Recent trends in intra-EU mobilities: the articulation between migration, social protection, gender and citizenship systems

Anastasia Bermudez & Laura Oso

Published online: 16 Jun 2020.

Submit your article to this journal ⬚

Article views: 2703

View related articles ⬚

View Crossmark data ⬚

Citing articles: 4 View citing articles ⬚

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

INTRODUCTION

Check for updates

Recent trends in intra-EU mobilities: the articulation between migration, social protection, gender and citizenship systems

Anastasia Bermudez [a,b] and Laura Oso [c]

aDepartment of Social Anthropology, Universidad de Sevilla, Sevilla, Spain; bCEDEM, Université de Liège, Liège, Belgium; cESOMI, Faculty of Sociology, Universidade da Coruña, Coruña, Spain

ABSTRACT
Recent intra-European mobilities can be analysed from the perspective of transformations in the European migration system, especially following the 2008 Great Recession, which requires moving beyond portrayals of such flows as problem-free mobilities resembling "liquid migration". These include renewed "(semi)periphery–core" movements involving both natives and naturalized migrants that interlink with other migration systems reaching beyond Europe and produce more complex mobilities. Analysis of these mobilities need to consider as well the connections with changes in social protection, gender and citizenship systems, and their intersection with other factors such as class, age, race and ethnicity. The articles in this Special Issue do so by focusing on a variety of cases that encompass quantitative analysis of demographic data for Portugal and Spain as well as qualitative studies of the experiences of recent Spanish, Latin American and Romanian migrants in London, Paris and Brussels, thus providing new insights into current intra-EU mobilities.

Setting the stage: rethinking the EU migration system

In their classic work "The Age of Migration", Castles, de Haas, and Miller (2014, 16) mention the "growing politicization of migration" as one of the defining trends of contemporary population movements. Nothing could be truer in the recent European context, where elections and governments in different countries are increasingly besieged by, or dependent on, attitudes towards migration. Migration has also become a key point of contention at the supra-national level, with concerns about external borders, free intra-EU mobility and multiculturalism leading to tensions threatening to unravel the Union,

especially following the UK's exit (Brexit). This is why moving towards a common European migration and asylum policy is proving difficult politically, with three main sources of concern identified in recent debates: "welfare shopping", "mixed flows" and "secondary movements" (Zuanna, Hein, and Pastore 2015). Tensions became most evident in the aftermath of two crises, the economic recession caused by the 2008 global financial debacle and the "migrant and refugee crisis" that followed the arrival of large numbers of displaced people on Europe's doors in 2015, both of which have had differential impacts across the EU. Currently, we would have to add the present "coronavirus crisis" and its impacts on external and internal migration within the EU. The articles in this Special Issue (SI) relate mostly to the ideas of "welfare shopping" and "secondary movements", since they have to do with East–West and South–North mobilities within Europe in a context of renewed core–periphery relations (Nagy and Timár 2017; King 2018).

There is evidence that over the past few decades and especially since the Great Recession European countries have experienced changes in their migration flows, with intra-EU mobility growing and diversifying (up until the widespread lockdown measures following the spread of the coronavirus in 2020). Most attention has focused on Europe's external borders due to increased arrivals of refugees and migrants escaping conflicts and deprivation, or presently the closing of frontiers in response to the coronavirus crisis. However, concern has also extended over internal borders in response to fears of growing primary and secondary migrations from Southern and Eastern Europe into North and Western EU member countries. Data shows that since 2008, Eastern European countries like Romania continue to record the largest negative values in net intra-EU inflows in absolute numbers, but they have been joined by Southern European members badly affected by the economic crisis like Spain and Portugal, while since 2013 Germany and the UK accumulate the greatest positive net inflows (Mazza and Soto 2019). According to the latest Eurostat (2019) report, out of the 4.4 million people migrating to an EU country in 2017, 2.3 million represented intra-EU flows (including return migration), while studies on intra-EU labour mobility (European Commission 2018) show these flows growing at a slower pace in the last few years, with Germany, the UK, Spain and Italy concentrating the majority of this mobile population and Romania, Poland, Portugal, Italy and Bulgaria the main sources.

Recent intra-EU flows also show greater diversity than the European migrations of the 1950s-70s, including a variety of mobilities along the East–West and South–North axes with renewed migration from Southern to Northern and Central Europe following the economic crisis, and involving both permanent and temporary moves as well as different types of onward, circular and return movements (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). In addition, migrants represent an increasingly variegated group, according to their

socioeconomic profile, education levels, migrant and family statuses and motivations for their mobility. According to the European Commission (2018), a majority of EU movers in 2017 were of working age (12.4 million out of a total 17 million), with recent arrivals highly educated but still overre-presented in low-skill occupations and younger in age than host populations. These flows include mostly EU nationals and naturalized migrants, but also third-country migrants relocating to a different EU country, although the latter two groups have received less attention. Equally, the impact of these diverse mobilities has grown in complexity both at the macro and micro levels, particularly in the context of growing hostility towards migration. At the micro level, migrant lives are framed by increased uncertainties, whether under the auspices of benign concepts such as "liquid migration" (Engbersen and Snel 2013) or constrained by escalating precarities affecting not only labour integration but also citizenship rights and personal and family lives (McIlwaine and Bunge 2019). This is why it is important to go beyond socioeconomic and political factors to analyse the experiences of recent intra-EU migrants.

