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The 'new' migration for work phenomenon: The pursuit of emancipation and recognition in the context of work

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Abstract

This article examines the 'new' migration for work phenomenon gripping Southern Europe since the Global Financial Crisis struck in 2008, by focusing on the case of skilled Greeks migrating to Germany for work purposes. In applying Honneth's (1996) concept of emancipation to the domain of work, the article frames emancipation as a phenomenon which emerges from an individual's search for meaningful work and as a form of resistance to deteriorating institutions and social injustice. Informed by this is an assessment of the new migration for work phenomenon from Greece to Germany by employing survey data on the perceptions of skilled emigrants. Following analysis of the findings it is concluded that emigration is a form of emancipation that allows individuals to regain recognition and self-respect while also to protest the erosion of social and human rights in their home country.

Key words

emancipation, skilled migrants, global economic crisis, Honneth, social injustice, 'new' migration for work phenomenon

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Main text of article:**Introduction**

Drawing on survey responses from skilled workers migrating from Greece to Germany, this study demonstrates the significance of declining institutions and human rights as crucial contributors to an individual's intention to emigrate for work. While there have been useful accounts of migrant experiences at the workplace level (Holgate, 2005; Mackenzie and Forde 2009; Liversage, 2009; Frank and Hou, 2016), research examining the antecedents to skilled

emigration in the context of crisis has been scant. Taking a deliberately broad approach, skilled migrant workers are defined as those who hold professional occupational status due to education and/or vocational experience in relevant industrial settings (Al Ariss et al., 2013). Furthermore, we also acknowledge the relational, temporal and spatial characteristics that shape a context-dependent and locally-specific approach to evaluating skilled migrant workers (Shan, 2013). As a by-product of policy and political differences observed within different country contexts, scholars unanimously observe there is no universal or firm definition of a skilled migrant (Raghuram, 2000; Harvey and Groutsis, 2012; Boucher, 2019). If we consider the variation in the process of data collection by migration and labour market authorities surrounding skilled migrant workers, the associated moveable feast of policy definitions surrounding the collection of data; and the addition of migrant's identity characteristics as markers of 'skill' (including gender, age and country of qualifications acquisition) we can safely conclude that a solid definition is near impossible.

The extant literature largely presents skilled migrants as a privileged cadre, able to 'trade' their skills in order to migrate: either lured by better wages and career prospects abroad; or pushed by deteriorating economic conditions in their home country. Another strand of literature posits the non-economic or socio-psychological and political motivators for migration, suggesting the importance of family ties, diasporic networks (strong and weak ties) and the aspirational desire to explore a different life (De Haas, 2010 and 2014; Carling and Francis, 2010; Bakewell, 2010; Massey et. al., 1993). We depart from the conventional wisdom of an economic focus, which sees migration – particularly of skilled migrants - informed by a utilitarian logic; and, we extend the non-economic lens by exploring the 'emancipatory' motives underscoring skilled migration.

Since 2010, many European governments have implemented austerity policies as emergency measures. Many of these measures – characterised by public expenditure cuts, regressive tax hikes, reduced labour protection and pension reforms – have exacerbated the already severe human consequences of the economic crisis which has loped along for more than a decade now. Vulnerable and marginalised groups of workers have been particularly affected, compounding pre-existing patterns of discrimination in the political, economic and social spheres. In some cases, austerity measures are undermining the very capacity of central and

local authorities to deliver on the basic promises of a social welfare state while ensuring fundamental human rights protections for all.

Crises are said to act as a trigger for emigration (Lafleur and Stanek, 2017). The politico-economic crisis defining Southern Europe since 2010 is emblematic of such a trigger. The sense of social injustice, the increased inequality and mass unemployment have been cited as the most fundamental reasons for the brain drain from Southern Europe. For instance, Atkinson (2013) suggests that even individuals who are protected from the crisis by their occupational resources and employment security, can possess a sense of insecurity and dislocation when faced with economic crises, crumbling politico-economic institutions and social infrastructure. In short, the destruction of the social fabric in the countries of Southern Europe has had dramatic consequences for the 'escape' of skilled professionals disillusioned by the erosion of their civil, political, social, cultural and human rights (Lafleur and Stanek, 2017).

