XX CICLO DEL
DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN

POLITICHE TRANSFRONTALIERE PER LA VITA QUOTIDIANA
TRANSBORDER POLICIES FOR DAILY LIFE

THE CROSSROADS
INTERCULTURAL INTERACTIONS IN THE GLOBALISED EUROPE.
THE CASE OF EUROPEAN YOUNG PEOPLE IN BRUSSELS.

(Settore scientifico-disciplinare: SPS/08)

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Abstract

Research questions

Globalisation have awaken scholars’ interest for the last two decades and has been studied by different disciplines. In sociology, it opened a new paradigm, as it obliges to go beyond the idea of separate national societies (what Beck [2006: 3] calls methodological nationalism) to embrace the idea of a global system characterised by an increasing level of interconnectivity among its elements. Inside this complex network, capitals, goods, services, information, objects, meanings and persons move with a freedom and a speed that are unique in world history.

This freedom of movement also represents one of the key aspects of the European integration process. In particular, the movement of students and professionals, what I refer to as high level migration, has been thought of as a way to facilitate the raising from below of a European identity and the Europeanization of the continent through intercultural exchanges. It is still doubtful if the many European programs and grants which promote European internal mobility has been reaching this objective. In any case, such a Europeanization process from below is based on the conviction that interpersonal relationships at a micro scale would produce changes in individuals’ identities.

One of the ideas moving the present research is that individuals and their identity are “inseparable from the transactional contexts within which they are embedded” [Emirbayer, 1997: 287]. Everybody is immersed in a set of social relations in which he moves dynamically, changing his identity and his behaviour both for social stimuli and for personal characteristics, that is, both for sociological and psychological reasons.

Therefore interpersonal relationships need to be studied under two perspectives: on one side, as origin of changes in one’s identity; on the other side, as objects themselves of change. The fact that people change place, together with the will or the necessity to maintain relationships in the distance, might produce changes in the interpersonal relationships nature itself.

In this sense, it is reasonable to wonder which are the consequences of globalisation, meant as increased transnational mobility, but also as the parallel
development of communication instruments, on interpersonal relationships. At the same time, it is important to investigate the identity changes produced by transnational interpersonal relationships.

This research has the objective to study globalisation and Europeanization through the analysis of transnational relationships. In this sense, it aims at offering a novel approach that seeks to humanise phenomena which too often are treated at a theoretical plan, far from the daily life reality.

To reach this objective, the research analyses Brussels’ expatriate reality. The political centre of both the European Union and the NATO, located really in the heart of the Western Europe, Brussels has always been multicultural, with its francophone, Flemish and germanophone cultural dimensions, at the side of which now the Anglophone one takes place. Brussels certainly is a unique city, not only for its role of symbolic capital of Europe, but also for its concentration of high level migrants from all over the world, usually working or wishing to work in the European institutions and in the many related organisations. The image of the crossroads well describes Brussels, a place where people coming from the most different places cross and meet for a while, some of them to remain, some other to leave for other destinations.

This uniqueness makes Brussels the ideal place to study high level migrants, for expatriates related phenomena have a very high intensity, this way being easily recognisable and analysable. I am affirming that what is unique in Brussels is not the presence of certain tendencies, but rather their intensity and their concentration. This is why I believe that the most of the results which will be presented are highly generalizable: similar phenomena, even though with local differences and on diverse scales, are very likely to be found in every urban environment where there is a significant multicultural high level migrants community.

The fact that Brussels attract people because of its political environment raises the matter of the relation between power and globalisation. It is thus an opportune question whether globalisation is creating an élite of transnational professionals.
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Therefore the main research questions raised are:

1. How does globalisation influence interpersonal relationships, in particular the non-family ones?
2. How and how much does the encounter with the Other during a permanence abroad determine an identity and value change in the Subject?
3. Are globalisation phenomena creating an élite of cosmopolite professionals?

The study is divided in two parts: Part 1 aims at providing the theoretical frame and the conceptual instruments to conduct the empirical research, while Part 2 analyses the collected material and discuss the highlighted results.

