at the progression of migrant personal remittances to countries that have been struck by the last economic crisis. Such countries are: Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus and Ireland. The available data that comes from the Word Bank for successive years are somewhat erratic. Thus, shifts from one to the next in some instances are abrupt and radical, to say the least. What emerges however is that from the six countries identified as having suffered or suffering from the economic crisis all but one register increases in incoming emigrant remittances during the period identified as that of the crisis (see, Table 2a, also Table 2b). This, one may presume to imply that those that have migrated make an effort, in solidarity to those left in the suffering home country to help them by sending back more monies.

Table 2a: Annual migrant personal remittance inflows (in US\$ million) 1976-2018; select countries

Year	<i>Migrant remittance inflows (US\$ million)</i>					
	<i>Greece</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Spain</i>	<i>Portugal</i>	<i>Cyprus</i>	<i>Ireland</i>
2000	2,194	1,790	650	259	45	252
2001	2,014	1,932	699	342	78	244
2002	1,659	2,270	745	309	21	316
2003	1,564	3,021	900	384	32	337
2004	1,242	3,686	1,011	385	77	414
2005	1,220	4,094	1,136	387	105	513
2006	1,543	4,074	7,352	3,485	104	539
2007	2,484	4,596	8,963	4,162	142	590
2008	2,687	7,355	9,742	4,287	975	633
2009	2.020	7.036	8.583	3.788	593	573
2010	1.499	7.977	8.687	3.726	862	658
2011	1.186	8.726	9.655	3.922	740	755
2012	681	9.169	9.715	3.991	555	700
2013	805	9.436	10.641	4.455	376	718
2014	735	10.096	10.720	4.446	267	719
2015	509	9.610	10,305	4,378	254	604
2016	417	9.516	10,264	4,433	342	594
2017	401	9.747	10,641	4,461	379	597
2018	490	9.443	10.986	4,470	448	624
2019 ^e	502	9.614	11.041	4.556	451	634

Source: World Bank (2019).

e: October 2019

The one country excepted is Greece; *inter alia* the country worst hit by the crisis. In the case of Greece a reverse process appears to unfold, i.e. a marked lowering of remittances is registered even though the number of its emigrants has significantly increased. In other words, it appears that Greek emigrants as a whole do no response to the crisis by sending back more than they did before the crisis. In fact, this is so despite the widespread claim that there has been a marked increase of emigration from Greece that, as has been established in the relevant literature, has been causally linked to the crisis, as one of its outcomes (Bartolini et al. 2017, Cavounidis 2013, Damanakis et al. 2014, Gropas & Triandafyllidou 2014, Labrianidis & Pratsinakis 2016). This macro-(country) level finding is therefore puzzling.¹¹

¹¹ It is of interest that the percent of remittances as a share of GDP is very low for Greece as portrayed in Table 2b.

Table 2b: Remittances as a share of GDP in 2019 (%)

Country	Per cent	Country	Per cent
Greece:	0.2	Portugal:	1.9
Italy:	0.5	Cyprus:	1.8
Spain:	0.8	Ireland:	0.2

Source: World Bank (2019).

This finding suggests that the new Greek migrants do not send back home money for the plain reason that their families just do not need it. And they do not need it if families, dependents, kin, and so on back home already have enough to sustain them. This finding then comes to sit well with the hypothesis that particularly with the new Greek emigration a significant number of the educated amongst them socially belong to the conglomeration of social strata known as the middle class, and are part of it. Accordingly, emigration for this group is not a means of survival pure and simple, but is a method to maintain their social position, which the crisis has been undermining and threatening.

Conclusion - Part I: Pulling the strings together

While the exact number of new emigrants remains unknown, it is clear that substantial numbers of Greeks have emigrated, since the eruption of the Greek crisis in 2009; it would appear that such emigration is occurring at rates that are at least double the pre-crisis rates. Those that leave are mostly young, as a norm have a university-level education and or are highly skilled/specialized, while the most part move to other EU member-countries for reasons of convenience and proximity.

There is a consensus that new emigrants left the country because they had suffered from the economic crisis; it was a way out. In fact, researchers have identified the lack of jobs, the lack of opportunities and the low-level of salaries as the main factors pushing them abroad. But this departure also signified a brain drain. The particular brain drain segment of emigrant is linked to the middle class. If the brain-drain is to take root it requires migrants in possession of sufficient linguistic expertise and educational resources/specialties, which nevertheless signal an elective affinity to middle class membership.

Still, from earlier periods a structural discrepancy has been noted between the labor market structure in Greece and its “needs” and the availability of specialized highly educated youths. In fact, this mismatch has been operating as an underlying structural factor that leads educated people to seek a job and a career abroad. Therefore, the new emigration is not only triggered by the crisis, but additional factors, economic and others, are at play.

Acknowledging the operation of other factors too does not negate the crisis’ impact. Thus, disappointment with the lack of meritocracy in Greece ranks high amongst the reasons for migrating, while negative emotions are intense in relation to the level of corruption. Then, frustration is expressed about the pervasiveness of clientelism and party political-related negative social capital networking. Respondents were also discouraged by the general lack of job opportunities and/or career development prospects. Further to this job insecurity and precarious working conditions such as low pay or undeclared work, all related to the crisis, were most negatively appraised. Moreover, there are additional reasons such as the improving of academic/professional training, enjoying a better quality of life with business opportunities abroad. In this sense, motivations for moving abroad included both economic as well as post-material concerns in roughly equal dosages.

Looking at recent empirical results as well as the public debate, it seems that new Greek migrants largely behave as rational actors when pushed by a series of factors operating from Greece (unemployment, bad jobs, lack of meritocracy, etc.) and pulled by other factors operating from the country of destination (better job opportunities, better salaries and working conditions, possibility to advance their careers, etc.). Decisions for migration are made after

weighing up the pros and cons of such a choice. Yet, the available theoretical frames do not suffice for a full explanation. Arguably, this may be accomplished when disparate theories are taken in various combinations appropriate to each of the types of migration.

Further in a “core-periphery” framework, migration to the core, i.e. to more affluent societies is considered as an “upward social class escalator”. In fact, it is claimed that current mobility rarely responds to family needs, but is mainly characterized by individuality, and unpredictability, leading to the designation of “liquid migration”. Still, another variant interpretation sees in migration a role as an agentic transition mechanism, as a passage to adulthood. Moreover, youth mobility is shaped by lifestyle reasons and the attractions of cosmopolitan global cities. Besides, the new migratory phenomenon retains a network structure, but it is much more individualized and *ad hoc* too than is the case with waves of the past.

Lastly, the issue of remittances, often considered a hallmark of migration, directs attention in that the Greek case departs from the norm: by comparison, very little money is sent away money to relatives in the home country. It is hypothesized that this is so because the emigrants' social class background is such that her/his family does not need. This finding and interpretation is important for identifying a latent function that the particular migratory wave may have.

Part II

Part II, focus in presenting some aspects of the empirical material from the two samples. This is undertaken in relation to what has already been outlined. The aim is to appreciate how the information that can be drawn from the surveys fares and whether the hypotheses about the social composition of the particular migratory wave and the latent functions it may have are sensible and valid.

The particular (middle) class origins in the composition of participants in these two samples is also in broad agreement with the finding that overwhelmingly those sampled did not sent remittances back in the home country (discussed earlier in Part I). This is inferred to imply that such migrants' families had limited need of them, which indicates that they belong to the more affluent middling groups. Accordingly, the particular migration may be seen to be an individualized as well as a pre-eminently middle class strategy to cope with the crisis and its adverse impact.

The reasons interviewees give for leaving the country are also explored and the kind of jobs they seek and get abroad, are also looked at, which help to arrive to the identification of some broad patterns of his migratory wave, as reflected in the responses obtained from the particular samples.

Methodology

This is a qualitative study of the causes, pathways, and mechanisms for the ongoing contemporary and New Greek migration to Europe (EU) in the context of the Greek socio-economic crisis that started to surface in 2009 and picked up pace the following years, from the perspective of the study participants. Forty three (43) qualitative, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with men and women having already left and in various stages of the settlement process mostly in Central Europe and Scandinavia, were conducted by the author in the fall-

winter period of 2018. This sample extended the inroads gained from an unpublished piece of research conducted in 2015 with a sample of 229 interviewees on similar lines. Sampling was based on the snow-ball method and as such not representative. My intention has been to obtain systematic information about the characteristics of emigrants, and to decipher the social rationale of emigration, namely to tease out its *raison d'être*. Therefore I have been looking at interviewee anticipations, networks, social background, employment needs aspirations, and status, and to their socio-demographic characteristics.

Accordingly the focus was on the nuances of the decision-making, planning, traveling, and settling in a Central-European country or in Scandinavia, as well as the changes in self, life trajectory and life style perceived by the participants. Interviews were conducted in Greek; which is the common medium of all participants in the study. These have been processed manually and selectively translated for the purposes of this presentation.