In order to understand the motivators of skilled migrants within the context of crisis, we draw on Honneth's (1996) theory of emancipation which allows us to identify how skilled workers use migration as a possible strategy for 'emancipation' from a crisis-ridden politico-economic context. The article provides evidence from a survey of 150 informants comprising skilled emigrants from Greece to Germany and as such makes an important empirical contribution, particularly so, given the limited research in the scholarly community on skilled emigration from Greece (Mavrodi and Moutselos, 2017:41). The survey data show that seeking to escape from deteriorating institutions and the deep social dislocation characterising Greek society has strongly shaped the migration intentions of Greek workers. We conclude that the dominant default to an economic justification for skilled emigration provides a patchy explanation for migration. In rejecting this position and complementing it with our approach, this article extends on pre-existing migration theories which examine the socio-psychological and political motivators of skilled migrant workers.

Honneth's theory of emancipation (1996) presents a useful tool for understanding the 'new' migration phenomenon. While employed in some areas of migration studies (Schinkel and van Houdt, 2010; Guo and Shan, 2013), Honneth's concept of emancipation as applied to explain and understand the mobility of skilled workers has been largely overlooked. Employing this

concept and applying it to the field of work therefore offers us the opportunity to extend on existing research and to draw attention to the micro-level of analysis, which illuminates the motivators of skilled migrants in the context of crisis. Honneth's (1996) concept of emancipation captures the individual's ability to conduct a social critique of failing institutions and social injustice (Rebughini, 2015), which in turn influences their decision to leave their crisis-stricken homeland. The concept of emancipation is therefore particularly useful in exploring the migration drivers of workers from contexts where labour market conditions, human rights and employment protections are deteriorating.

The article turns first to an examination of the context fueling skilled migration and then elaborates Honneth's (1996) theory of emancipation. This theoretical framework informs our analysis of the survey data, which is presented subsequently before our findings and conclusion.

The New Migration for Work Phenomenon: From Greece to Germany

Since 2008, the population of Greece has been severely affected by the economic crisis and subsequent austerity measures. From 2008 to 2015 Greece's GDP dropped 27.3 percent and the real adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita dropped from EUR 19.519 in 2008 to 15.059 in 2014 (Eurostat, 2014). The austerity measures introduced in the aftermath of the crisis have adversely affected Greek society, in the form of severe cutbacks to social welfare, precarious employment conditions, slashed wages, a stagnant production and consumption market, rising unemployment, poverty and social exclusion, a spike in rates of suicide and depression (Georgiopoulos and Maltezou, 2013; Eurostat, 2015) as well as broader social unease (Montagna and Mew, 2013; Mavrodi and Moutselos, 2017).

Since the financial downturn, over 400,000 citizens have left the country from 2008 to 2016 (Bank of Greece, 2016), and more than one third of this group migrated to Germany (OECD, 2016). Germany's desirability as a destination country are clear: a flourishing economy, the lowest unemployment rate in the EU (4.7 percent) and chronic shortages in skilled occupations (Cologne Institute for Economic Research, 2015), combine to create an appealing pull force (Klekowski von Koppenfels and Hohne, 2017:152-155, 160, 168; Mavrodi and Moutselos, 2017).

Insights from recent studies suggest that the new Southern European emigrants are young and skilled and motivated less by purely economic considerations, as suggested by the dominant neoclassical theories of migration. Instead, they are motivated more so by the perceived and experienced incidence of corruption, undesirable conditions of work, mistrust of politicians and the political machinery, a perceived lack of meritocracy, and very bleak future prospects (Enriquez and Romera, 2014; Triandafyllidou and Gropas, 2014; Lapshyna, 2014; Lapshyna and Düvell, 2015; Labriniadis and Pratsinakis, 2016). With the exception of the aforementioned studies, analyses of this new migration for work phenomenon are in the main incomplete. This study responds to the lacuna in research by exploring the deeper and more complex reasons for the 'new' migration for work phenomenon.

Greece is experiencing its biggest brain drain in recent modern history with close to half a million of its most talented professionals having left since the start of the economic crisis (Bank of Greece, 2016). These numbers are striking for two reasons: first, until recently Greek citizens were amongst the least mobile Europeans (European Commission, 2006); and second, with a population of almost eleven million, approximately five percent of Greeks have left with the new emigration wave.