This SI does so by focusing on a variety of cases, including emigration from Southern European countries like Spain and Portugal, which have a history of past emigrations followed by large migration inflows since the 1990s and new outflows from 2008, as well as East–West migration from Romania since accession, and into receiving societies like the UK, France and Belgium, providing a diversity of arrival contexts. Thus the articles in the SI provide a good vantage point from which to debate the future of one of the main tenets of the EU, the right to freedom of movement, as well as connections between migration, social protection, gender and citizenship systems in Europe from an intersectional approach.

Intra-EU mobilities: a story of intersecctions and interconections

Recent intra-EU mobility, together with the refugee question, have attracted increased academic and policy attention. A significant part of studies on intra-EU mobilities has focused on quantifying such flows, especially since the 2008 crisis, as well as analysing the responses of member states (Lafleur and Stanek 2017). Knowing the exact magnitude of these mobilities is difficult, since in many cases EU citizens do not have to register to reside in another member country. However, the use of different statistical sources can provide approximations, as several articles in this SI show. Regarding the direction of these movements, earlier attention focused on East–West mobilities following EU enlargements, with studies since the onset of the economic crisis linking them to the emergence of nationalist, anti-immigration political agendas and debates about the future of free movement within Europe (see, for instance, Favell 2018). Regarding these flows, some studies have focused

on return movements in the context of the Great Recession, while others see evidence of repeat and circular migrations as well as settlement in the West (Snel, Faber, and Engbersen 2015). The theme of high-skilled migration has also been central to research on intra-EU mobilities, with recent work exploring how such flows have evolved from a gendered perspective (Triandafyllidou and Isaakyan 2016). However, as a result of the economic crisis other, less visible migrations started to receive attention as well, such as renewed South–North mobilities and the phenomenon of onward migration (or remigration) of naturalized migrants and third-country nationals.

The aims of this SI are to contribute to this literature by presenting a wide range of experiences of new intra-EU mobilities on the South–North and East–West axes. Moving beyond a unique focus on demographic, economic or political factors, it highlights the articulations between migration, social protection, gender and citizenship systems as main explanations, while taking into account the intersections with factors such as class, age, race and ethnicity. The articles included here are the result of a process of discussion among scholars from various disciplines working on different aspects of intra-EU mobilities that started during two conference panels organized in 2017 (as part of the IMISCOE Annual Conference and the CES 24th Europeanists Conference). Following these debates, three important themes emerged that run through and articulate the different articles. These themes are presented briefly next and developed further in the rest of this paper.

The first theme has to do with continuities and discontinuities observed in new-intra EU mobilities within the framework of renewed core–periphery relations. The migrations examined in this SI present new elements but also continuities with previous flows within Europe and beyond. The in-depth quantitative analysis of migration data for Spain presented by López de Lera (2020) and for Portugal by Góis and Marques (2020) identify elements of both. On the one hand, new emigration from Spain as a result of the negative impacts the 2008 economic crisis had on this country has followed similar routes to the ones undertaken by the economic migrants of the 1950s-70s, highlighting the importance of intergenerational transnational networks spanning decades, as Oso (2020) develops in her ethnographic article about recent Spanish migrants to Paris in the SI. Similarly, for Portugal there are connections with past migratory movements as well as evidence of recent migration representing a way for younger, more highly educated Portuguese to access a wider labour market. In both cases the authors bring to the fore new elements, with recent emigration from Spain and Portugal including the return of immigrants to their countries of origin and the remigration of people of migrant origin to other EU countries. This is studied from a qualitative perspective for the case of Latin American onward migrants to London and Brussels in the articles by McIlwaine (2020), Vivas-Romero (2020) and Bermudez (2020) in the SI. Findings point out to a new reconfiguration of the

European migration system, with emigration from "semi-periphery" European countries to core member nations creating links with other systems, such as the Lusophone migration system (connecting Portugal with former colonies), and similarly for the case of Spain.

Going a step forward, the articles in the SI bring to the fore the intersections between these interconnected migration systems and the complex mobilities produced, and other systems involving gender, social protection and citizenship. The texts by López de Lera, and Góis and Marques, show how recent intra-EU migration from Spain and Portugal portray different gender characteristics, with women assuming more protagonism in the Spanish outflows. In response to this, the articles by Cortés, Moncó, and Barbosa (2020), looking at the experiences of young Spanish au pairs, and McIlwaine, on feminised precarity among onward Latin American migrants, both focused on the city of London, and by Oso, for recent Spanish migration to Paris, explore gender implications from different vantage points. The first text analyses how young Spanish women (and some men), independently of their qualifications, find a niche in the growing au pair market in London, and how this situation reveals traditional gender imperatives and tensions with gender imageries. The issue of low skill and high skill migrants and their labour insertion is also explored for recent Spanish migration to Paris, with Oso's text highlighting connections with past Spanish emigration to France and the importance of understanding intersections between class, gender and generation. This is why the concept of "feminised precarity", developed by McIlwaine, proves particularly useful to explore the experiences of a third group, that of onward Latin American migrants arriving in London from Spain, since it reflects how precarious living and working conditions affect these new mobilities in intersectional ways.