Methodology

Firstly, it must pointed out that I restricted the field of my analysis to:
- Europeans citizens (not just from EU members country);
- professionals;
- aged in between 23 and 35.

Secondly, in this research I use non standard methods, combined with relevant quantitative second hand data. To be sure that the second hand quantitative data were comparable and uniform, as well as trustworthy, I used exclusively Eurobarometer and Eurostat data. Moreover, they seem to be the most influential data at a European level.

Inside the different non standard methods, I chose to combine three ways of investigation:

1. the document analysis;
2. the in-depth structured interview;
3. the participating observation.
For the latest, the fact of being inside the Expats community have helped me considerably in the creation of the questionnaire before, in the running of the interviews and in the interpretation of the collected data in a second moment.

Regarding the document analysis, 8 different publications dedicated to Expats have been taken into consideration. A content analysis of the articles, as well as of the advertisements published in these publications has been implemented. This analysis has been useful in order to organise in a documentable and coherent frame the many impressions collected working in the field about the cultural peculiarities of the Expats environment. The content analysis has been carried on both at a factual and at a narrative level.

Concerning the in-depth structured interviews, I chose this instrument because I needed to survey the individual inner conceptions of interpersonal relationships, underlying personal differences in consideration of interviewee’s situation and motivations. To use Corbetta’s words [1999: 405], I decided to run structured interviews to have access to the perspective of the analysed subject.

At the same time, I chose to structure the interviewees according to a questionnaire in order to produce comparable answers, so to facilitate the emergence of tendencies.

I ran two groups of interviews: the first one (three interviews) to opinion leaders in the field of expatriates; the second one (thirty interviews) to European young professionals. All the interviews have been recorded and then transcribed in the original language they were made (either English, Spanish, Italian or French).

By the analysis of the interviews, I tried to extrapolate tendencies about the research questions. I speak of tendencies because I renounced to any pretension of direct representativeness.

Theoretical frame

With the word “globalisation” I indicate a process towards a more and more global system. More specifically, I would define globalisation as a process of
individuals and institutions inclusion in a global system that connects them dynamically and dialectically through a complex net of psychological, economic, political, cultural, social and ecological relations, in such a way that the status of an element of the system may possibly influence the status of other elements or of the entire system.

In this global system, national states are subject to a twofold sovereignty loss process: bottom-up, because of the power delegation to local authorities, of the self-governing claims, of the ethnic identities and sub-national cultures strengthening; top-down, because of the globalised economy, of the more and more numerous international treaties, of their entering in international organisations. To use Sassen’s worlds [1996], sovereignty has been decentralised. Fragmentation, pluralism and the accent on differences on one side, and the movement towards unity created by globalisation, the ecologic idea of being one only species on the Earth and the human rights universalization on the other side are delegitimizing the idea of a democracy exclusively coinciding with the national space: national states cannot be anymore the political arena highest level. Moreover, in consequence of the feeling of proximity with very far people and of the spreading of democratic universal values, a division among peoples based on an ascribed characteristic like the place of birth becomes more and more anachronistic and arbitrary, as well as less and less appealing.

Despite of all this, it is difficult to deny the renaissance that nationalism is having everywhere, in the Western countries too, often in the form of localism. But, as Hobsbawm [1990] explains, current nationalism is not anymore a moving element of history, as it was during the 19th and part of the 20th century.

I assume that three different senses of belonging are taking the place of the national one:

a) a belonging to more private groups, like the genre, the ethnic group, the religious group, etc.; I call it private identity;

b) a belonging to different layers of citizenship, from the local to the supranational one; I call it multi-layer identity;

c) a belonging to some conception of the world as a whole; I call it cosmopolitan identity.
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In the empirical research I analyse the importance of these identity models for the young Europeans.

In such a scenario, a stronger Europe is seen by many as a set of power and legitimacy that could be used to establish a “European way” to answer to global challenges. The importance of citizens, that is, of the civil society and of the civil dialogue has been recognised by the European governors as a key issue to guarantee the fulfilment of this “European way”. In the present research I assume a Europeanization process narrow definition that puts citizens at the centre of its action, and I analyse how they react to European Union’s attempt to create a European identity, at the same time creating a model of the different ways of being Europeans.