A survey conducted in 2009, a year before the crisis started deepening in Greece, showed that approximately eight percent of Greeks envisaged working abroad. Similarly of note, the share of Greeks willing to move for work due to unemployment at home was found to be well below the EU average (European Commission, 2010). This aversion to work mobility has changed dramatically since the crisis worsened. While employment prospects featured as a key reason for emigration, Labrianidis and Pratsinakis (2016) suggest that it is not the only determinant, since half of the emigrants in their study were employed in Greece at the time of their decision to leave (see also Mavrodi and Moutselos, 2017:43). According to their findings and echoing Gropas and Triandafyllidou's study (2014), more poignant and powerful motivators for skilled emigration than exclusion from the labour market, were the following socio-psychological and political drivers, shaped by an observation of the broader malaise and moral decline: a general mistrust of institutions, disillusionment with the country's political system, a belief that there

are better and fairer socio-economic and political systems and conditions abroad, and feelings of insecurity about their future in Greece.

Departing from Dominant Views on Skilled Migration and Applying Honneth's Theory of Emancipation to the Domain of Migration for Work

Explanations for the motivators of skilled migration are largely dominated by theories around macro-level demand-driven conditions, meso-level career opportunities, and micro-level financial incentives (see for instance Todaro, 1969; Borjas, 1989; McGovern, 2007; Zikic, 2015; Crowley-Henry et. al., 2018), with a strong focus on economic motivators. In contrast, research examining non-economic motivators emphasises social connections and diaspora networks as incentives to migrate, with such connections minimising the risk of emigration (Massey et. al., 1993; Tilly, 2011; De Haas, 2010).

Recent work by migration scholars identifies the fraught and somewhat false distinction between economic and non-economic motivators; and the binary parallels drawn between the structure of emigration and the agency of the migrant as the spearhead for emigration. Instead, attention is drawn to the 'cross cutting themes' within and between these binary categories (Carling and Francis, 2010: 909; see also Tilly, 2011; Bakewell, 2010; Bakewell et. al, 2011; De Haas, 2014). In applying Honneth's (1996) concept of emancipation to the domain of work and in framing emancipation as a phenomenon which emerges from an individual's search for meaningful work as a form of resistance to deteriorating institutions and social injustice, our research contributes to the notion of agency and the wider scholarly debate around the agency of skilled migrants.

While we do not reject the importance of economic drivers for skilled migration we provide a more nuanced examination by drawing attention to deeper cross-cutting thematic reasons which highlight that ... 'even economic narratives of movement are socially constructed and can only be read in relation to the subjectivities of migrants, their states of feeling and the circulation of affect within and across borders' (Carling and Francis, 2010: 913). For skilled migrants, their in-demand position, skills and qualifications and their human capital resources are seen to offer a 'freedom' of movement. The focus on a freedom from dysfunction and their role in social transformation however does not figure in pre-existing works which inform the determinants of skilled emigration (de Haas, 2014). We agree with Carling and Francis

(2010) who note that: 'Migration theory needs to account for the multiplex componentry of migration, the way it is situated in imaginative geographies, emotional valences, social relations and obligations and politics and power relations, as well as in economic imperatives and the brute realities of displacement.' (Carling and Francis, 2010: 911).

Accordingly, in departing from pre-existing theories surrounding skilled migration, we draw on Honneth's (1996) contribution which focuses on the importance of recognition of the self, as a crucial feature of one's desire for emancipation. That is, escape from the erosion of rights of participation and self-governance shape motives for migration. As elaborated below, these are key markers for skilled emigration and provide us with an understanding of how migration is 'initiated, experienced and represented' (Carling and Francis, 2010: 911).

For Honneth, the concept of recognition (Honneth, 1996) is central to our understanding of an individual's need for respect and esteem. From a distributive justice perspective, the pursuit and fulfillment of a 'good' life requires primary social goods such as rights and liberties, powers and opportunities, or wealth and income (Rawls, 1999). Yet, individuals also need meaningful recognition as a significant source of well-being. As the leading representative of the third generation of critical theorists, Axel Honneth has systematically rehabilitated the notion of recognition in contemporary scholarship (Anderson et al., 2011: 31-58). In *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts* Honneth (1996) proposes a tripartite approach to recognition rooted in one's intersubjective nature. In Honneth's view, individuals desire three specific types of recognition, each dependent on the sphere of social interaction: in intimate relationships; in legal relationships and in cooperative relationships (Honneth, 1996: 102, 104, 121). Acts of social recognition are the social preconditions for individual autonomy and self-realisation. Honneth defines self-realisation as the process of actualising one's self-chosen life-goals without coercion, free from external and internal barriers including psychological inhibitions and fears (Honneth, 1996: 174). Demands for recognition are demands for the social conditions necessary for living a fulfilled and autonomous life. The individual's sense of well-being and moral goals depend on how others see them: that is, on how they are recognised. According to Honneth (1996), misrecognition can include the denial of rights and denigration of political and cultural practices which can inflict harm on the self and cause humiliation: feelings of being unwanted or unworthy in society, as if one's life possesses no significance or integrity of its own (Beitz, 2001: 104). Due