Such intersections are explored in two other different contexts in the articles in the SI by Vivas-Romero, following on with the theme of onward Latin American migration, and Paraschivescu (2020), looking at "whiteness" and Romanian migrants in London and Paris. If the first text puts the emphasis on how Andean onward migrants arriving in Brussels from Spain organize transnational social protection for themselves and their families in response to different opportunities and precarities, and criss-crossed by gender, class, ethnic and generational factors, the second focuses on the issue of race. By using the concept of whiteness, widely explored in connection with recent Eastern European migration to Western Europe, Paraschivescu explores how the inclusion/exclusion of Romanians in the white space of privilege in London and Paris manifests itself through economic and cultural elements depending on local and national contexts, thus revealing different types of racism and precarity.

Finally, a third theme picks up on the connection between increasingly complex mobilities and growing precarities, linking it with wider questions

about citizenship and belonging. The articles by Vivas-Romero, McIlwaine, and Bermudez in the SI, develop this debate by focusing on the case of Latin American onward migration (or remigration) to different contexts. Before the 2008 crisis, secondary migrations within the EU had received less attention, but there is evidence that these movements have grown. Although initially studies looking at the impact of the crisis on migrant populations put the emphasis on return, research shows that among some groups an alternative option has been remigrating to another EU country. Complementing the gender and social protection themes of the two first articles, Bermudez's text centres on how naturalization for Colombian migrants in Spain acquires both instrumental and identity values in the context of the crisis, within a "global hierarchy" that reorganises citizenships depending on their international worth. However, if acquiring an EU passport might feel like joining the "first world", the reshaping of core–periphery relations in Europe means that for many naturalized migrants EU free mobility has become instead precarious intra-EU migration. Such conclusions are confirmed by the evidence presented in the articles by Vivas-Romero, and McIlwaine, when they explore the new vulnerabilities and options onward Latin American migrants find in London and Brussels, but could also be applied to the situation of young Spanish au pairs in London as analysed in the article in this SI by Cortés, Moncó and Barbosa. Linked to this is also the relationship between precarity and belonging, which is explored further in relation to inclusion and exclusion by Paraschivescu's analysis of the discrimination of Romanian citizens in Europe.

Altogether, this SI makes a compelling case for looking, on the one hand, at the interconnections between different systems linking migration, gender, social protection and citizenship, and on the other, taking into account the intersections between class, age, ethnicity and race, when seeking to understand recent developments in intra-EU mobilities in a changing economic, political and demographic context. Moreover, it finds a common thread throughout the different cases analysed, that of precarity, while at the same time making visible migrant strategies and the diversity of experiences resulting. These themes will be discussed in more detail next.

Articulations between migration, social protection, gender and citizenship systems

The reconfiguration of the European and other interconnected migration systems

Some contributions in this SI bring to light how recent intra-EU mobilities are not a completely novel phenomenon, but form part of the transformations occurring within a long-established European Migration System, as defined

by Góis and Marques in their article on new outflows from Portugal (see also López de Lera, and Oso, for the Spanish case in the SI). Until the 1970s, this system was characterized by the guest worker programmes that led to the migration of large numbers of workers from Western Europe's southern periphery to core countries in Northern and Central Europe, as part of the postwar economic recovery and industrial expansion. Initially planned as temporary schemes for mostly young male workers to fill shortages in unskilled or semi-skilled sectors of the secondary labour market, with time it led to family reunifications and settled migrant populations. Such programmes were stopped following the oil crisis of the early 1970s and have been amply studied. Still, intra-European migration continued to grow mainly as a result of family reunification and return movements. However, from the end of the 1980s and during the 1990s the European migration system experienced further changes. This was most evident in southern Europe, which reduced significantly its emigration and gradually attracted increased migration from third countries, thus developing its own sub-system (southern Europe's migration system). Effectively, southern Europe came to represent the most important external border within "Fortress Europe".

During this time, research focused on third-country migration to Europe, with intra-European movements initially receiving less attention as they started to be considered "mobilities" associated to the creation of an EU free movement area. Still, some studies began to centre on specific groups such as high skill professionals and students, and diverse types of migration such as life-style mobilities, including the migration of retired people from northern and central Europe to the South. Following subsequent EU enlargements, especially in 2004 and 2007, there is a new restructuring of the European migration system resulting in renewed East–West migrations (Black et al. 2010). Although migration from Eastern to Western Europe had been rising since the fall of Communism, as Paraschivescu (in this SI) points out for the Romanian case, it is after joining the EU that numbers escalate leading to growing fears of mass migration. Connected with these changes new theoretical approaches were put forward seeking to explain differences between the earlier guest worker system and new mobilities in the context of free EU movement, such as the notion of "liquid migration", characterized by individual and fluid migration projects in relation to their temporality and "intentional unpredictability" (Engbersen and Snel 2013). Other approaches, rather than focusing on classic integration perspectives, emphasised the growing diversity and multi-directionality of human mobilities in response to technological developments and advancements in modern communications, through concepts such as the "mobility turn" (Sheller and Urry 2006).