One of the ideas that move the present work is that identity is formed within social relations. In a globalised Europe, that is, in a condition of easy international communication and mobility, individuals enlarge their social relations range and, consequently, the spreading of ideas and associations.

Individuals, anyway, move in a world that is passing through the post-modern transformation, and where people behaviour is not influenced anymore by tradition, or by the belonging to a class, but by a precise individual choice or set of choices. In this sense, the activity of choosing becomes an activity of identity structuring. In other words, as some of the traditional significance producers, like political parties and trade unions, but also like the family and the parish, have lost their power or have been demystified, we assist to a process of individualisation [Beck, 1993; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1994]: if both the interpretation of reality and the indication of the proper behaviour are not anymore hetero-directed, individuals have more and more the twofold task of giving a sense to reality and of taking decisions autonomously. A growing load of choices and institutional pretensions in a growing number of areas lies on single persons. Individual’s biography becomes a biography of the choice, a “reflexive biography” [Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1994: 6].
The activity of choice is normally related to individual egos and has consequences on subjective biographies. Every choice, anyway, communicates something about the individual to all the others. This fact has two consequences. Firstly, whenever an individual takes a choice, he is making a social act, not just an intimate psychological one; in this sense, both during the process of choice and while realising his choice, the subject is considering his environment and the people around him, in other words: his community. Moreover, as our choices are influenced by the environment we live in, they influence it too. To sum up, individual choices have not just personal consequences, but remain in a mutual influence with the environment where they are taken and its people. This is not in contrast with the idea of individualisation: each person enjoys an autonomy (the fact of being free to choose) and an independency (the possibility of choosing a different way with respect to the socially accepted one) never experienced before. But this does not emancipate people from the consideration of their social context and, possibly, from conformism.

The current (Western) existential condition is thus characterised by two aspects:

a. a continuous change;

b. the necessity for the individual to attribute a sense to reality and to adapt to the constant change by a pervasive choice activity.

These two aspects produce uncertainty. Post-modernity implies a passage from the ontological question to the epistemological one. As Sennett [1998] and Ceri [2003] note, uncertainty has changed in our time because it exists without impending historical disasters: it is a structural element of our society, it is considered normal, better: existential. In this sense, I would say that uncertainty is both ontological and epistemological.

Reflexivity, that we can define as “the susceptibility of most aspects of social activity, and material relation with nature, to chronic revision in the light of new information or knowledge” [Giddens, 1991: 20], is the answer to this post-modern uncertainty.

It is possible to recognise two levels of reflexivity:
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1. Personal reflexivity [Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1990; Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1995], which is given by the formation and the constant adaptation of individuals’ life projects;

2. Social reflexivity [Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1993; Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1999], which is given by an auto-monitoring social activity.

I believe that social reflexivity is producing uncertainty and anomy, for it allows people to discover the hole in the modernisation paradigm and in the social system without providing them with proper solutions. Those uncertainty and anomy are partially compensated by personal reflexivity. In other words, people try to compensate their lack of control in the macro-social sphere with a concentration on the micro-social sphere.

Reflexivity is an aspect of the tendency of our society towards individualisation. Individualism is not understood anymore in Tocqueville’s anti-solidarity meaning, but rather as political individualism, which seeks for rules and processes able to guarantee the accord among personal needs and interests on one side and coordination and cooperation on the other side [V.A., 1993: 536]. Individualism recognises to the individual a priority with respect to the community in which he takes part. This individual is a auto-determinant, self-sovereign unity, characterised by a constant emancipation will against any kind of communitarian subordination [Greblo, 2005; see also Laurent, 1993; Kumar, 1995]. The post-modern individual is still far from reaching a total capacity of auto-determination (and it is doubtful if he will ever be). This is why Touraine [1997] speaks about the necessity to politically guarantee to individuals those conditions that allow them to reach happiness by auto-determining their own destiny. In other words, current individualism is conceived as a compromise between the individual and the collective demand.