to the socio-psychological effects of misrecognition, individuals are unable to function fully as individuated autonomous agents, thereby losing their opportunity to attain self-realisation.

The deprivation of due recognition and the moral experience of disrespect drive one's desire for emancipation. When individuals are denied proper recognition, they can develop a sense of insecurity. When they are denied equal rights of participation and self-governance, their sense of self-respect can be destroyed. When they are silenced or are prevented from articulating and making sense of their distress, their self-esteem can be shattered. In this sense, the experiences of disrespect motivate a struggle for recognition and as a corollary a struggle for emancipation. From Honneth's perspective, this means that it is not only legitimate but also imperative to protest when the erosion of social and human rights do not allow one to feel self-respect as well as empowered to express their distress in the public domain.

More recently, Honneth (2010) conceives of work as a sight in one's quest for emancipation and as such associates recognition with the structure of work. By working, individuals contribute to the constitution and reproduction of their society, but also to the formation of their own identity. Accordingly, individuals perceive themselves as mutually related (Honneth, 2010) and the social division of labour is at the core of the third sphere of recognition: that of esteem, that is, being able to contribute to the common good means contributing to one's own well-being and autonomy, and vice versa. From Honneth's perspective, this means that it is normatively imperative to engage in emancipation when the existing labour market conditions do not allow one to feel valued and recognised for their contribution to the development of their society. Individuals are not merely dominated by the market but, by participating in it, they actively contribute to the formation of their own identity (Honneth, 2010). Applying Honneth's theorisation to migration for work sheds light on one's purposeful pursuit of meaningful work in other countries while resisting socio-political decay in their home country.

Accordingly, it can be argued that during times of austerity skilled workers might feel disrespect in the sphere of work as their identity is dislocated due to a lack of recognition for their contribution to the common good. Individuals need the integrity of their work identity to participate freely and fully in social activities. If they are denied due recognition for their

contribution, they are normatively compelled to struggle in order to re-establish recognition. According to Honneth, this struggle might lead to emancipation through emigration. The struggle for recognition has moral underpinnings as it implies 'normative judgments about the legitimacy of social arrangements', which are formulated according to an individual's expectations of recognition (Honneth, 2005: xii). The struggle for recognition emerges the moment individuals are no longer able to rationally understand why they continue to consent to a particular (undesirable) institutional structure and rule (Honneth, 2003: 130). This struggle is at the heart of emancipation; and, emancipation for recognition is at the heart of emigration for work.

Method

A web-based survey designed by the authors and administered in 2016 by a recruitment agency with offices in Greece and Germany, targeted Greek workers who wish to work in Germany. The recruitment agency specialises in the fields of medicine, infant care, education, social work, psychology, information technology and engineering and coordinates recruitment for a significant number of German companies in the private and public sectors. The sample of the study was limited to those who self-selected to participate anonymously in the survey via the link posted to them through the recruitment agency. The response rate of this online study was 52% percent (cf. Nulty, 2008). Although the sample has a number of limitations such as self-selection bias, and insights from a single agency, this methodology was cost-effective and allowed extensive coverage of the target group, which showed good levels of diversity across demographic characteristics, albeit a proportionately higher response rate from women participants which, according to Smith (2008) is a common phenomenon. The relationship between the gender skew of respondents seeking work abroad, the economic crisis and austerity measures remains debatable. While more acute discrimination is seen to be a key motivator for the intra-European migration of women (Favell, 2011), we have yet to fully understand the effects of the economic crisis on the mobility of skilled women (Kofman, 2013 and 2012).