The Global financial and economic crisis of 2008 brings a further restructuring of the European migration system following a reactivation of outflows

from southern countries into Northern and Central Europe in what some authors describe as a the "(re)production of peripherality" (Nagy and Timár 2017; King 2018). As Góis and Marques argue in this SI for Portugal, southern European countries now occupy a semi-peripheral position both attracting migrants from the wider global periphery while sending people to more central countries. This allows for the connection with other migration systems, which in turn are introducing further changes into the European system. As both the article on Portugal's ongoing intra-EU flows and López de Lera's text on the Spanish case, also in this SI, highlight, new South–North intra-EU mobilities emerging as a result of the economic crisis have to be understood in terms of such connections between systems. Góis and Marques's study emphasises links with the Lusophone migration system (see also Góis and Marques 2009) evidenced by flows of Portuguese people born in Cape Verde migrating to France, where there is a significant community from this country, or by migrants from former Portuguese colonies, such as Brasil, Angola and Guinea-Bissau, remigrating from Portugal to the UK where they also find community support.

Such connections are amply demonstrated for Spain too in López de Lera's text, which situates new emigration flows from Spain since 2008 to other European countries as a continuation of previous cycles (see also Oso regarding Spanish migration to France in this SI). A large part of recent outflows from Spain are related, on the one hand, to the configuration of this country as main recipient of labour migration in the last few decades linked to the East–West subsystem emerging after EU enlargement, as many migrants leaving Spain were returning to Romania and Bulgaria. The reshaping of a transnational field between Eastern and Southern Europe helped activate mobilities in the opposite direction following the crisis. There have also been returns from Spain to Central and Northern Europe, this time of retired people and professionals who had settled in the country in previous decades. On the other hand, similarly to the Portuguese case, new intra-EU mobilities from Spain are connected to a "Spanish-speaking or Hispanic" migration system (linking Spain with former colonies), since another type of mobility detected in this article and covered by other authors in the SI (by Bermudez, McIlwaine, and Vivas-Romero) is the remigration (onward migration) of people of Latin American origin to other EU countries. These remigrations form part of a dense web of transnational connections between Latin American migrant communities in different European countries, which sometimes leads to multi-directional or repeated circular migrations in response to different contexts and circumstances.

Finally, the new intra-EU mobilities of native Portuguese and Spaniards since 2008 can be tied to prior classic migrations from the 1950s. Within these flows it is possible to observe different socioeconomic profiles. Góis and Marques in this SI identify cases of high-skilled migrants from Portugal

moving to the UK in search of more dynamic and professional labour markets as part of individual, temporary strategies more in accordance with the concept of liquid migration. This is also partly the case of the Spanish au pairs in London studied by Cortés, Moncó and Barbosa in this SI. However, connections with previous South–North migrations within Europe are also highlighted, with some young, recent Portuguese migrants activating contacts with former networks of co-nationals who emigrated in the 1960s and 1970s in the case of France. Recent Portuguese migration to this country tends to be composed mostly of lower skill workers, in comparison with those travelling to the UK. This same connexion is observed by Oso in her contribution to this SI. Based on qualitative fieldwork conducted in Paris with Spanish migrants, the author explains how the onset of the economic crisis reactivated traditional migration networks in order to position recent migrants in the employment sectors traditionally occupied by Spaniards migrating to Paris during the 1960s–1970s (mainly in domestic service, care-taking and cleaning). Generally, they are migrants of working class origin who, despite their lack of economic capital, possess another form of capital generated by their contacts with traditional migration networks. Nevertheless, this might lead to downward or stagnant social mobility, blocking them into gendered low-skilled occupational niches and reproducing class positions across borders and generations. New Spanish migration to Paris also includes high-skilled workers that do not tend to mix with historic labour flows, but some are building links with networks of previous Republican exiles, thus sharing common political claims and functioning as diasporas that mobilize at the local and global levels.

Cortés, Moncó and Barbosa's analysis of young Spaniards in London from a gendered perspective (see this SI) also help put into question the division between high and low skilled flows, given the labour niches into which young Spanish women are inserted in this city (as au-pairs). Similarly, Oso's study of Spanish migration to Paris in this SI identifies a third group of recent arrivals of working class origin with low French language skills, who lack financial or other types of initial support and thus are pushed into low-skilled jobs at the start of their migratory trajectory despite having high levels of education. This is partly because, as López de Lera's article in the SI shows, among native Spaniards migrating to Europe in the last few years, young people badly affected by unemployment and labour precariousness have been prominent, while the destinations of these flows coincide largely with those of the 1950s–1970s. These articles and others, outlined next, bring to the fore as well how all these spatial mobilities and migration systems are crisscrossed by gender and intersect with transnational social protection and welfare systems, as explored next.

The intersections with gender and social protection systems

Several of the contributions to this SI demonstrate the relationship between new intra-European mobilities and gender systems. As Ridgeway and Correll (2004, 510–511) point out "gender is an institutionalized system of social practices for constituting people as two significantly different categories, men and women, and organizing social relations of inequality on the basis of that difference". It involves cultural beliefs, distributions of resources, patterns of behavior, organizational practices, selves and identities. Such a gender system explains to a certain degree some of the spatial mobilities studied in this SI.