Firstly a word on methodological issues: specifically about issues of access and the samples drawn. Both samples, i.e. the more recent 2018 one (n = 43; 2018) and the earlier 2015 one (n = 229; 2015) have been formed by addressing a diverse set of relevant Facebook (F/B) groups in which migrants from Greece have formed. For instance “Greeks in Brussels; publicized members: 11,642”, “Greeks in and around Zurich”; publicized members: 8,125, “Ellinika Estiatoria Germanias” (meaning “Greek Restaurants in Germany”), publicized members: 6,719, etc. This means that those those addressed had to participate in such a F/B group, see the announcement about my research, respond, and come to agree to participate/be selected; those that did not, could not be identified nor addressed.

The process for gaining access and thereafter arranging for an interview has been the following: F/B groups with an explicit referent to the migrant situation of Greeks abroad were identified, about 80 in all. In several of them a registration as member was a prerequisite for being allowed to post messages, in which case I did register. A few groups required additional conditions, e.g. to be a resident in a particular locale, or work in a locale, to be allowed to join the group. In several instances such were token barriers. However, in some instances these were substantial and this led to my exclusion from joining the particular F/B groups. It should be pointed out however that such restricted conditions among F/B groups were quite limited, while their membership – as far as I could reckon – was quite small.

Once a member of an F/B group, or when access to one of them has been possible, I then posted a message in its wall. In this message, I identified myself and my intentions, gave my contact details and invited interested group members to let me know if they would like to participate in the research I have undertaken on the recent emigration from Greece by providing their contact details by means of private messaging. It was pointed out that a face-method to be used via the “Skype” system. In some instances respondents suggested the unitization of the “Messenger” system to which I agreed. A sample of such invitation message is available as an appendix. No overlap between respondents in the two samples has been observed.

The feedback received was twofold. The one type of response was a straightforward acceptance to be interviewed. In these instances I proceeded to make the necessary arrangements and conduct the interview. The other type of response was to send “like” signals to my posting. In that case I would send them a “thank you for your interest” follow up message in which I explicitly reiterated my invitation to them to undergo an interview on the subject matter of their emigration. Roughly one third to half of those that gave a “like” sign would accept an interview.

Both kinds of response, taken together, generated limited amount of interviews; limited in relation to the announced number of members. This was the case with virtually any and all

F/B groups! For instance, one of the larger in terms of nominal (publicized) number of members F/B group is the “Greeks in London”; it mentions 5,346 members (accessed anew on 27-07-2019). In fact, however, only about 20 or so gave off a response to my call and this irrespective of whether this led to an interview or not. What I mean to say is that the cited number of any F/B group members bears little relation to the actual activity and responses that may be obtained and this is true of a topic that refers to their very actual situation, i.e. their emigration from their own country, which should be of interest. This discrepancy just reflects the purpose and the trajectories of such group formation and activity which, as a rule, is extremely loose and lax, are formed, reformed, split or forgotten on the basis of individual initiative, variable networking and diverse circumstance.

Reflecting on the impact of this condition on interviewee recruiting, it may be said that while the latter is possible and feasible, the formed samples bears no relation to representativeness. Clearly, there is an element of self-selection of interviewees. Self-selection in the sense that it echoes would-be interviewee interests, availability, choice, pastime, and related engagement with social media. Needless to say that those not acquainted with the electronic media and their usage, were automatically excluded from participating in a research deployed through them.

Further to this, the method utilized to identify research subjects may and does exclude those that lack skills to use computers, or do not have the resource to access them, or are at work, or do not have the habit of looking at social networks such as the “Facebook”. This may be the case with several of potential respondents that were not identified and were not interviewed and whose basic socio-economic features might have differed to those that did responded. This is an element that should be kept in mind, particularly as it may have to tilt the center of gravity of samples obtained, and accordingly misrepresent the actual situation. And as noted earlier it may well restrict the generality of the samples and tilt the quality of the main findings

Overall, implementing the social media for research purposes, such as the one with which I am concerned here, is possible and may be relevant too. Yet, this system of identifying would-be interviewees and recruiting them operates like a snowball sample, without any further pretensions to representativeness. And as a snowball sample, it mostly has a heuristic function and potential. This does not mean that the sample thus identified and addressed cannot give much, as I think that it can. That is, it may allow identification and insight into the underlying social processes.

Interviews were conducted specifically with Greek migrants that were working abroad. It is the case however that in a few instances it became apparent that subjects were students that also had a paid job or that their work role was limited (part-time workers). The older 2015 sample targeted those that resided abroad for a period up to four year, so as to explore the impact of the economic crisis with them. In practice this was not always the case with few earlier emigrants included in the sample. The newer sample of 2018 was intended to research very recent emigrants that did work abroad for up to two years. In actuality, the time span was extended although all subjects had moved abroad in the course of the crisis years.

It should be noted that the information presented here just reflects these two non-representative samples. The presentation of some information collected in numerical form only reflects the samples and by itself is not amenable to generalization. In fact, this information reflects the qualitative and open-ended nature of the questions that have a heuristic orientation. Despite the fact that the empirical material collected is non-representative of the general population of emigrants, it is possible from the responses obtained to discern some recurring regularities or patterns. When these regularities appear systematically this could mark

the emergence of a saturation of information condition, an approach pioneered by Bertaux and Bertaux-Wiame (1981a, 1981b). This means that the main account(s) of a series of related events can be discerned, with dissimilarities only reflecting the variation of individual experience. This implies that the emergent social patterns that are identified, allow the formulation of finer hypotheses that have a high likelihood to catch the more underlying, non-verbalised or essential aspects of the phenomenon. If so, then they may come to possess enhanced explanatory power. This I think it is the case with the information obtained from two research samples.

It should be added that there is no overlap of interviewees participating in the two samples; each and all interviewees in both samples are unique. Therefore it is reasonable for certain purposes to consider them as a unitary group, given the common features that they share. On the other hand, this is dependent on the particular issue at hand of course that allows or not to establish meaningful comparability of responses, given that the questions asked were not identical. Therefore, grouping features or responses from the two samples together is ruled by such preoccupations.

The Socio-Economic Profile of Leavers

Socio-Demographic and Educational Profile

The 2018 sample included 43 participants residing in EU countries and in Switzerland. By far most of them live in central European countries and Scandinavia, and all of them find themselves in large cities. Thus, three (3) are in the UK (England), six (6) in Austria, one (1) in Belgium, four (4) in Germany, seven (7) in Denmark, 13 in Switzerland, seven (7) in Sweden, two (2) in Czechia; a total of 43; see Table 3.1.

By contrast the 2015 sample included 229 interviewees. These resided mostly in the UK, i.e. 74 or 32.3 % of the particular panel, and in Germany in which 35 or 15.2 resided, followed closely a group of 29 or 12.6% residing in the Netherlands. To a lesser extent they are found in Sweden (15 or 6.5%) in Malta and Switzerland (13 in each or 5.6%), in Belgium-Luxemburg-France (12 or 5.2%), and in single digits in Austria, Finland, Denmark, and other counties (see Table 3.1). The exception is a contingent of 19 or 8.2% that was living and working in the Arab peninsula countries, namely the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Table 3.1 – Interviewee County of Residence

Country (or region)	2018 research		2015 research		Both samples	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Arab peninsula (UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia)	-	-	19	8.2	19	6.9
Austria	6	13.9	4	1.7	10	3.6
Belgium-Lux-France	1	2.3	12	5.2	13	4.7
Czechia	2	4.6	-	-	2	0.7
Denmark	7	16.2	8	3.4	15	5.5
Finland	-	-	3	1.3	3	1.1
Germany	4	9.3	35	15.2	39	14.3
Malta	-	-	13	5.6	13	4.7
Netherlands	-	-	29	12.6	29	10.6
Other	-	-	4	1.7	4	1.4

Sweden	7	16.2		15	6.5		22	8.0
Switzerland	13	30.2		13	5.6		26	9.5
UK	3	6.9		74	32.3		77	28.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>100.0</i>		<i>229</i>	<i>100.0</i>		<i>272</i>	<i>100.0</i>

In demographic terms, the 2018 sample of 43 included 19 women and 24 men. The age range of the participants was between 20-61 years, with most of them in late twenties and particularly in their early-mid thirties. Specifically, 12 belong to the 20-29 age-group, 19 in that of 30-39, nine (9) in the 40-49 age cohort, two (2) in the 50-59 age category and one (1) in the 60+ age-group. This information is portrayed in Tables 3.2 and 3.3.

The demography of the 2015 sample included 108 men and 121 women, or 47.1 and 52.8 per cent respectively. Of them, 30.1% were in their twenties, 42.7% were in their thirties, 16.5% in their forties, and 8.7% in their fifties (see Tables 3.2 and 3.3.). It may be noted that in rough outline the demography of the two samples was not different.