Informed consent is an ethical requirement for most research. Surveys do not usually require the completion of a separate consent form. However, the first page of the survey provided specific information about the study, explaining the purpose of the study and intended use of the results, ensuring informed participation of respondents. A link to the

survey was posted to individuals who were selected through the recruitment agency to work in a company in Germany and who were ready to migrate. An executive summary of the results was offered to participants as an incentive to complete the survey. The survey data were only accessed by the research team and the link between individual responses and the identities of participants was removed in order to provide anonymity and confidentiality. Data were only presented in aggregate form.

Survey-based research exploring the motives underpinning the decision to migrate have been rather fragmented, focusing largely on push – pull factors for talent flow (Jackson et al., 2005; Suutari and Brewster, 2000). To address this gap, we drew on the limited studies examining the drivers for the ‘new’ skilled migrant and combined insights from these studies to arrive at a list of 47 items which we used to explore the salience of drivers for emigration to Germany from crisis-ravaged Greece (Triandafyllidou and Gropas, 2014; Labrianidis and Pratsinakis, 2016; Dickmann et al., 2008). The statements aimed at obtaining information about key social, career and financial motivations, such as monetary incentives, threatening career limitations, learning and development opportunities, accelerated career advancement, desire for adventure, family and personal concerns. Items were also included regarding the effects of networks and aspirations on individual’s decisions to emigrate. Moreover, the survey included statements that explored key socio-psychological and political motivations for emigration derived from Honneth’s framework, such as perceptions of the erosion of human and social rights, lack of meritocracy, bad working conditions and lack of decent work, and the perception that individuals are not recognized and valued for their contribution to work and society. The statements were rated on a five-point scale according to their degree of influence in the decision process from 1 (no influence) to 5 (great influence) (Dickmann et al., 2008). The survey also consisted of questions seeking demographic information including gender, level of education, occupation and family status. A sample of participants pilot-tested the survey items for adequate variance and clarity of language. The distribution of the final version commenced in May 2016 with the survey closing on July 2016. Data were downloaded and analysed using SPSS (23.0).

Findings: Understanding the factors that influence the choice to migrate to Germany

The survey sample comprised 150 Greek participants who emigrated to Germany for work (Table 1). As noted in Table 1, respondents were mostly female, young, single and highly

qualified. The majority also had professional experience and were in a range of professions including: education 37.58%; engineering 16.78%; health 8%; sales and marketing 4.7%; and finance and auditing 3.3%. Importantly, a large group saw themselves settling in Germany long-term or migrating to another country post their stay in Germany. Strikingly, a sizeable group (almost 50%) of the respondents were not migrating to Germany due to existing networks and contacts at their destination nor did they have international work experience in the past (70%). Over half of the respondents (almost 55%) also indicated that the economic conditions in Greece were not the main motivator for emigration, noting that they would have left Greece regardless.

Insert Table 1 here

A descriptive analysis of the economic, social and political motivations was performed in order to establish the degree of significance of each driver on the participant's decision to migrate to Germany. Table 2 presents the means obtained from the ten highest ranked items. While the desire to improve their economic situation and advance their career development are among the first ten drivers of skilled migration, motivations connected to the standard of living of the host country and the circumstances of the home country in terms of the erosion of human and social rights, and the lack of meritocracy are prevalent among the participants of the study. This finding suggests that economic factors strongly coexist with individual's desire to free themselves from dysfunction. On the other hand, lifestyle motivations, personal problems and the existence of personal and professional networks in the host country do not seem to influence our respondent's decision to emigrate.

Insert Table 2 here

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted for the survey items to explore and empirically determine the underlying factor structure of the questionnaire. Such an analysis deepened our understanding of the complex set of economic, social and political factors that drive our respondents to migrate for work. Moreover, it helped us to assess whether our respondents perceived the socio-political motives, such as the erosion of human and social rights and the lack of meritocracy that derive from Honneth's (1996) framework as a distinct factor affecting their decision to migrate. Principal component analysis was used to extract the factors followed by varimax (orthogonal) rotation. To define if the statements were suitable for factor

analysis, two statistical tests were conducted: The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity which tests if the inter-independence of the sub-scales reached statistical significance ($p > .000$) and the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy verifying the sampling adequacy for the analysis (KMO coefficient of .802, exceeding the recommended value of .6) (Field, 2009). Both analyses indicated that the sample data are suitable for factor analysis. Ten factors were extracted guided by the Kaiser's criterion rule (eigenvalues above 1.00), accounting for 72.89% of the total variance. Factor loadings of items to their corresponding scale were greater than .32 and items with cross-loading over .30 were removed (Tabachnin and Fidell, 2001: 625). The items for each dimension were averaged and formed reliable scales (internal consistency reliabilities ranged from .692 to .892). Sample means, standard deviations and zero-order Pearson correlations of all variables are provided in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 here