The articles by Goís and Marques and López de Lera show how in recent intra-EU migrations from Portugal and Spain there is a gender selection. In Portugal, the new flows are more masculine, following the same tendency observed in previous flows. Nevertheless, for the Spanish case there is more diversity in the sociodemographic profile of recent migrants by gender. Among outflows linked to previous cycles of immigration into Spain there is a greater presence of men, as observed in the case of returns to Romania and Bulgaria, which could be explained by the impact of the 2008 crisis in male-dominated employment sectors like construction. Still, among young native Spaniards emigrating, women gain a greater share. This is related to the precarity and unemployment affecting younger generations in Spain, which has had an impact on both people with higher and lesser qualifications. The existence of gendered employment niches, configured within the framework of gender systems operating in home and host societies, can explain the selection of migrants. Thus, the greater presence of women in some recent intra-EU mobilities could be the result of increased demand for workers in feminized sectors, independently of the skill level required (such as in health, education, domestic service and care), as evidenced in this SI by the analysis of young Spanish au pairs in London by Cortés, Moncó and Barbosa. This is also true for the Spanish women occupied in domestic service and as porters in Paris, as evidenced in Oso's article in this SI.

The studies carried out by Cortés, Moncó and Barbosa in London and Oso in Paris are an example of how the "(re)production of peripherality" for Southern countries, within the framework of the European Migration System (King 2018), is articulated with gender systems. Indeed, despite being more qualified, some Spanish women are employed as au pairs, domestic workers or concierges at the lower end of the migrant labour division in London and Paris, reproducing similar dynamics as their compatriots who migrated to the UK and France in the previous century. In the case of au pairs in London, this shows up as well the growing dependence of middle class families on low-paid care and domestic work throughout Europe. Cortés, Moncó and Barbosa also highlight the tensions emerging between

traditional gender norms that naturalize care and ascribe it to women, reproduced for au pairs, and the emancipating gender imaginaries of equality and women's empowerment under which younger Spanish migrants have been socialized.

Gender tensions between labour market imperatives and imaginaries are also evident among Latin American onward migrants in London as studied by McIlwaine in this SI. This author highlights how onward migration is part of renewed intra-EU flows from the "periphery" to the "core", and how two thirds of new migrants of Latin American origin arriving in London work in the cleaning sector (both women and men). Their feminised precarity is underpinned by discourses of decoloniality, as migrant women work in exploitative conditions akin to those created by colonization processes. In the case of men, they also experience a "feminised and dehumanising precarity", which creates tensions with gender imaginaries as they "struggle to work in what they viewed as transgressively feminised spaces" (McIlwaine in this SI). To understand better such experiences, this author develops the notion of "feminised onward precarity", highlighting the interdependence of (in)mobility and feminised precarity and showing how female and male Latin American onward migrants experience precarious living and working conditions, reflecting devaluation and exploitation in intersectional ways. This contribution is original as it considers how gendered precarity can travel and transform itself across spatio-temporal contexts beyond the labour market, at the same time showing up intersections between gender, class and race. The intersections between recent intra-EU mobilities, gender, class and age are also highlighted by Oso in this SI, in relation to how Spanish migration to France is structured around the reproduction of class positions, based on the intergenerational replacement of gendered occupational niches.

Linked to this, a further contribution of our SI is how beyond productive sectors and labour demands, new intra-EU mobilities can also be understood in relation to welfare and social protection systems. Weak welfare systems can, on the one hand, become key push factors for migration, as the text by Vivas-Romero in this SI argues for Latin American migrants leaving their countries in the search for greater social protection for them and their families, to come initially to Spain. However, as McIlwaine's and Bermudez's articles in this SI also bring to the fore, the 2008 crisis drove many of these migrants to remigrate to Northern and Central European countries, partly in response to the weakening of social welfare systems in the host country. Vivas-Romero shows how restrictive migration policies and budgetary cuts in welfare, pension rights and unemployment benefits in Spain, pushed some Andean migrants to move to Belgium. In response to these increasingly complex mobilities, migrants have created different sets of global social protection arrangements, based on their gender, class and ethic locations, in order to protect them and their transnational families spread between the home

and several host countries. Such arrangements can be formal or informal. Focusing on the case of ageing Colombian and Peruvian domestic migrants in Brussels, Vivas-Romero shows how these workers' ethnic, class, gender and generational translocations in sending and receiving societies affect their construction of social protection arrangements. After seeing their access to formal social protection in Spain reduced, Andean migrants embark on onward migration to Belgium as an alternative strategy for them and their transnational families, highlighting once more how gender regimes help configure transnational mobility strategies, deciding who must migrate to obtain sufficient social protection for the whole family, and which family members will benefit more. In the case studied, this gendered configuration intersects as well with ethnic and class differences.