Table 3.2 - Respondent sex

	2018 research		2015 research		Both samples	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Sex						
Men	24	55.8	108	47.1	132	48.5
Women	19	44.1	121	52.8	140	51.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>229</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>272</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 3.3 - Respondent Age

	2018 research		2015 research		Both samples	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Age-group						
20-29	12	27.9	69	30.1	81	29.7
30-39	19	44.1	98	42.7	117	43.0
40-49	9	20.9	38	16.5	47	17.2
50-59	2	4.6	20	8.7	22	8.0
60+	1	2.3	4	1.7	5	1.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>229</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>272</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Marital Status - Personal circumstances

In terms of marital status, 10 or 22.2% are single, 17 or 39.4% are married, with 11 of them having children – two (2) as a norm. A further 16 or 37.2% are in a relationship. In 11 instances (or one in four) married respondents reported they had children; two (2) children were the norm. In percentile terms, 64.7% of married respondents also have children in their families. By contrast, with the 2015 sample, among the 78 (33.1%) that were married, 52 (66.3%) had children, mostly one child. In addition, 68 (29.6%) were in a relationship, and 76 (33.1%) were single (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 – Marital Status

MARITAL STATUS	2018 research		2015 research		Both samples	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Single	10	22.2	76	33.1	86	31.6
Married	17	39.5	85	37.1	102	37.5
In relationship	16	37.2	68	29.6	84	30.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>229</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>272</i>	<i>100.0</i>

In terms of the time-period interviewees have been abroad in the country of their domicile, it emerges that most of them have been there for less than two year. Thus, for 25 (58.1%) of those in the 2018 panel averaged 11.1 months, with the remaining 18 (41.1%) averaging 4.7 years. The figures for the 2015 panel were rather similar so that 121 (52.8 %) of participants averaged 15.5 months while the remaining 108 (47.1 %) average 4.0 years. Nearly all of the 272 participant in the two panels have moved and living abroad during the crisis period years. The exception has been five participants in the 2015 panel, or 1.8% of the total, that exceeded this time frame (see Tables 3.5.a and 3.5.b).

Table 3.5.a – Duration of Living Abroad (N = 43; % - 2018 research)

Months:	1-6	8	12	18	24	1-24
<i>n</i>	11	1	4	3	6	25
<i>11.1 months on average for 25 respondents (or 58.1% of total)</i>						
Years (over 2,5 years):	2,5	3	5	7-9	Over 9	2,5-years +
<i>n</i>	4	8	3	3	-	18
<i>4.7 years on average for 18 respondents (or 41.1% of total)</i>						

Table 3.5.b – Duration of Living Abroad (N = 229; % - 2015 research)

Months:	1-6	8	12	18	24	1-24
<i>n</i>	20	6	32	21	42	121
<i>15.5 months on average for 121 respondents (or 52.8 % of total)</i>						
Years (over 2,5 years):	2,5	3	5	7-9	Over 9	2,5-years +
<i>n</i>	21	57	21	4	5	108
<i>4.0 years on average for 108 respondents (or 47.1 % of total)</i>						

Education levels attained

In terms of the level of formal education attained, eight (18.6%) respondents in the 2018 sample reported to have received education up to the level of high school (*Lyceum*),¹² three (6.9%) have had post-secondary school education, nine (20.9%) have obtained a first degree, or were about to do so, 20 (46.5%) were in possession of a Master’s degree or were completing one, and another three (6.9) have obtained or were in the process of obtaining the PhD. In effect most of the sample participants, i.e. 32 (74.4%), have had at a university degree, while the designation of “highly educated” (reserved for those with a Master’s degree or the PhD) applies to 23 (53.4%) of them.¹³ In percentile terms the 2015 sample is not dissimilar to the 2018 sample in terms of the education its members have received; actually it is quite similar. Thus, 29 (12.6%) participants in the 2018 sample received education up to the level of high school (*Lyceum*), 18 (7.8%) have had post-secondary school education, 39 (20.9%) have obtained a first degree, or were about to do so, 113 (49.3%) had a Master’s degree, and 30 (13.1) had the PhD. In effect, the vast majority of members of both panels the sample participants, i.e. 182 (79.7%), have had a university degree, while the designation of “highly educated” applies to 143 (62.4%) – see, Table 4.

Table 4 – Respondent education-level attainment

<i>Education level/credential</i>	2018 research		2015 research		Both samples	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
PhD level	3	6.9	30	13.1	33	12.1
Master’s level	17	39.5	113	49.3	130	47.7
Bachelor/First Degree	11	25.5	39	17.0	50	18.3
Post-secondary School	5	11.6	18	7.8	23	8.4
High School & Less	7	16.2	29	12.6	36	13,2
<i>Total</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>229</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>272</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The overall homology of the education levels of the interviewees in both samples, notwithstanding the other external similarities already noted, allows for their grouping together (see, Table 4). Accordingly, when both samples are taken together, the segment of those with university-level education number 214 (or 78.6% of the total), while the highly educated amongst them (Master/PhD’s) number 166 (or 61.0%). Patently in both samples those with university-level education dominate, while those considered highly educated also dominate. This is much in line with other available related pieces of empirical research and the literature

¹² A Lyceum completion certificate is the highest level achieved in this category. It also includes individuals with minor educational credentials. All of them have been grouped in the same category for purposes of convenience.

¹³ Masters’ and PhD’s here include both those studying for an MA/MSc or other post-graduate level degree or the PhD and those already possessing such an academic title.

on the new emigration, all of which consist of non-representative samples (i.e. Bartolini, Gropas & Triandafyllidou 2017, Chalari & Koutandou forthcoming 2020, Gogonas 2019, Gkolfinopoulos 2016, 2018, Gropas & Triandafyllidou 2014a).

Education profiles

Interviewees are further grouped here for purposes of analysis and convenience in three education profiles. This is done on the basis of proximity to the educational levels/credentials held. Thus, the data presented in Table 4 is recombined according to education profiles.

Specifically, with respect to the 2015 research, the first profile (A') includes those holding a PhD or working toward one (PhD candidates); they form 13.1% ($n = 30$) of the total. In the same category of the highly educated are also included those with a Master's degree. Together these form another 49.3% ($n = 113$) of the total and when taken together with PhD holders who are also included under the highly educated rubric that characterises profile A', they form 62.4% ($n = 143$) or the total (see, Table 5).

Educational profile B' includes those that have earned a first degree (BA/BSc) and which are the 17.0% ($n = 39$) of the total. If those with a first degree are added to the highly educated, then those with a university-level credential reach, as noted earlier, 79.4% ($n = 182$) of the sampled. Little wonder then that the discussion on the "New Greek migration" has affinities with the concerns pertaining to the "brain drain" problematic (see, Koniordos 2017, Lazaretou 2016, Triandafyllidou & Gropas 2014).

Education profile C' includes the remaining, i.e. those that have received lower-level education. These include those that have undergone some post-secondary education have completed secondary education or followed a part of it or have had grammar school education. These comprise 7.8% ($n = 18$) and 12.6% ($n = 29$) respectively (see Table 4), and when are taken together they add up to 20.5% ($n = 47$) of the total sampled (see Table 5).

By the same token those participating in the 2018 survey may be distributed into the three profiles. Thus, 53.4% ($n = 23$) line up with education profile A', 3.9% ($n = 9$) with profile B', while 25.5% ($n = 11$) with profile C'.

Since the two samples are homologous and thus compatible on education levels it is meaningful to include them together for allocating those sampled to education profiles. In view of that, when the two samples are grouped together the picture that emerges has as follows: education profile A' now forms 61% of the total ($n = 166$), education profile B' is met by 17.6% ($n = 48$), while profile C' applies to 21.3% ($n = 58$).

Table 5 – Education Profiles

<i>Education profile</i>	2018 research		2015 research		Both samples	
	<i>N</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percent</i>
A'	20	46.5	143	62.4	163	59.9
B'	11	25.5	39	17.0	50	18.3
C'	12	27.9	47	20.5	59	21.6
<i>All</i>	43	100.0	229	100.0	272	100.0

Social class composition

Social class composition

Given that social class divisions are central in social life the panel members have been identified in terms of their socio-economic status and circumstances and allocated in social class categories. By using a nine-fold social class classificatory scheme,¹⁴ it was possible to identify each respondent's social class and stratum position. Accordingly, only 0.4% of the 2015 research panel members, i.e. one emigrant, had a middle-upper class designation attributed to her/him. Then, 28.4% ($n = 65$) of the total had middle-middle class features, 44.9% ($n = 103$) were linked to the middle-lower class, and 26.2% ($n = 60$) were included in the lower-upper class (see, Table 6). It is evident that in terms of social composition the sampled pre-eminently have had middle class characteristics and may be thought to belong to that social class category, with those from the lower strata of the middle class forming its largest contingent.