According to the results of the analysis, the factors underlying respondent's motivations to migrate for work could be broadly interpreted in the following manner. The mean scores of the factors (see Table 3) suggests that the four main reasons for migration were: the pursuit of economic benefits (Mean = 4.17, s.d. = 0.56), the erosion of social and human rights in the home country (Mean = 4.11, s.d. = 0.62), the standard of living in the host country (Mean = 3.73, s.d. = 0.65) and the opportunity for occupational upgrading in the host country (Mean = 3.68, s.d. = 0.66). Such a finding indicates that skilled emigration, within the context of economic crisis, occurs as a result of a variety of drivers of which the erosion of social and human rights features significantly. Interestingly, drivers related to networks and personal aspirations are less frequently mentioned as important influencers of their decision to migrate for work. One-way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were applied to detect any inter-group differences among the background variables and it was discovered that such differences existed for the demographic variables of gender, age, family status and employment status. Due to space constraints it is worthwhile honing in on one key aspect which involves employment status. Unemployed individuals were found to have lower mean scores than employed individuals when they considered opportunities associated with the host country and their ability to adapt to it. Moreover, and most importantly, individuals who quit their employment in Greece in order to migrate to Germany had higher mean outcomes related to the erosion of their social and human rights.

Comparisons of unemployed and employed emigrants across the components are presented in Table 4. Employed emigrants were influenced significantly more by the erosion of their social and human rights, the attractiveness of the specific location, their ability to adapt and the opportunities provided for the development of their career. The results, therefore, indicate that skilled individuals who decide to migrate for work combine rational choices to move based on financial benefits and career advancement with socio-political motivations and their need to seek recognition in their new society and escape from the erosion of human and social rights. The economic crisis context amplifies the interaction between these three motivations for skilled and employed immigrants from Greece to Germany, highlighting their need for emancipation.

Insert Table 4 here

Discussion and conclusion: Emancipation as a Motivation for Migration for Work

Our in-depth analysis of survey data shows that a complex suite of socio-psychological and political factors combine to motivate Greeks to leave their crisis-stricken homeland. Specifically, the survey participants placed a primacy on the erosion of social and human rights; the perception that they were not recognised and valued for their contribution to work and society in their home country; the attractiveness of the specific location and the reputation of the host country being open to foreigners. When human rights and economic and national security arguments clash, human rights laws and considerations are invariably relegated to a tertiary status (Kamaşak et al., 2019). Consequently, economic and political theories of migration have been given stronger voice than theorisation of the emancipatory potential of migration. The evidence presented breaks this cycle and demonstrates the significance of human rights and the emancipatory potential of migration, in particular for migrants who have adequate resources.

From Honneth's (1996) perspective, migrating is not only a means to protest the erosion of social and human rights and lack of recognition, but it also allows individuals to re-gain self-respect and to experience emigration as a form of emancipation. As illustrated in Table 2, the most highly ranked items in our study show that there is a wider range of motives than economic variables alone. While economic motives were important, they were insufficient to account for and explain the complexity surrounding skilled emigration.

In drawing on Honneth's theorisation our article not only contributes to and extends on existing works, but also draws attention to the micro-level of analysis, which illuminates migrant worker's desire for emancipation. Honneth's (1996) concept of emancipation captures the individual's ability to conduct a social critique of deteriorating institutions and social injustice, which in turn influences individuals in their decision to leave their crisis-stricken homeland. Our study illustrates (Table 4) that employed migrants are more likely to engage with the pursuit of emancipation, focusing on and prioritising social and human rights agendas in making their migration decisions, in comparison to unemployed migrants whose economic motives remain central.