It is possible to see then how the articulation between productive models (including labour market dynamics) and social protection systems, together with gender, age and ethnicity and race, can throw light into the diversity of intra-EU mobilities. The issue of race is explored in more detail in Parachi-vescu's article, which adds to the wide scope of this SI by considering the ambiguous position of intra-EU Romanian migrants in London and Paris through the concept of "whiteness" (Garner 2007). Eastern European migrants in Western Europe were initially seen as unproblematic due to their "white skin" and free mobility rights (after accession). However, more recently, studies have put the emphasis on the discrimination and public hostility they are subjected to, especially in the case of Romanians, which has made it harder for them to enter the white space of privilege (McGinnity and Gijsberts 2016; Moroşanu and Fox 2013). Romanian migrants in London and Paris, as studied by Parachi-vescu in the SI, seek to use their economic and cultural capital to become part of the white space and thus escape being "othered" by racial, social and class discourses prevalent in different local contexts and thus become invisible (and free from potential discrimination). However, this is not always possible, with migrants in London being mostly circumscribed to low skill and precarious jobs, for instance in construction or the hospitality sectors, a situation they try to overcome by emphasizing their value as hard and honest workers (in response to media images of beggars and thiefs). Meanwhile, those high skill Romanians in better employment positions realize how difficult it is to portray their "Roma-nianess" in such a context. Cultural capital, on the other hand, assumes greater importance among Romanian migrants researched in Paris, with a different history of previous migrations from Romania to France. Race and ethnicity play a larger role in the gradual process to achieve whiteness by these migrants in Paris, as they seek to differentiate themselves mostly from Roma people, even though culturally they still remain outside the French mainstream. These interplays between race (going beyond skin colour), economic precarity and cultural barriers will have an impact on belonging and citizenship practices, as analysed in the last section.

Increasingly complex mobilities and precarities: linkages with citizenship and belonging

As already remarked, one of the main contributions of this SI is that it focuses not only on the recent migration experiences of native EU citizens migrating within Europe, but it includes studies of remigration or onward migration. This has helped highlight the growing complex mobilities onward migrants engage in, which can combine repeated migration and return movements between the original home country and more than one host society, as well as multi-stage migrations to several countries or circular mobilities within Europe. Sometimes, this has forced families to diversify their transnational coping strategies further, with research in the case of Spain showing different family members staying put, returning or remigrating as a result of the 2008 economic crisis (Bermudez and Oso 2019). All of this put together points out to the notion of precarity explored above, as new intra-EU mobilities become more uncertain in time and space, not in response to idealized notions of liquid migration, but as migrants seek to survive in the midst of different crises. The articles in this SI by Vivas-Romero, McIlwaine, and Bermudez, analyse, from a qualitative perspective, different aspects of the experiences of Latin American migrants previously settled in Spain who after 2008 left for other European countries.

A useful way to connect these highly mobile experiences is through McIlwaine and Bunge's (2019) concept of "onward precarity", based on a continuum of intersecting vulnerabilities affecting migrants as they move around that takes into account the strategies put in place to resist and move ahead. The article by Vivas-Romero in this SI on ageing Colombian and Peruvian women working in the domestic sector in Brussels sets out how different economic, political and care crises have affected the life-course of these migrants and their families, prompting diverse mobilities. After the crises that forced them out of their country of origin and attracted them to Europe in the first place, and the severe impact of the economic crisis in Spain later, moving to a new host country can offer fresh opportunities to rebuild their transnational social protection systems, with the aim of securing theirs and their families' futures. However, new precarities await them as host countries seek to limit the arrival of EU migrants and their access to welfare services. This author identifies the changes in migratory regimes, access to nationality and the welfare state in Belgium, as having key impacts on the Andean women researched and their ability to build their social protection and that of their families, depending on previous resources. Continuing from this, the texts by McIlwaine and Bermudez expand on the analysis of such precarities by considering the limited employment niches Latin American remigrants can occupy in London (mainly cleaning services), and the consequent poor working conditions, salaries and access to housing and other

services they face. A situation made worse, in the case of the UK, by a new political crisis emerging in the run up to Brexit, as the political and social climate against newly arrived EU migrants hardened. Recent Latin American migrants in London, despite mostly having EU citizenship, have seen their access to social services limited, while at the same time having to worry about what Brexit means for their right to stay and work in the UK. In their case, citizenship expectations have been met, to a certain degree, by new precarities, a situation that could become much worse under the current "coronavirus crisis" as many lose their precarious employment and housing without having recourse to welfare benefits.

This brings us to our final point, which takes into account how new "(re)peripherilised" intra-EU South–North migration flows connects with a "global hierarchy of citizenship" (Harpaz 2019) offering different rights and opportunities for spatial and social mobility. As explored in Bermudez's article in this SI, for Latin American migrants, the option of first migrating to Spain represented an opportunity not only to better their lives and that of their families, but also acquire wider EU rights, especially given their relatively easy access to Spanish citizenship. Several authors, including Bauböck (2019) have analysed how in the current scenario, with the value of international mobility increasing, the instrumental value of acquiring citizenship in "first-tier" countries has risen. In her study of Colombian migrants' citizenship strategies, Bermudez shows how naturalisations in Spain went up during the economic crisis, with respondents in her study stating the importance of having an EU passport to be able to move within Europe. However, despite the promises that holding such a passport entailed, their remigration experiences within Europe have, in most cases, provided them with new situations of precarity, where they remain to a certain extent excluded from a secure living and vulnerable to new crises, thus devaluing the value of their EU citizenship and making their latest mobility highly unstable. It could be argued that having an EU passport from the semiperiphery only offers them at the moment second-hand citizenship rights in Northern Europe, and soon, with Brexit going ahead, even less. A similar point could be made for native Spanish migrants in London, especially those in precarious work, as the case of the au pairs studied by Cortés, Moncó and Barbosa on this SI. However, hit by new crises, the latter might have access to wider family and support networks back in Spain, while onward migrants who lost everything in Spain might be limited to attempt new mobilities to other locations or return to uncertain conditions in their home countries.