When we speak about Europeanization or globalisation from below, for instance, we are referring to this attempt to harmonise the individual perspective with the institutional one. Because of the post-modern transformations, anyway, what normally happens is that individuals tend to retreat from the collective dimension to
concentrate on the personal one. Even when a social movement arises, it is often ignored or overwhelmed by a politics which remains substantially far from individuals. This way a contradiction arises among what the political system claims (for example: Europeanization from below) and what it actually does (European institutions lack of democratic legitimacy, decisions from above).

In general, individuals are subjected to a twofold pressure:

a. on one side, they have lost the classic (collective) adherences (class, party, union, nation, etc.) and are pushed to more personal adherences (genre, sexuality, ethnicity, locality, etc.);

b. on the other side, they are not really free to determine their private way of being, but suffers the constant market attempt to drive their way of life.

In such a context Touraine’s proposal of socially and politically guaranteeing to individuals the conditions to determine themselves as Subjects acquires an enormous importance, as individualisation by itself is not able to produce those conditions: social institutions are needed. Public and private spheres merge together, and through reflexivity the private way turns into the public one, in three manners:

a. by the Subject acquisition of awareness about his existential condition;

b. by the Subject concrete and active struggle for self-realisation conditions;

c. by socially influencing other identities through the spreading of ideas and behaviours, like in the processes from below.

In a world more and more complex, reflexive, differentiated and dominated by the idea of choice, as I depicted it by far, identity itself seems to be the result of a choice. Identity would not be an accomplished unity, but rather the mutable result of a process of change. In this sense, people create and modify their identity day by day.

Now, any kind of mobility has consequences on people identity:

a. identity implies the possibility of a difference between auto-identification (how I see myself) and external identification (how others see me) [Melucci, 1991];

b. “People found their self and the sense of their place also considering themselves in contraposition with some place that somehow they feel as very
different”1. If travelling I discover that the people I felt as very different after all are not that different, I can immediately enlarge my “base camp” borders; c. we can also influence a place leaving it, so that even our not-being-there can contribute to that change that we observe when, after a time spent somewhere else, we go back. In this sense, the return to a “base camp” can be extremely disappointing and seems to be more a migrant fantasy than a concrete possibility.

All this considered, I embrace the idea of “place” as a place of intersections, as a crossroads where different biographies cross and different experiences can be done. These intersections are nothing but interpersonal relationships among individuals who might come from different countries.

To analyse these interactions, an interpersonal relationships model is needed.

In my opinion the entire sphere of interpersonal relationships is used as a compensation for post-modern anomie, and each person of our life, even the ones who are not intimate, have a role in defining our identity and our place in the world. Moreover, in a condition of increased uncertainty, individuals tend:

a. to rely more on their social relationships as sources of information and of certainties;

b. to search for fixed points in their environment as elements they can count on.

Consequently, I believe that abroad, at least during the phase of settlement (which can vary individually in his length), also the most superficial relationships, that is, the weakest ties acquire a certain importance in the construction of individual reality, and may contribute to give to individuals a sense of certainty more than what they would do at home. Moreover, the necessity for the individual to confirm his mental maps may increase his reflexivity, pushing him to look for new opportunities to collect experiences. Thus the individual may valorise his acquaintances as a source of experience.

1 “Le persone fondano il proprio senso del sé e del luogo anche mettendosi in contrapposizione con una qualche località che in qualche modo avvertono come molto diversa” [Rose, 2001: 72; my translation from the Italian edition].
All this considered, I maintain that, when analysing interpersonal relationships abroad, it is necessary to take in consideration the weak ties as much as the strong ones. Therefore I created a model that in my intentions allows to order any possible kind of interpersonal relationship:
### Interpersonal relationships model (complete version)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>INTENSITY</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mediate Relationships</td>
<td>Not formalised roles</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>- Parasocial friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Chat pals who never meet;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- people who got to know on the phone and never meet personally;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>- people who shared a non significant presence meeting and never meet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>again, but keep in touch through media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formalised roles</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>- Colleagues working in different branches who never meet;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Internet formalised communities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- never met distant relatives with whom one keeps in touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence Relationships</td>
<td>Not formalised roles</td>
<td>Very weak</td>
<td>- Occasional meetings without reiteration, for example with shoppers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td>bar customers, etc.;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- repeated meetings with people known by sight (for example, with the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>newsvendor where one buys the newspaper everyday or the neighbour</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>met every morning at the bus stop);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>- Acquaintances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Friendship based on empathy and feelings;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- flings, last longing sexual relations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- flirtations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formalised roles</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>- Work colleagues;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td>- never met or occasionally met distant relatives on whom one can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rely in case of need;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- instrumental friendships (people who are considered instruments for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>one’s own personal affirmation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>- Parents and close relatives;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- couples (engaged, living together, married; cheating lovers).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