Table 6 – Social Class Designation (attributed)

<i>Social class (background)</i>	2018 research		2015 research		Both samples	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
- Middle-upper	-	-	1	0.4	1	0.3
- Middle-middle	6	13.9	65	28.4	71	26.1
- Middle-lower	23	53.4	103	44.9	126	46.3
- Lower-upper	14	32.5	60	26.2	74	27.2
Total	43	100.0	229	100.0	272	100.0

¹⁴ The upper, middle, lower class classificatory scheme, is utilized here which allows for a further triple division for each class category (again upper, middle, lower). This makes possible the relational grouping of respondents according to social background. Class designation was done by applying objective method criteria and approximations, such as parents' occupational class and level of education, attendance of private/public school, homeownership, and area of domicile, as these became available (see, Goldthorpe & McKnight 2004, Goyder 1972, Townsend 1979: 369-412). Middle class in the current context (with its internal cohort differentiation) is a relational and descriptive category. As such, it that bears a mixed relation to the Marxisant notion of the bourgeoisie and to has a part affinity and overlap to the notion of petit bourgeoisie.

Table 7 – Education profiles correlated to attributed social class

<i>Profiles</i>		2018 research		2015 research		Both samples	
		<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
EDUCATION PROFILE A'	<i>Social class (background)</i>	20	46.5	143	62.4	163	59.9
	- Middle-upper	-	-	1	0.4	1	0.3
	- Middle-middle	6	13.9	61	26.6	67	24.6
	- Middle-lower	13	30.2	74	32.3	87	31.9
	- Lower-upper	1	2.3	7	3.0	8	2.9
EDUCATION PROFILE B'		11	25.5	39	17.0	50	18.3
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	-	-	-
	- Middle-middle	-	-	4	1.7	4	1.4
	- Middle-lower	9	20.9	25	10.9	34	12.5
	- Lower-upper	2	4.6	10	4.3	12	4.4
EDUCATION PROFILE C'		12	27.9	47	20.5	59	21.6
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	-	-	-
	- Middle-middle	-	-	-	-	-	-
	- Middle-lower	1	2.3	4	1.7	5	1.8
	- Lower-upper	11	25.5	43	18.7	54	19.8
<i>Total</i>		<i>43</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>229</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>272</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Education profiles correlated with social class

The education level achieved has been correlated to interviewees' socio-economic status (about which see, Table 6). It emerges that a general pattern can be identified that can be described as follows: the higher the education level achieved the higher the social class from which one comes from, and vice versa. However, the pattern has confines, which for the most highly educated (profile A') are those of the middle-middle and the middle-lower social class. Those fitting the education profile B' are linked, with respect to their social features, primarily to the lower echelons of the middle class and secondary to the higher echelons of the lower class. The pattern observed also applies to those included in education profile C' who with respect to their social characteristics are placed in the lower stations of the stratification scale (see Table 7).

Financial Assistance, Remittances and Social Reproduction

Financial assistance from the home country

Interviewees were asked whether they received any financial assistance from one's family while abroad. In relation to this issue 54.4% of the respondents of both panels, i.e. slightly more than half of the sampled, answered positively. The remaining 45.6% said that did not receive any (the 2015 panel members reported slightly more often receiving financial assistance than the 2018

panel member). Those that reported receiving assistance indicated that the sources of such assistance were kin (usually parents) that resided in Greece. The sums of money were advanced to them for study purposes or/and during the first period of settlement abroad, i.e. before getting a job there or in the very early stages of settlement and employment abroad. In other words families assist those moving abroad directly for work purposes if this is necessary or possible for them. They also contribute or pay for the studies and related expenses of their adult offspring. However, assisting those that have emigrated has a specific time-horizon. Namely the period that is necessary for getting a job; it is not meant to continue for long.

As far, as those that indicated that they have not received any financial assistance from relatives in Greece, in almost all instances interviewees pointed out that either their families of procreation could not afford to assist them with money or/and that they used their own resources, i.e. own savings to meet expenses made during the first period of settlement in the host country. The latter point applies particularly well to those that were in their 40s and older.

Remittances

Migration has more often than not been associated with remittances. In fact, the literature just abounds of accounts of migrants regularly sending out money back home to support family members or other dependents, and this certainly applies to earlier waves of emigration from Greece too. Accordingly, an early expectation when researching or/and studying the New Greek migration has been that in this instance: migrants would regularly be dispatching money back home as has been the norm for long. However, from information initially gathered in the earlier survey undertaken in 2015 to the 229 Greek emigrants that have been in employment at the time they were queried, it surfaced that most respondents were just *not remitting* money. The same pattern on the issue surfaced with the 2018 survey of 43 emigrants too.

Specifically, out of the 229 interviewees of the 2015 research included in that study, nearly one-third of them i.e. 70 or 30.5%, acknowledged sending remittances. The remaining 72.4% or 168 said they did not (see Table 8.2). The remaining 159 or 69.4% said they do not. The picture is not dissimilar with the 43 panel members of the 2018 study. In this instance 17 interviewees or 39.5% of the particular sample recognised sending out remittances, with remaining 26 or 60.4% indicated that they do not (see Table 8.1). In percentile terms the latter group sends more often money back home than the former group, but given the non-representative of the samples the difference in the findings it is not amenable to generalization. When both panel members are taken together, it emerges that 87 or 31.9% out of 272 interviewees send remittances, with the remaining 185 or 68.0% not doing so (see Table 8.3).

This finding diverges from the broader migration norms on the topic, reflected in the available macro-level official evidence on countries mostly in Southern Europe that have also suffered a crisis, i.e. Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus, and Ireland. However, these countries, with the marked exception of Greece, have seen in the course of the crisis years a significant and telling expansion of incoming remittances, as this is reflected in Table 2.a. So, the particular empirical finding discussed here from the two panels (of 2015 and 2018,) aligns itself with the statistical evidence on the matter, which explains why it is worth further pondering into.

Accordingly, it is now attempted to relate this unusual for migrants finding to two available sociologically features that may assist in specifying those that send out remittances and those that do not. These are the constructed education profiles and the social class categorization of panel members. Relating these to the dispatch or not of remittances it is anticipated to reveal the social tag of such activity, and possibly help in understanding better who are the emigrants – at least in relation to the two samples reported here. Overall, such an

exercise bears on the issue at hand insofar it may facilitate the analysis on the underlying structural factors for emigrating and agents' circumstances abroad.

Now considering that interviewees in both samples were all in employment at the time of interviewing, the limited references to remittances sent home is, one may surmise, a solid indication that taken as a whole, the families they left behind are in a position to cope with the daily and other expenses. And that they may do so despite the pressure the economic crisis has impacted upon them. This may appear as an oxymoron since it will be recalled that in essence all interviewees pointed out that they left Greece for reasons related to the adverse impact the economic crisis has had upon them (although this in itself varied in intensity and accruing need). In fact, as such the migration of the particular samples of migrants surveyed may well be considered as an adverse after-effect of the economic crisis if looked upon from the country's point of view or interest. However, when emigration is looked at from the micro-level perspective of individual agents, there were very few accounts of leaving the home country as the thing to do to be able to earn money to be sent back to assist the family that was left behind, or help it survive. Instead the norm has been that interviewees reported departing from Greece to safeguard/improve their own *individual* situation and position.

This, I reckon, indicates that this migratory movement, which was definitely *unofficial* and *not* organised either by governments or private agencies, has been the rational outcome of evaluations and calculations of discreet individuals that were considering their own life-chances more than anything else. These as a rule did *not* appear to have acted as the long arm of a familial or small community group, as it has been the case with earlier emigration waves in the course of the 20th century. The very high education level of the sampled as well as their middling social class background, which are internally linked as shown in Table 7, indicates that this migration has prominently been a middle class affair rather than anything else.

The high education level of the particular migrants is their major asset in that it allows them to get jobs abroad that pay relatively well, pursue a career there and build up assets, which safeguards their inclusion in the middle class of the home country, and potentially perhaps of the host country too. The fact that the bulk of the sampled has moved to another EU country that institutionally is closely bound to the home country and renders them in terms of rights as quasi-citizens, has shifted in some part the status of the migrant towards what has been described in EU phraseology as "mobile citizen". In this specific sense, migrants from one to another EU country may not be migrants in the same way that migration has been experienced in the past or overseas. In the contemporary period and the specific EU context, one by departing from her/his country may continue having a career, that most significant middle class feature which reflects social position. In other words,¹⁵ the migrant has the potential –not the certainty- to safeguard, in conditions of crisis, her/his social position. Social reproduction may take place via emigration to the rest Europe, and apparently this is not a mere possibility but something that does occur.