The lack of a clear footing in any society despite formal citizenship rights affects as well the sense of belonging. For many of these onward migrants, naturalization is also linked to identity (not just instrumental) factors, as Bermudez's study suggests. However, exclusion and discrimination in the host society has an impact on belonging, as the article by Paraschivescu in this SI explores. This text focuses on a different group, post-accession Romanian

migrants in London and Paris. The inclusion/exclusion of Romanian migrants in the dominant white space of these two global cities exposes them to different experiences of (in)visibility and discrimination, with an impact on citizenship practices, especially in the case of the UK in the run-up to Brexit. As the author portrays, based on her qualitative research, for some Romanian migrants, having EU, or even British, citizenship does not offer guarantees of entering whiteness and becoming part of the mainstream, while others, especially those in high skill employment might engage in extra efforts to disassociate themselves from being identified as Romanians precisely to try and become part of such a space of privilege. Thus belonging and citizenship do not always go together, with gender, class, race and ethnicity playing an important role once again.

Conclusions

This Special Issue brings to light how recent intra-European mobilities have to be understood in connection to migration, social protection, gender and citizenship systems, as well as the intersections between class, age, ethnicity and race. First, the reconfiguration of the European migration system that developed in the postwar period, as part of which Southern Europeans provided North and Central Europe with cheap labour, later mutated into a new system characterized by Southern European countries as new recipients of labour migrants. This forged connections with other migration systems that, in many cases, were fed by colonial and historical links with specific regions of the world (such as Latin America) and previous migration flows. The 2008 financial crisis restructured once again the European migration system by reenacting new periphery-centre flows. In this context, Southern Europeans, under the umbrella of EU citizenship rights and freedom of circulation, joined Eastern European migrants to constitute a renewed labour reserve for Northern and Central Europe, resulting in a new migration system which incorporates migrants of non-European origin remigrating to other EU countries, while many EU citizens return to their home countries. As a result a complex variety of recent intra-EU mobilities have emerged.

Secondly, recent intra-EU mobilities can be explained in relation to their articulation to productive and reproductive systems that include social protection as well as gender systems. The existence of gendered labour niches, gender systems and their imperatives, and the onward search for transnational social protection, are behind these new mobilities. Such mobilities are also connected to class, race and ethnic differences, in addition to intergenerational strategies that incorporate the reproduction of class positions or social mobility trajectories between generations, while race plays an important role in deciding who enters "whiteness" depending on reception contexts. Thirdly, most of the articles in this SI focus on the production and

reproduction of new precarities in connection with the intra-EU flows studied, as these mobile citizens are exposed to ongoing diverse economic, political and care crises while seeking to secure their wellbeing and that of their families. If having EU citizenship through naturalization in southern European countries was once seen as a way of gaining such security, recent challenges to the idea of a united EU have put those expectations on hold, thus making recent mobilities increasingly uncertain and unstable, at the same time affecting feelings of belonging.

The SI has equally brought to light the relevance of studying new intra-EU mobilities from different methodological perspectives. The quantitative articles included offer evidence of the magnitude and directionality of these flows, along with socioeconomic profiles of recent migrants from Southern Europe, making visible the links between migration systems and with historical flows. On the other hand, those offering qualitative data have been able to analyse in more detail the interconnections between mobilities, gender systems, social protection and citizenship hierarchies, as intersected by class, age, race and ethnicity. Finally, we conclude this introduction in the midst of another crisis, that caused by the "coronavirus", which could lead to new reconsiderations of intra-EU mobilities and immobilities. These conclusions might help identify what routes and (im)mobility strategies new flows will assume, as well as the impact of the crisis on migrants according to age, gender, race and ethnicity . They provide also a starting point to assess the productive and reproductive strategies deployed by transnational families to cope with the economic consequences of this latest crisis.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Anastasia Bermudez http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1405-6438
Laura Oso http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1532-6196

References

Bauböck, R. 2019. "Genuine Links and Useful Passports: Evaluating Strategic Uses of Citizenship." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45 (6): 1015–1026. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2018.1440495.

Bermudez, A. 2020. "Remigration of 'New' Spaniards Since the Economic Crisis: the Interplay Between Citizenship and Precarity among Colombian-Spanish Families Moving to Northern Europe." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, doi:10.1080/01419870.2020.1738521.

Bermudez, A., and L. Oso. 2019. "'Kites' and 'Anchors': the (im)Mobility Strategies of Transnational Latin American Families Against the Crisis in Spain." *Population, Space and Place* 25 (6): 1–10. doi:10.1002/psp.2221.