Honneth's notion of emancipation may also prove useful for future research into what motivates skilled workers to emigrate, beyond crisis-conditions in Europe. Patterns of migration in the context of Brexit in the UK and Trump's presidency in the USA are interesting cases in point. When, Canada's immigration website crashed, post Trump's accession to office, data from Google trends suggested searches from the USA for 'move to Canada' spiked significantly (BBC, 2016). As for the UK, a recent University and College Union survey asked 1,000 academics in UK higher education for their view on the impact of Brexit on the sector. A staggering 42 per cent of UK and 76 per cent for non-UK EU academics said they were now more likely to consider leaving due to Brexit (Morgan, 2017). It is not possible to account for migration movements from home to host countries purely based on economic factors, since the economic impact of both the Brexit and Trump outcomes are yet to be felt. However, the erosion of social cohesion and loss of human rights appear as significant determinants of skilled worker's intentions to leave a country, be it the UK or Greece, or non-EU states such as the USA. Therefore, our research presents utility for studying skilled emigration elsewhere and more generally. Furthermore, the notion of emancipation from wretched conditions of work and from human rights violations could aid a better understanding of the motivation for migration by refugees for instance, which is often (and increasingly so) associated with economic factors in mainstream media.

Finally, social policy interventions for managing migration flows should engage workers at economic and socio-political and psychological levels in order to capture worker's challenges such as moral injury and social exclusion, experienced due to the deterioration of human and

social rights at work (Hill, 2001). Often, migrant worker's lived experiences are not consulted when crafting organisational design, diversity and inclusion policies and strategies, and trade union activities. In order to address this at the organisational level, 'centrality of the lived experience of workers' (Holgate, 2005) can give insights into and for effective organising and the management, engagement and inclusion of migrant workers.

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Dimitria is Associate Professor in Work and Organisational Studies at the University of Sydney Business School. She is a leading scholar in the field of migration, labour mobility and cultural diversity in the business context. Her innovative, evidence-based, policy-driven research has appeared in highly regarded outlets. Her consulting role sees her working with large corporate sector partners and key stakeholders in the government and non-government sectors. Dimitria has received numerous competitive research grants, with total funding in excess of \$2 million dollars. Most recently, Dimitria was awarded the University of Sydney SOAR fellowship (2019 – 2020).

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Joana Vassilopoulou is a Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in HRM at Brunel Business School, Brunel University London, UK and she holds a position at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University, The Netherlands. Her research focuses on race and gender equality at work, highly skilled migrants, migration and diversity management, from a critical and international comparative perspective. Joana is the editor of the Xenophobia monitor at the European Management Journal (EMR) and her work is widely published. In 2019, she published an edited collection on Race Discrimination and Management of Ethnic Diversity and Migration at Work, Emerald publishers.

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Mustafa F Özbilgin

Mustafa F. Özbilgin is Professor of Organisational Behaviour at Brunel Business School, London. He also holds three international positions: Co-Chaire Management et Diversité at Université Paris Dauphine; Visiting Professor of Management at Koç University, Istanbul; and he is an academic mentor at Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul. His research focuses on equality, diversity and inclusion at work from a relational perspective. His work is empirically grounded and supported by international as well as national grants. With a focus on changing institutional policy and practice in equality and diversity at work, he is an engaged scholar, driven by values of workplace democracy, equality for all, and humanisation of work.

Tables, figures and/or images (if applicable)

Table 1. Demographic Data Summary (n= 150)

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		38%
Male	57	62%
Female	93	
Age		
1-25	34	22.7%
26-35	86	57.3%
36-45	24	16%
46-55	6	4%
Educational Level		
Primary education	2	1,3%
Secondary education	6	4%
BSc	103	68.7%
MSc	38	25.3%
PhD	1	0.7%
Marital status		
Single	112	74.7%
Married or in partnership	34	22.7%
Divorced	4	2.6%
Work experience		
0-1	41	27.3%
2-5	61	40.7%
6-9	24	32%
	24	32%

< 6		
Employment status		
Unemployed	48	32%
Employed	102	68%
Hierarchical level for the employed		
No management	81	54%
Middle management	16	10.6%
Senior management	3	2%
Upper management	2	1.3%
Contact with host country		
No contact	46	30.7%
Holiday	35	24%
Educational visit	13	8.7%
Professional visit	11	7.3%
Relatives in Germany	36	5.3%
Education in German school in Greece	8	24%
International working experience		
None	105	70%
1 time	30	20%
2 times	7	4.7%
3 times	4	2.7%
More than 5 times	4	2.7%
Employment sector in Greece		
Education	56	37.58%
	2	1,34%