The purpose of the present research has been to analyse a multicultural expatriate community in order to answer to three main research questions:

1. How does globalisation influence interpersonal relationships, in particular the non-family ones?
2. How and how much does the encounter with the Other during a permanence abroad determine an identity and value change in the Subject?
3. Are globalisation phenomena creating an élite of cosmopolite professionals?

During the research and the analysis, these three main questions produced other operative questions:

1.1. Which is the nature of non-family relationships?
1.2. How does mobility influence interpersonal communication?
1.3. How does new media influence interpersonal communication?
2.1. What is the role of intercultural relationships in the identity and value change?
2.2. How is it possible to classify identity?
2.3. What kind of identity do Euromovers show to have?
2.4. Can globalisation produce cosmopolitanism?
3.1. Can mobility produce freedom?
3.2. Is globalisation producing the conditions to guarantee Subjects’ action freedom?

To answer these questions, I will start from question 3 and question 3.1, which give me the possibility to introduce concept of Euromover, necessary to understand all the other points.

3. Are globalisation phenomena creating an élite of cosmopolite professionals?
Both globalisation and Europeanization are creating the conditions that allow a growing minority of people to maintain a high level of mobility. This mobility can be put into practice in two ways, either by repeatedly going abroad or by spending many years in one foreign country. In both cases the mobile Subjects constitute a category of cosmopolite young Europeans that I define *Euromovers*.

Euromovers are characterised by:

a. their *global horizon*, which allows them to consider the entire world as the stage for their action;

b. an *inner push to move* to other countries;

c. the ability to find strategies to *adapt* in the host country.

Even though further investigation is needed to support this hypothesis, my opinion is that Euromovers tend to concentrate in very international towns and cities, which I define *movers’ islands*.

To choose their destination, Euromovers weigh up a number of criteria. According to the importance they attribute to these criteria, they can be classified in two broad ideal typical categories: the *interested-in-diversity* movers, which valorise the fact of staying in a culturally different environment, and the *opportunity-driven* movers, which valorise the experience they can get through their period abroad. Moreover Euromovers can leave with a predetermined timeframe or without a defined timeframe. Crossing the timeframe dimension with the two ideal typical categories, it is possible to differentiate 4 types of movers (as shown in the table 11.2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERESTED-IN-DIVERSITY</th>
<th>OPPORTUNITY-DRIVEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEFINED TIME FRAME</td>
<td>travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT DEFINED TIME FRAME</td>
<td>explorers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Euromovers typology

In the common sense of the word élite, Euromovers can be considered as such for their cosmopolitism, but not in its sociological meaning of political or power élite.
3.1: Does mobility produce freedom?

Thanks to their global horizon, Euromovers undoubtedly enjoy a freedom unknown to those who are not available to leave their country. But the freedom of movement does not automatically convert itself in life planning freedom. Because of their usual character of temporariness, high level migrations tend to reduce people stability and, consequently, their possibility to plan their life. On the other hand, the availability to move enlarges enormously people’s possibilities, this way allowing them to reduce the possibilities of remaining stuck in their biographies because of bad contingent conditions. But it is just this increase of possibilities that produces uncertainty in movers: when they decide for any kind of moving, they find themselves in the need to choose among different lives, different social networks, different value systems, and this choice can be extremely problematic. For example, some interviewees are divided about their career in the host country and the desire to set a family in their origin country.