On their part, families of procreation have been actively supporting the settlement of their progeny abroad. At the same time, in actual practice, they have been relieved both from the financial burden and existential *angst* of having their younger members facing a bleak future. And this is so despite the cost of supporting their descendant's settlement abroad or studies. The rationale is that that since the migrant family member is gainfully employed abroad

¹⁵ The connection of the idea and practice of a *career* and its trajectory pre-eminently to the middle class, i.e. as one of the distinguishing feature for substantial sections of it, is rather well established in the work of several sociologists. For instance see, Becker & Strauss 1956, Collin & Young 2000, Hodgkinson & Sparkes 1997, Sorensen 1974, Strauss 2018.

s/he may have a career. At the same time, other costs that were tied to the migrant member remaining in the home country, now that s/he has left are significantly reduced. This then allows middle class family plans for *maintaining* their social position, standing and wealth to become a realistic possibility, despite the crisis instigated-adversities that it faces only because emigration counterbalance them to a significant extent.

With respect to those reporting sending remittances, the situation is more versatile. Thus, one minor segment that has markedly middle class features definitely sends away a member who is not particularly young and already has a career, for the expressed purpose to help support the family that is facing economic adversity. However, these are not families of procreation, but instead families of orientation as it become apparent from the interviews.

The major segment of those sending remittances belong to the lower education profiles B' and C' while socially are placed either at the lower echelons of the middle class or the upper stratum of the lower class. For them moving abroad is not that much a matter of utilising their education assets or skills and to have a career, but has a more emergency and survival character: it aims at avoiding further deterioration of material conditions to a degree that is qualitative different from the conditions of more educated migrants confront. This is portrayed in the "Sending Remittances" column of Table 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3. Further pondering on them on the issue of their social class reproduction is not possible at this time given that the limited representation of such groups in the particular surveys.

It must also be added that some qualifications emerged in relation to those who do remit. Thus, for about half of those reported remitting money (roughly for 44 or 16% of the total number of interviewees), there is a time horizon; they would do so for a designated period as need arises and not indefinitely. However, for the remaining half the time horizon was open, or unspecified.

Of course all these apply let me reiterate it, to the particular sample and any generalisation risks being off the mark, if it is not corroborated with additional and sufficient information.

Table 8.1 – Strata by education profiles correlated with social class background and reported remittances – 2018 research panel.

		2018 research		Sending Remittances	
<i>Profiles</i>	<i>Social class (background)</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
EDUCATION PROFILE A'		20	46.5	2	4.6
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	
	- Middle-middle	6	13.9	-	
	- Middle-lower	13	30.2	1	
	- Lower-upper	1	2.3	1	
EDUCATION PROFILE B'		11	25.5	8	18.6
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	
	- Middle-middle	-	-	-	
	- Middle-lower	9	20.9	5	
	- Lower-upper	2	4.6	3	
EDUCATION PROFILE C'		12	47	7	16.2
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	
	- Middle-middle	-	-	-	
	- Middle-lower	1	2.3	1	
	- Lower-upper	11	25.5	6	
<i>Total</i>		<i>43</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>39.5</i>

Table 8.2 – Strata by education profiles correlated with social class background and reported remittances – 2015 research panel.

		2015 research		<i>Reported Sending of Remittances</i>	
<i>Profiles</i>	<i>Social class (background)</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
EDUCATION PROFILE A'		143	62.4	26	11.3
	- Middle-upper	1	0.4	-	
	- Middle-middle	61	26.6	7	
	- Middle-lower	74	32.3	16	
	- Lower-Upper	7	3.0	3	
EDUCATION PROFILE B'		39	17.0	21	9.1
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	
	- Middle-middle	4	1.7	2	
	- Middle-lower	25	10.9	19	
	- Lower-upper	10	4.3	-	
EDUCATION PROFILE C'		47	20.5	23	10.0
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	
	- Middle-middle	-	-	-	
	- Middle-lower	4	1.7	3	
	- Lower-upper	43	18.7	20	
<i>Total</i>		<i>229</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>30.5</i>

Table 8.3 – Strata by education profiles correlated with social class background and reported remittances – both research panels.

		Both samples		<i>Reported Sending of Remittances</i>	
<i>Profiles</i>	<i>Social class (background)</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	
EDUCATION PROFILE A'		163	59.9	28	10.2
	- Middle-upper	1	0.3	-	
	- Middle-middle	67	24.6	8	
	- Middle-lower	87	31.9	17	
	- Lower-upper	8	2.9	3	
EDUCATION PROFILE B'		50	18.3	29	10.6
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	
	- Middle-middle	4	1.4	2	
	- Middle-lower	34	12.5	24	
	- Lower-upper	12	4.4	3	
EDUCATION PROFILE C'		59	21.6	30	11.2
	- Middle-upper	-	-	-	
	- Middle-middle	-	-	-	
	- Middle-lower	5	1.8	4	
	- Lower-upper	54	19.8	26	
<i>Total</i>		<i>272</i>	<i>100.0</i>	87	31.9

Why leave Greece

Giving their reasons for departing from Greece and specifically about the role the crisis might have had in the decision to emigrate interviewees prioritized the deteriorating economic situation as it impacted on their own conditions. In fact, most interviewees participating in the 2018 panel - by as high as 80.0% of them - responded by saying that their departure was directly caused or triggered by the crisis. Those participating in the earlier 2015 panel research, i.e. 71.6% explained their emigration *solely* and explicitly with reference to the crisis and its impact on their personal circumstances.

Besides, the centrality of the economic adversity may also be gauged from the responses interviewees gave when asked about their scenarios to return to Greece. They clearly and overwhelmingly pointed out that the continuing economic adversity in Greece, dissuades them from seriously thinking to return. And this is the case across the panels.

The importance of the crisis for instigating the migratory exodus from Greece is discerned from the following verbatim accounts of responses interviewees gave that are quite straightforward:

I had a problem of survival. I was dismissed and could not find work (#A03)

Because of the mass unemployment in Greece. Since 2008, when I graduated, I have not been invited to work not even as substitute teacher. The low salaries of 500 Euros persuaded me to leave (#A07)

Professionally I could not progress – everything was at a standstill or became worse. People around me were affected, their priorities changed, negatively. My chances were reduced a lot and significantly (#A19).

I was practically fired; took a voluntary redundancy (#A22).

I clearly had no prospects there (#A42).

I was working a little bit myself. The husband was in construction but these have stopped due to negligence. He was unemployed. He first thought of and prepared for America where his family had relatives that owned a restaurant. He gave 1500 euros, but they were cut off at the embassy! It was suggested to go to Germany by a well-known to him but fraudulent person. My husband found a job in Germany after staying there for two months (# A100).

My job just closed down. I was already searching for a better one and I've found something that involved relocation abroad (#A141).

I was married and had a child. I saw that we had no future. Everybody was unemployed. So, I said that I would have to leave before things get worst (#A149).¹⁶

I could find work. There weren't any prospects. I was getting a lot of negative responses from my interviews I have gone through and my applications. Uncertainty was great. My motive for traveling abroad was mostly financial (#A150).

I was very angry with my professor, I was working for free! I could see that salaries were lowered. ... My father in his work had a diminishing clientele (he was a medical doctor). ... The discussions among older people were negative, pessimistic and this affected me. I could sense sluggishness around me, it was deteriorating; I had to leave (#A153).

¹⁶ Some interviewees pointed out that among the things they considered while contemplating the prospect of emigration has been a desire to safeguard an adequate level of education as well as a calm and orderly environment for their children, which as they argued was unavailable to crisis-laden Greece. Such people were definitely of middling social station and it may have been the case that feelings towards the future of their children played a role, as they said, in their decision to emigrate. Furthermore, once abroad to embrace the kind of intensity of effort to make ends meet, which if not – “survival-driven” in a broad sense, is of an existential nature, but at the same time meaningful to the actor.

Further research might be able to specify and refine whether class maintenance and reproduction for the middle-middle and middle-lower class cohorts or for other social categories for that matter, that includes such thought processes, desires and meanings are at play in the emigration condition.

I had a tavern that I had to close it down because of the crisis. It was an eatery without prospects. I left (#A170).

I had work in Greece. However, given the uncertainty and the lack of prospects I was on the watch out, I was looking around. I did find an announcement. I thought about it and moved to Switzerland (#A181).

The crisis had an impact on us - our income was halved. I had studied abroad so I had a recognized degree and knew the language and we decided to move (#A212).

I couldn't find work. I wanted to work. So, I did go to Austria to find something to do. My Greek degree wasn't valid there. So I had to do a Master's to recognize my degree and get a job (#A220).

However, the reasons given for leaving the country was not just or mere economic. Other factors are also at play that can be thought to pertain to the more private/personal and agentic realm such as the aspiration one might have for traveling, personal fulfilment and making one's own thing and/or personal disappointment. Ethical issues were also raised that indicated to disappointment and disillusionment with the way things operated in Greece and its political system.

These came out more clearly when probing more the interviewees to expound on their specific circumstances. This helped bring out the multifaceted aggregate of underlying reasons and trigger factors that prompted them to leave the country. Accordingly, besides the perception subjects expressed about a felt economic malaise that was quite apparent, further details were provided on what pushed them away. Thus a particular interviewee would point out that there was an intermix of personal, social and economic factors:

It was the result of: (a) the economic situation, of the direction it followed, most negatively. (b) I divorced with my wife and wanted to start something new. Then (c) I also had contacts in Berlin, and a cousin that had a restaurant there and that is an open a city" (#A 106).