Black, R., G. Engbersen, M. Okólski, and C. Panţiru, eds. 2010. *A Continent Moving West? EU Enlargement and Labour Migration From Central and Eastern Europe*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Castles, S., H. de Haas, and M. J. Miller. 2014. *The Age of Migration. International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cortés, A., B. Moncó, and F. Barbosa. 2020. "Young Spaniards in London: Migration and Gender Tensions in the Context of Intra-EU Mobilities." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*.

Engbersen, G., and E. Snel. 2013. "Liquid Migration: Dynamic and Fluid Patterns of Post-Accession Migration Flows." In *Mobility in Transition: Migration Patterns After EU Enlargement*, edited by B. Glorious, I. Grabowska-Lusinska, and A. Kuvik, 21–40. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

European Commission. 2018. "2018 Annual Report on intra-EU labour mobility. Final Report December 2018." Brussels: European Commission.

Eurostat. 2019. "Migration and migrant population statistics", *Statistics Explained* (March).

Favell, A. 2018. "'The new European Migration Laboratory: East Europeans in West European Cities'." In *Between Mobility and Migration. The Multilevel Governance of Intra-European Movement*, edited by P. Scholten, and M. van Ostaijen, 263–270. Cham: Springer Open.

Garner, S. 2007. *Whiteness: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge.

Góis, P., and J. C. Marques. 2009. "Portugal as a Semi-Peripheral Country in the Global Migration System." *International Migration* 47 (3): 19–50. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2435.2009.00523.x.

Góis, P., and J. C. Marques. 2020. "Portuguese Intra-EU Migration. The Dynamics of an Ongoing Migration Process." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*.

Harpaz, Y. 2019. "Compensatory Citizenship: Dual Nationality as a Strategy of Global Upward Mobility." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45 (6): 897–916. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2018.1440486.

King, R. 2018. "Theorising new European Youth Mobilities." *Population, Place and Space* 24 (1): 1–12. doi:10.1002/psp.2117.

Lafleur, J. M., and M. Stanek, eds. 2017. *South-North Migration of EU Citizens in Times of Crisis*. IMISCOE-Springer Research Series.

López de Lera, D. 2020. "Continuities in Intra-European Mobilities: What's Novel in the new Spanish Emigration?" *Ethnic and Migration Studies*, doi:10.1080/01419870.2020.1738517.

Mazza, J., and A. Soto. 2019. "Considering intra-EU migration and countries' net inflows." *Blog Post (March 28)*: https://bruegel.org/2019/03/considering-intra-eu-migration-and-countries-net-inflows/.

McGinnity, F., and M. Gijsberts. 2016. "A Threat in the air? Perceptions of Group Discrimination in the First Years After Migration: Comparing Polish Migrants in Germany, the Netherlands, the UK and Ireland." *Ethnicities* 16 (2): 290–315. doi:10.1177%2F1468796815616154.

McIlwaine, C. 2020. "Feminised Precarity among Onward Migrants in Europe: Reflections From Latin Americans in London." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, doi:10.1080/01419870.2020.1738518.

McIlwaine, C., and D. Bunge. 2019. "Onward Precarity, Mobility, and Migration among Latin Americans in London." *Antipode* 51 (2): 601–619. doi:10.1111/anti.12453.

Moroşanu, L., and J. E. Fox. 2013. "'No Smoke Without Fire': Strategies of Coping with Stigmatised Migrant Identities." *Ethnicities* 13 (4): 438–456. doi:10.1177%2F1468796813483730.

Nagy, E., and J. Timár. 2017. "The (re-)Production of Peripherality in Central and Eastern Europe." *European Spatial Research and Policy* 24 (2): 5–16. doi:10.1515/esrp-2017-0006.

Oso, L. 2020. "Crossed Mobilities: the "Recent Wave" of Spanish Migration to France After the Economic Crisis." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, doi:10.1080/01419870.2020.1738520.

Paraschivescu, C. 2020. "Experiencing whiteness: intra-EU migration of Romanians to Paris and London." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*.

Ridgeway, C. L., and S. J. Correll. 2004. "Unpacking the Gender System: A Theoretical Perspective on Gender Beliefs and Social Relations." *Gender & Society* 18 (4): 510–531. doi:10.1177%2F0891243204265269.

Sheller, M., and J. Urry. 2006. "The new Mobilities Paradigm." *Environment and Planning A* 38 (2): 207–226. doi:10.1068%2Fa37268.

Snel, E., M. Faber, and G. Engbersen. 2015. "To Stay or Return? Explaining Return Intentions of Central and Eastern European Labour Migrants." *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 4 (2): 5–24.

Triandafyllidou, A., and I. Isaakyan, eds. 2016. *High Skill Migration and Recession: Gendered Perspectives*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Vivas-Romero, M. 2020. "Beyond the 2008 Crisis? Tracing Global Social Protection Arrangements Amongst Onward Andean Migrants in Belgium." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2020.1738519

Zuanna, G. D., C. Hein, and F. Pastore. 2015. "The Pitfalls of a European Migration Policy. Migration and Political Challenges in Times of Crisis in the EU." *Population and Policy Compact Policy Brief* 9 (July): 1–4.