1: How does globalisation influence interpersonal relationships, in particular the non-family ones?

Globalisation, meant as a set of phenomena, influences interpersonal relationships by including individuals in complex networks of people, objects, information and meanings. It is thus necessary to focus on precise globalisation dimensions. I chose to focus on mobility and communication.

1.1: Which is the nature of non-family relationships?

Before replying to question 1, it is necessary to better explain what I mean with “non-family relationships”, that is, those relationships which are not based on a blood tie or on marriage. To do this, I adopted a model which classifies any possible kind of interpersonal relationship according to different criteria (table 11.3). This way I avoid to define concepts like friend or acquaintance, which suffer of a subjectivity indeterminacy, but I am able to restrict the variety of the real situations to specific predetermined types.
To the light of the present research results, it has been possible to enrich the initial model including three kinds of relationships:

1. opportunity-driven relationship, based on the fulfilment of a precise goal (for instance, to acquire a new contact useful for lobbying) or on the satisfaction of an inner need (for example, not to stay alone on Friday night);
2. friendship based on sharing an experience and on mutual support;
3. close friendship based on feelings, trust and intimacy (usually in a durable relation).

The fact that close friendships, which are normally developed during many years, are considered more intense than friendships based on the sharing of an experience is an evidence of the importance of the time factor in closer relationships formation.

1.2: How does mobility influence interpersonal communication?

According to the results of the present research, Euromovers use their contacts abroad as a source of social capital. The presence of a contact or of a friend in a specific country may orientate the Euromover to choose just that country as a destination. Once in the host country, the Euromover can use his contact to start his integration process. Therefore, the presence of a contact, and especially of a friend, in the destination country constitutes an important facilitation for the Euromover in the process of adaptation.

As many Euromovers move repeatedly, they create a network of friends in the different countries they visit, and this network remain an important source of social capital.

While abroad, Euromovers tend to use their acquaintances as sources of social capital. In this sense, also the most superficial relationships, that is, the weakest ties acquire a certain importance in the construction of individual reality. At the same time Euromovers tend to valorise some of these ties, transforming them in friendships based on sharing an experience. If one of the friends moves, these friendships may last in the distance or slowly fade. If they last, they become close friendships. As maintaining a relationship in the distance requires a certain degree of commitment, the hope that it will be possible to meet again the distant friend helps
the success of the relationships: *the more a tie becomes intimate, the more it needs to have a perspective*. Euromovers tend to assign a high value to their close friendships, which they consider durable and trustworthy non-family relationships, a real fixed point up in a mobile life characterized by uncertainty.

Given the different types of relationships that Euromovers may establish, they can develop different social networks:

- a *professional opportunity-driven network*;
- a *personal opportunity-driven network*;
- a *solidarity network established abroad in the present experience*;
- a *solidarity network established at home*;
- a *solidarity network established in previous experiences abroad*.

Each social network responds to precise Euromover’s needs. In particular, the solidarity networks established abroad are often based on a commonality of interests that the solidarity network established at home might not have. In this sense, the interpersonal relationships established abroad may be enriching even though they are not intercultural.

1.3: How does new media influence interpersonal communication?

Euromovers are prepared to the fact that, when they leave to go back home or to move to a new country, they normally lose the majority of the friendships they established abroad. Only the most genuine, intense and intimate relationships last, while the others simply fade.

New media, especially the ones based on the Internet (e-mails, chats and audio chats), are considered essential instruments to maintain the relationships with people living in different countries. They are preferred because of their low cost, their large availability and their immediacy in transmitting the message.

Nevertheless, communication frequency and intensity may vary, so that it is possible to recognise two different strategies to maintain relationships in the distance, which I call *rarefied communication strategy* and *intense communication strategy*. 
2: How and how much does the encounter with the Other during a permanence abroad determine an identity and value change in the Subject?