A series of other verbatim accounts pointed to the same complexity in the factors involved that also included, among other, existential and post materialist concerns too. The following extracts illustrate this point:

There are jobs in Greece. The fact of the matter was that I was pressurized by my mother who was telling me that my salary was too small for the long hours I was as working. Mother was insistent that I move to a better place so that I may have a future (# A130).

I wanted to leave the country. The easiest way for me was to go abroad for studies – I was looking for a job too (#A156).

I was very disappointed because of the low levels of available salaries. I did not insist in searching for a job, did not look that much. I also wanted to travel abroad. There was an opportunity and I did move abroad (# A197).

There was this downturn, but I still had a job with Eurobank. The overall situation did play a role – there was no light for an end in the tunnel because of the crisis condition. Then a voluntary retirement program appeared. It was an opportunity and I took it. Things change with difficulty and I had the child that was living in Berlin – I was divorced with its German mother. So I decided to try it in Berlin (# A221).

My parents' suffered pay cuts, while [I could see that] quality employment opportunities for me were reduced. But given this context, moving abroad was something I wanted to do from a younger age irrespective of Greece's economic environment. ... Then, I underwent a recent separation and have had some disappointing [job] interviews with companies in Greece (#B43).

Other respondents indicated that the exacerbation of overall and particular circumstances and personal aspirations made the choice to leave more imminent and feasible:

Because of the crisis we started saving on extra goods and services (e.g. entertainment, shopping). ... Fortunately, the effects of the crisis were not terribly visible [for us]. Both my parents did have a job. But I find that the psychological influence and uncertainty about the future was more intense. ... [In the context] the decision to leave Greece for me and my brother has become easier. ... I wanted to start a master's degree in a specific field that [would give me] long-term job opportunities (#B 09).

Personally I was not affected financially. But my parents had more 50% of their income reduced while their expenses increased due to over-taxation. I immigrated at the beginning of the crisis in Greece, so it didn't affect me personally. I was tired of this [Greek] mentality of why bother, of just coming around of making things meet ends and all is fine and well. Generally there were no opportunities for people that had ambition, had an appetite to work and to offer (#B13).

Further, some interviewees indicated that the crisis had affected them only to a limited extent, bringing out for example ethical issues that apparently are important to them. They said that:

I Left for study purposes and, also, I wanted to acquire specialized work experience and credentials (#A05).

I wanted to go abroad for the life-style and the cultural opportunities, to have interesting experiences (#A27).

I needed a change and had a personal need for development, for proper working hours and a better standard of living to that of Athens. My salary was reduced while my hours increasing and I could not react! Hence, I decided to migrate; it was said that conditions abroad were much better (#A32).

To some extent, the issue was not economic. [There was] corruption, cronyism, partyocracy ... I could not see any future in Greece. I see no Greece; it's a country in collapse. ... Things became clear with the [coming of the] financial crisis (#B26).

We were affected more psychologically than financially. We lost hope for the future and felt disrespectful as citizens. We just couldn't go ahead and create; not to speak of our self-realization. ... In Greece I was a freelance professional and the state was hostile to me and did not let me use my qualifications and skills. ... The fact of the matter was that I was called to pay 1440 Euro in tax without having earned a single euro; that was the trigger for leaving the country (#B28).

It goes without saying that the crisis had adversely affected me - one hundred percent! I detest the others-politicians. I owe money to the tax office and everywhere else (TEVE). I was building houses, my money was finished, I had no financing. So I left. There is no returning to Greece. I

was looking around; I saw that it was not possible to make it there. I wanted to be decent, but ... (# B37).

It may be surmised from such accounts that the economic crisis dimension was of key importance for emigration and it did act as a trigger. Nonetheless, the migratory movement was not activated solely by the crisis. It was/is a more complex phenomenon and process that involved a variety of internally – at the individual actor level – interconnected reasons that were meaningful and made sense to discreet subjects. It may be the case then that to get hold of this migratory wave's unpretentious aims, purposes and character, it is necessary to look at them by considering this complexity.

How the decision to emigrate was taken?

Respondents indicated that the decision to leave Greece was taken individually by each one of them. There wasn't any reporting about the intervention or implication of a specialised agency or a government organisation. In this sense, in this migratory wave, as reflected in the panel members interviewed and presently reported upon, is a highly individualised one.

The gestation period for effecting the decision to move country was variable. It depended on such factors as the possession of language skills, the availability of savings or the safeguarding of some funds to finance the movement and settlement abroad, knowledge of the labour market abroad, the existence/acceptance of a job offer, and the conditions of settlement abroad and suchlike. Once the idea to emigrate has emerged there was a period during which an interviewee would consult with one's friends and acquaintances that have already moved abroad in the city and country of orientation.

At a certain point and under the influence of a trigger factor that had a personal impact or meaning for the agent the decision to emigrate was taken. Such a trigger was not necessary or solely economic or financial. Also, it could be for instance a personal thing, e.g. a divorce or separation, but could also have been an economic one, e.g. a redundancy, or what the agent perceived as unfair or unjust treatment at work.

In most instances the prospect of moving to another country was not communicated to one's immediate circle until just a few days just before departure. Families would only then be informed. Respondents by more than two-thirds reported that there was a strong emotional response from parents or older family members or siblings, which indicates that families of procreation were not particularly knowledgeable about the emigration of one of their members. It also verifies that this migratory wave was primarily an individual affair. Family assistance was welcomed but planning involving the family was kept to a minimal. On the other hand, whenever a would-be-emigrant had a family of her/his own then the spouse or other family members were involved or informed of the decision to move abroad and in the ensuing planning and preparations.

Employment

Current Employment / Plans for Employment

Those sampled, in both panels, at the time of interviewing have settled in their select EU country or intended to do so soon. For the most part, they have attempted with success to

ensure this by finding employment that was analogous in each instance to prior posts to which they have been employed, i.e. in 74.4% of them, when the two samples are taken as a whole. The remaining, the excepted, are primarily interviewees that while working are pursuing studies, and with the assumption hanging in the air that studies bear the promise of future employment. Besides them there are a few women migrants with young children that opt-out of work to raise them. Also, excepted are some – few – recent arrivals in the country of destination that have not found a relevant to their experience/credentials/assets job yet; it is mostly with the latter that they are indications that there is a skills-jobs mismatch, and hence of discontinuity in terms of employment track.

Specialities

The 43 participants of the 2018 research sample had a wide range of occupations, which almost exclusively seem to form part of the wide-ranging category of the services. Thus, six (6) have jobs in management/marketing/accounting, four (4) work as medical doctors (various specialties), nine (9) are occupied in electronics (broadly defined), five (5) are civil engineers/architects, three (3) are industrial workers, two (2) work in retail, two (2) are researchers, one (1) has a catering business (with four employees), two (2) work in text processing jobs, and one (1) panel is self-employed. These formed a contingent of 35 or 81.3 per cent of the particular sample. The remaining for the reasons indicated above, i.e. for purposes of study or as a pensioner, held a part-time job when they were interviewed. However, those in study intended to return or enter to full-time work, once their special conditions change.

As far as the larger 2015 sample of 229 is concerned, five professional groups are quite prominent amongst them, namely medical doctors, computer specialists (numerically the larger group), those involved with business (as in marketing/(HR) or management/finance), engineers (various kinds), and those employed in restaurants/catering. Taken together these constitute almost 50.0 per cent of the said sample.

The jobs interviewees held abroad were for the most part quite similar to those they did and trained for when in Greece (or abroad too). This has a lot to do with the fact that, for the most part, panel members were highly educated and in possession of transferable skills. They also aimed to continue and further the professional careers they have embarked upon while still in Greece. It is also worth noting that the jobs migrants held abroad when interviewed, when compared to the ones they previous held in the home country are as a rule better, in terms of revenue, position and status, and more satisfying too.

Therefore, participants in both panels usually divert significantly from the type of economic migrant that moves to another country just to survive. With the former the objective is not merely survival, but furtherance, improvement or uplifting of work position if possible, in terms of a relevant to them job, that also can be seen to form a station that is part of a career. Such a career would be useful in the country of domicile, but possibly suitable too when/if returning back to the home country occurs. Returning is anticipated to take place at some unspecified point in the future, and when/if conditions in Greece become favorable for such a move. In this particular sense, the panel participants' situation may be seen to be more akin to mobility rather than long-term migration. And as a matter of fact, this is I think part of the sociological interest that marks this particular movement.