Medical professionals	12	8%
Health professionals	25	16.78%
Engineering professions	5	3.3%
Finance and auditing	7	4.7%
Sales and marketing	18	12.19%
Administrative personnel	25	16.11%
Other		
Type of company in Greece	78	52.4%
Greek private	2	1.36%
Foreign private	6	4.08%
Foreign subsidiary	28	18.35%
Greek public company	36	23.81%
Other		
Type of company in Germany	70	46.67%
German private company	11	7.33%
Foreign private company	7	4.67%
German subsidiary	4	2.67%
Foreign subsidiary	47	31.3%
German public organisation		
Expected Promotion in Germany	105	70%
Yes	45	30%
No		
Position with lower status	26	17.33%
Yes	124	82.67%

No		
Knowledge of German language		
Yes	140	93%
No	10	7%
How long do they plan to stay in Germany?		
1 year	3	2%
2-3 years	23	15.5%
4-5 years	35	23.26%
6-8 years	18	12%
Permanently	71	47.3%
Plan for the non-permanent immigrants		
Return to home country	47	58.9%
Move to another EU country	26	33.3%
Move to a non-EU country	6	7.8%
Would you go to Germany if there wasn't for the economic crisis?		
Yes	81	54.26%
No	69	45.74%

Table 2. The ten most highly ranked items

Position	Item	Mean	S.D.
1	Having benefits (e.g. vacation pay, health / dental insurance, pension plan) that meet your personal needs	4.54	.717
2	Doing work that affords you a good salary	4.46	.799
3	Standard of living in the host country	4.44	.687
4	Having the assurance of job security	4.43	.637
5	Superior career opportunities in the host country	4.35	.615
6	Erosion of social and human rights	4.34	.732
7	Doing work that you find interesting, exciting and engaging	4.33	.729
8	Having the opportunity to continuously learn and develop new knowledge	4.32	.718
9	Inadequate standard of living and social security	4.30	.702
10	Lack of meritocracy	4.24	.776

Table 3. Means, standard deviation and correlations among the variables

Variables		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Ability to Adapt	Pearson	3.66	0.66	1	.481**	.161	-.077	.578**	.34
Correlation					.000	.063	.373	.000	.00
	Sig. (2-tailed)			135	135	135	135	135	13
	N								
2.Networks	Pearson Correlation	3.02	0.89	.578**	1	.194*	.133	.464**	.19
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000		.024	.123	.000	.02
	N			135	135	135	135	135	13
3.Family Welfare	Pearson Correlation	3.58	1.35	.161	.194*	1	.159	.285**	.07
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.063	.024		.065	.001	.37
	N			135	135	135	135	135	13
4.Opportunity for Adventure	Pearson Correlation	3.05	0.85	-.077	.133	.159	1	.088	.06
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.377	.123	.065		.308	.36
	N			135	135	135	135	135	13
5.Standard of Living	Pearson	3.73	0.65	.578**	.464**	.285**	.287	1	.35
Correlation				.000	.000	.000	.001		.00
	Sig. (2-tailed)			135	135	135	135	135	13
	N								
6.Personal Problems	Pearson Correlation	2.54	0.95	.347**	.195*	.077	.061	.350**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.024	.377	.364	.000	
	N			135	135	135	135	135	13
7.Occupational Upgrading	Pearson Correlation	3.68	0.66	.484**	.447**	.244**	.236**	.556**	.35
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.004	.006	.000	.00
	N			135	130	135	135	135	13
8.Socio-Political Motivation	Pearson Correlation	4.11	0.62	.367**	.330**	.280**	.092	.504**	.37
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.001	.000	.001	.295	.000	.00
	N			130	130	130	130	130	13
9.Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	3.62	0.67	.263**	.465	.424**	.149	.379**	.18
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.002	.000	.000	.085	.000	.03
	N			135	135	135	135	135	13
10.Economic Benefits	Pearson	4.17	0.56	.257**	.254**	.336**	.146	.422**	.14
Correlation				.003	.000	.000	.097	.000	.09
	Sig. (2-tailed)			130	130	130	130	130	13
	N								

Table 4. Factors significantly differentiating employed and unemployed skilled immigrants

Employed or unemployed immigrants	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	p
1. Ability to Adapt	85 (employed) 45 (unemployed)	3.71 3.63	.53 .73	9.198	0.003
2. Socio-Political Motivation	85 (employed) 45 (unemployed)	3.99 3.89	.50 .74	5.636	0.019
3. Occupational Upgrading	85 (employed) 45 (unemployed)	4.16 4.08	.43 .70	5.485	0.021