Snap shots of social conditions abroad

Social ties abroad

“Strong” ties, i.e. ties with kin and close friends in which an emotional bond predominates, have been acknowledged as instrumental in providing support of a psychological as well as practical character to interviewees to accomplish the movement/settlement abroad. In fact, 43.4% of members of both panels acknowledged the impact of such support as positive. Furthermore, specifically they referred to family members residing abroad or/and close friends as providing essential support, particularly during the first period of settlement, but thereafter too. On other hand, 56.6% did say that theirs was a sole emigration. In their case the support that they have been receiving was of a “weak” type, involving friends of friends and acquaintances, Facebook groups or websites and was rather low in intensity.

Friends abroad

Respondents acknowledged that they have some, rather few, friends abroad. Those friends that they have for the most part are not persons indigenous to the host country. Indeed, such people were very often beyond reach, particularly as friends, about which respondents commented negatively, thinking that this might have signified an element of exclusion or even of racism. Some acknowledged the occurrence of irregular social outings with their colleagues from work in which indigenous to the host country people would also join in, but these usually were not considered among their friends. By contrast, respondents overwhelmingly indicated that their friends abroad were “compatriots”. Often they would add others as their friends to which collectively they referred as “internationals”. These included primarily people other European countries, and secondarily persons from the broader Middle-East. The reported patterning of friends in terms of ethnic origins indicates that the sampled experience a measure of social exclusion, as well as closure of their ranks.

Free time-Leisure

Asked what panel members did at their free time several recurring themes of pastimes and leisure activities were prominent. Thus, watching TV, seeing friends and family members and having meals together, going out for drink and dining out, listening to music, and participating in sports and other activities were regularly cited by both panel members. Among the sports and activities mentioned some were quite specific to the place of domicile, e.g. in Switzerland they often participate in mountain walking. In the UK cricket or golf, in the Netherlands in bicycle riding, etc. This of course indicates migrants’ implicit attempt, possibly not a conscious one, to emulate practices that are specific to the place/country of domicile. It is in this sense that such practices seem to represent migrants’ attempts to adapt to the new environment by means of symbolical identification or integration with the host country’s culture. In other words, it is adaptation via acculturation, i.e. the actual participation in activities particular to the host society.

Empty walls – an ethnographic observation

In the course of the interviewing, which as indicated earlier was taking place via Skype or Facebook’s Messenger, there was visual contact with the interviewee. And it was apparent that in most interviewing sessions the background behind the interviewer’s image was walls. Such walls as a rule lacked decoration, i.e. they were either entirely empty with perhaps had an odd poster hanging or in a few instances had a rudimentary and inexpensive decoration. This marked

lack of wall decoration or very limited extend of, reflects I think the financial difficulty subjects were facing. But it also may be interpreted to reflect an actors' unsettled predisposition towards taking steps that signify permanent settlement abroad or/and just to the expectation that they will not be staying for long abroad, so why make the expenses.

It would appear that for most part the panel members have internalized the mind-set of the "Stanger" who in the Zimmelian interpretation "cannot be indigenous" to the host society as s/he "does not belong in it initially" (Zimmel 1971: 143). Thus, s/he is someone without local roots, who "has not quite gone over the freedom of coming and going" (*ibid.*), and thus may leave from a set place at any moment. It surely indicated a lack of long-term prospect and non-integration. In this sense the experience of being a migrant appears contradictory: striving between symbolic attempts to adapt to the host country (e.g. adopting host country sports) and non-integrating individual practices (e.g. does not decorate the walls of the flat one lives) that indicate that integration is not that much anticipated. These of course reflect the social distance these migrants experience from the arrangements of the host society.

Returning

Respondents indicated that they often visit the home country and spend their vacation there too. With respect to plans for a permanent *return* to Greece, i.e. for returning to live and work in the home country, almost all respondents expressed a wish to do so. They almost universally, however, left the return date exceedingly open. Returning was something to be realized in three, five, ten or more years. With respect to the conditions for this realization it has been pointed out that this may indeed materialize if/when an improvement of Greece's economic and overall situation improves and the likelihood for subjects to get a decent job becomes realistic - a possibility that they questioned. So, the anticipation to return is there, but not to be realized in the foreseeable future.

Broad patternings

Interestingly, from the interviewees that have had the experience of emigration not a single emigrant profile (pattern) is discernible, but instead several! I will just outline two of them and refer very briefly to a third one:

Indeed, one pattern or profile emerges that fits well with my indirect hypothesis: it concerns educated young people (holding a Masters, or even a PhD), who have sought and obtained employment abroad. These are of variable middle-class social background, with parent that more often than not actively support their decision to emigrate, and coming from major cities but also, in some measure, from provincial Greek cities too. Advanced language skills were already available before they left the county to work in another European country or were actively developed. Such people, after getting a series of short-term contract jobs (from one to several) that were related to the areas of their expertise, arrived at relatively secure job, in which most of them are currently employed. These are jobs that pay well, and are correlated to subject's studies and expertise. Working conditions are acceptable, or even described as "very good", and clearly allow one to look forward to a career - internal career ladders are available in the work environments in which they find themselves. Such emigrants, who can be designated as professionals, see themselves remaining for a considerable period of time abroad. They express a general desire to return to Greece, but they cancel such a prospect as they recount on the sorry current situation of the country, and of the dubious prospects they would expect to have should they decide to return.

In this pattern people are oriented towards the foreign country, in settling there for a period. They make plans to start a family or are already following such a path, buy or consider buying a home (by taking a loan/mortgage), and make an effort to cultivate a circle of friends and acquaintances, in which some indigenous people are also present (although in this they are not particularly successful, which only confirms that integration is almost unattainable for the first generation migrants).

Quite often, respondents that fall in this category said that they did not leave the country just for economic purposes, but also because they wanted to travel, had different mentalities than those dominating Greece social life, or because they were seeking the carefree lifestyle and the open horizons of cosmopolitan western cities (see, King *et al* 2014), while they often condemn the clientelistic ways of the homeland and the *modus operandi* of the various state bureaucracies, often in quite ethical terms. In fact, this emigrant pattern/profile comes close to the one initially hypothesized to represent the new element in the current migratory wave, when compared to earlier ones.

At the other end, and somewhat unexpectedly because of the method in addressing the would-be interviewees' population, another emigrant pattern has also emerged that is marked by the certain differing characteristics when compared to the first pattern/profile. Thus, some emigrants are relatively unskilled, or possess lower-level empirical skills. They come from a lower-class background, and have worked in the home-country in a long-line of mostly short-contract insecure jobs, as in catering or nursing. Home country jobs paid little. Specifically, they experienced adverse working conditions, payment reductions or/and have been laid off. Their foreign language skills are rudimentary, if not entirely absent. They find the wages obtained abroad high by Greece's standards, but the jobs they get may or may not be stable, and often insecure. Some (as in Germany or Holland) are employed by other Greeks – themselves often products of earlier immigration. They often find themselves being overworked, paid insufficiently or are undeclared. They reside in a room in worker hostel, alone or with others, switching from one low-paid job to another of the same kind, and from one city to the next. They socially mingle only with fellow nationals or others that are foreigners too, and definitely not with locals. Some do leave the country in which they have migrated to return to Greece for a summer job, to emigrate again in September. Their migration has clear survival features with the economic dimension being pre-eminent.

In between, these two patterns/profiles that may be thought of as ideal types, "mixed" patterns may be discerned too. Such patterns are sufficiently clear and are dependent on education and skill levels, language skills, social standing/class, work conditions at home, station on has in life's trajectory, financial situation and burden, and networking and job opportunities abroad. In other words, they indicate a measure of complexity in the interplay of push and pull factors in the decision to migrate.

To the extent to which broad patterns of features and behavior among emigrants are identified, it can be assumed that a saturation of information condition has been reached; additional interviews are not required. However, additional information may be required to arrive to a better understanding of the mixed patternings of emigrant profiles. This is also related to the character of the samples obtained: these are not representative in some sense samples of emigrants. Instead they are mostly snowball samples with ingrained into them certain selection features. Accordingly, from the findings one cannot generalize as such, although they provide most interesting insides. Nevertheless, such findings need corroboration if they are to be accepted as reliable in understanding and explaining the multifaceted features of this migratory wave, particularly in relation to the mixed patterns/profiles.

A last point: It is most interesting that virtually all emigrants have made reference to the element of “*luck*” and to friends and acquaintances that “*just happened*” to be in a position to assist them with relevant information, getting a job abroad, finding a house there, settling down, and so on. With varying degree of emphasis, most interviewees said that without such help it would have been much harder for them to emigrate and settle down, if not entirely impossible. Of course, this only highlights the fact that people migrate not as mere monads, but carry alongside their continuing social relations and are embedded in their social contexts, connections and networks, which mark them. Thus, this piece of investigation only reconfirms, that migration is a pre-eminently a social phenomenon.

Conclusion

Overall, the most recent migratory wave from Greece that is primarily oriented towards other EU countries is not an organized one. Instead it is largely individualized with networks around individual emigrants having an important support role. It is also an “easy” one as obstacles migrants usually face have been lifted or accommodated. New Greek emigrants have often been receiving variable support from their close ties, social circle and even from weak relations. The latter are accessed via various self-help and mutual assistance Facebook groups and suchlike schemes. Most often than not, such migrant actors see their movement as temporary although expectations to return to the home country in the foreseeable future are realistically appraised as slim.

A marked feature of this migratory wave, one that differentiates it from earlier ones, is that a significant segment of emigrants are highly educated. This is particular evident in the two samples researched, which while non-representative aligns with the migrant profiles of other available studies undertaken by other researchers. Those that leave Greece to a significant extent originate from the middle and lower echelons of the middle class and from the upper strata of the lower class. In fact this is another development that separates the current migratory wave to earlier ones.

People who emigrate do so in the context of a severe economic crisis and they do not fail to mention the impact of the crisis on the persons and the role it had played in their decision to migrate. But migration is a highly complex phenomenon and this applies the recent Greek one. Accordingly, and besides the negative impact of the crisis that has acted as a trigger as well as a major underlying causal factor, other concerns and aims have also been at play, some of which can be assigned to post-materialist and lifestyle concerns.

Remittances are a major expression and outcome of migration in general. However, the frequency reported for sending remittances in the case of the new Greek migrants indicates that such activity is quite limited. In fact, the overall statistical evidence align with the evidence from the empirical research undertaken, aspects of which has been presented in this paper.

The situation becomes more meaningful if interviewees’ education and class background are considered, as well as the conditions of the families that remain in the home country. The limited remittances indicate that taken as a whole, the families that migrants leave behind are in a position to cope and accommodate themselves despite the crisis and its adverse aftereffects. This is turn has led to an attempt to link and explain a large part of the current emigration wave with reference to the high education level of the largest part of panel members surveyed, which has been linked to a middle class social position/background. Within the confines of the research undertaken and discussed here, therefore, the higher the education

level achieved the higher the frequency that such subjects are part of middling social strata, and vice versa.

In turn, this leads the inquiry to the rationale that may be identified that lies behind the decision to emigrate and to the decisions and assumptions underlying such a process. While the emphasis in emigrating is on improving one's lot, the bargaining element that actors possess and bring along to the host country is a high level of education/skills. It is this that makes it possible for them to obtain gainful employment abroad and also have a career, and in this way attempt to maintain their social class position.

By contrast, the minority that is sending remittances usually has a lower education profile and socially is part of the lower echelons of the middling strata and overwhelmingly of the upper strata of the lower class. It is confronted more directly with a threatening or/and immediate set of economic difficulties and therefore attempts to respond to it by migrating to get a job and an income. The anticipation here is more of a survival kind rather of maintaining or carving a life career, as it is the case with the majority.

Continuing on the point about limited remits, it may be inferred that in such instances migrants' families are not in absolutely desperate need of them, which confirms that as far as the members of the two panels researched are concerned, most of them belong to the more affluent middling social groups, i.e. the middle-middle class and middle-lower class. In fact, the highly educated emigrants *de facto* relieve their families from the burden of having to support/assist them at a time of generalised unemployment, precarity and difficulty to maintain a career *within* the country. Accordingly, the particular migration may be seen to be, in part, an individualized and pre-eminently middle class strategy to cope with the crisis and its adverse impact.

Yet, the idea of strategy needs to be qualified, since essentially – with some exceptions, e.g. those that have a family of orientation or/and are not young anymore – it is the mobile individual that has a plan rather than her/his family. Accordingly it may be more relevant to refer to it as a “quasi-strategy”. In the context, it is a more pertinent notion and term.

Arguable such a migratory movement *unwittingly* acts to maintaining the social position of the emigrants' and their families in their places of origin; this is its latent function. It does so by reducing the burden, in times of severe economic crisis, on the family to sustain unemployed or underemployed young men and women. Thus, by keeping the family's wealth and position, more or less intact, despite the trimmings on income and property that crisis-linked additional taxation and other adverse developments had imposed upon it. At the same time, employment abroad offers emigrants valuable work experience, skills and credentials that they might be utilizing at a later date in the home country, should they return. The expectation is that such a baggage may allow them to maintain or even strengthen their professional *cum* social standing. Therefore, it may be asserted that for the educated emigrants their movement abroad and their work situation in the host country operate as a social adaptation mechanism to the crisis, one that has social reproduction effects. And it is on these issues that lay the sociological relevance of the findings of the empirical research undertaken.

APPENDIXES

Appendix I: NINo Registrations to Adult Overseas Nationals Entering the UK, select counties (2008-2019)-UK data

Year of Registration	COUNTRY of Origin				
	GREECE	ITALY	PORTUGAL	SPAIN	IRELAND
2008	2,931	16,462	12,983	10,547	11,777
2009	2,751	16,876	12,211	11,062	14,281
2010	3,260	18,464	12,064	13,898	19,858
2011	5,598	24,891	16,347	17,055	30,020
2012	7,417	26,605	20,443	14,713	38,075
2013	9,891	44,113	30,121	17,412	51,729
2014	9,790	51,217	30,546	18,237	50,260
2015	12,022	58,653	32,301	17,646	50,028
2016	14,656	62,984	30,543	15,332	47,741
2017	14,371	50,880	22,622	12,387	35,642
2018	13,044	42,769	18,871	10,295	31,016
2019*	9,982	29,585	12,709	5,188	18,956

Source: Stat-Xplore (2019)

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/jsf/tableView/tableView.xhtml>

*First two quarters of 2019.

Appendix IIa: Select counties' migrants to Germany from 2008 to 2017 with a residence period of up to one year

Year of Registration	COUNTRY of Origin			
	GREECE	ITALY	PORTUGAL	SPAIN
2008	4 110	8 735	3 142	3 695
2009	4 139	9 546	3 110	4 131
2010	6 783	11 322	3 529	5 314
2011	14 300	13 289	4 793	8 266
2012	21 759	19 489	7 226	13 266
2013	21 596	26 947	8 414	17 310
2014	19 256	32 815	7 267	16 705
2015	19 214	35 135	2 409	15 498
2016	18 419	33 519		13 428
2016*	12 568	24 005		7 217
2017*	13171	24 250	1 521	5 021

Source: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge im Auftrag der Bundesregierung (2016), *Migrationsbericht 2015*, Referat 123 – Statistik, Nuremberg, Germany, Dezember, σελ. 44 (Tabelle 1-5: Zugewanderte Ausländer von 2005 bis 2014 mit einer Aufenthaltsdauer von mindestens einem Jahr), σελ 47 (Abbildung 2-1: Zu- und Fortzüge von Unionsbürgern im Jahr 2015 (ohne Zypern und Malta)).

Note: an official German source cites the number of **394 000** persons of Greek origins as residing in Germany in 2014. Source: DESTATIS (2016), *Datenreport2016. Ein Sozialbericht für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*,

Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis), Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB) in Zusammenarbeit mit Das Sozio-oekonomische Panel (SOEP) am Deutschen Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (DIW Berlin), Bonn, p. 226.

The number declined to **348 475** persons of Greek origin in 2016 and then rose to **362 245** in the end of 2017. *Source: Migrationsbericht der Bundesregierung. Migrationsbericht 2016/2017*, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, Referat FI-Internationale Migration und Migrationssteuerung, Referat 22B-Statistik, Januar 2019, Table 7-14, pp. 321, 323. Of them, **64 600** were recent immigrants, i.e. they resided in Germany for up to four (4) years (p. 325).

*Immigration and emigration by most common countries of origin and destination in 2016/2017.

Source: "2016/2017 Migration Report: Key Results", Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, 90343 Nuremberg, Germany, February 2019.

Appendix IIb: Foreign population in Germany by place of birth and citizenships on 31 December 2018, select countries.

Citizenship	Total	Born in Germany	Born abroad
GREECE	363 205	73 780	289 425
ITALY	643 530	156 385	487 145
PORTUGAL	13 890	23 700	115 190
SPAIN	176 020	27 125	148 895

Source: DESTATIS (2019), "Foreign population by place of birth and selected citizenships on 31 December 2018", 15 April 2019, <https://www.destatis.de/EN/Themes/Society-Environment/Population/Migration-Integration/Tables/foreigner-place-of-birth.html>

Appendix III: Foreign citizens in Sweden, by select country of citizenship; years 2008-2018

YEAR	COUNTRY of Origin			
	GREECE	ITALY	PORTUGAL	SPAIN
2008	4 567	5 507	1 539	4 489
2009	4 732	5 861	1 630	4 902
2010	4 824	6 096	1 660	5 107
2011	5 290	6 422	1 696	5 522
2012	6 222	6 817	1 853	6 105
2013	7 126	7 362	2 023	7 073
2014	7 784	7 951	2 193	8 081
2015	8 418	8 553	2 344	8 826
2016	9 174	9 178	2 527	9 647
2017	10 065	9 905	2 727	10 425
2018	10731	10 589	2 924	11 035

Πηγή: SCB Statistics Sweden (2019).

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