To have any identity change it is necessary that the individual does not close in his own identity, refusing diversity. Euromovers show this precondition, as they do not choose their relationships according to national preferences. Nevertheless, they may find easier to stay with certain national cultures rather than with others. The conflict between their stance of openness towards diversity and the natural difficulty to stay in the same way with every person from wherever in the world produce two different approaches to meet strangers:

a. a critical personal approach, in which more personal selection criteria are adopted to choose one’s own relationships;

b. a non-critical cosmopolite approach, moved by the conviction that it is always nice to meet different people, as in any case they are a richness;

In both cases, the Euromover is able to trigger an intercultural exchange that produces a dialectic process of mutual learning. This process is useful to the Euromover not only to learn about the other culture, but rather to learn about himself. Therefore reflexivity ceases to be an isolating, intimate mental activity, to become an action in process, a transformation that occurs in the daily life activities. Exposing themselves to this process, at the beginning Euromovers lose their certainties, but only to realise that they do not need them: in the moment they renounce to them and accept diversity, Euromovers become more free, more independent, more self-confident and able to adapt.

2.1: What is the role of intercultural relationships in the identity and value change?

The fact that Euromovers very rarely look for strangers in their origin country allows to believe that also for Euromovers what is really important is not having international friends, but just having friends. As Euromovers do not see national identity as a discriminating factor at the time of choosing their ties, when abroad they naturally establish relationships also with people from other countries: having English as a common communication language, they have no reason to avoid
intercultural relationships. So even though Euromovers are aware that intercultural relationships may help them to learn about themselves and the place they come from, this cannot be considered the reason why they establish relationships with other foreigners. International friendships among Euromovers rather seem to be based on traditional factors, like the presence of an opportunity drive, the sharing of cultural interests, a similar education level, the sharing of an important experience, the creation of an emotive link based on mutual liking or on reciprocal support.

Despite this, intercultural exchanges produce identity changes. Euromovers may become critical about their national identities, in such a way that gaining the ability to stay with people from other countries, they become more intolerant towards their own country idiosyncrasies. Moreover, adapting to new lifestyles, Euromovers trigger a virtuous circle: they become flexible, improve their tolerance and broad-mindedness and develop a democratic spirit; these abilities improve their adaptation skills, this way increasing their ability to cope with uncertainty and making them more self-confident.

### 2.2: How is it possible to classify national identity?

In order to classify national identity, I counter two different logics: the logic of the or, which produces monolayer identities, and the logic of the and, which produces multilayer identities. On the basis of this main differentiation, I defined the typology schematised in table 11.7:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>monolayer (or)</th>
<th>multilayer (and)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>defensive</td>
<td>horizontal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consolatory</td>
<td>dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shifting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>multi-national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>global</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identity types

Regarding specifically the European identity, I identified four levels of adherence to it, which I called:
1. EU **supporting** identity: support to the European political project; very weak European identity;
2. EU **opposition** identity: weak cultural identity used to mark the differences among the Europeans and other continental cultures;
3. EU **belonging**: strong cultural identity based on the recognition of similarities which are common to all European states;
4. EU **filling**: very strong cultural identity, used as a replacement for the lack of a narrower identity level.

### 2.3: What kind of identity do Euromovers show to have?

Euromovers present two contradictory tendencies:

a. a monolayer identity, usually a national one (only one interviewee identifies with his region rather than with its state), prevails. In these cases, it seems that the Euromover has very clear who he is and where he is from, and that ***this very defined identity becomes a source of certainty*** to him.

b. A multilayer identity is used to combine different and sometimes conflicting identities. In these cases, Euromovers solve the problem of loyalty to the origin or to the host country by adopting an “and” logic: some Euromovers shift from an identity to another one, others feel more than one belonging, and others use broad labels, like the European one, to define themselves in addition to their national identity. This European identity, however, does not correspond to a clear vision of Europe, but rather to a mix of many dimensions, not unified by a unique and univocal concept of the old continent.

### 2.4: Can globalisation produce cosmopolitism?

To answer to this question firstly it is necessary to define what cosmopolitism is: a mental stance of openness towards diversity sufficient to guarantee not only intercultural communication, but also a transformation in the subject or a concrete commitment to a cause. On the basis of this definition, it is possible to differentiate among the travellers with a global horizon, who are able to look for and take
opportunities on a global scale, but who tend to remain detached from diversity, and cosmopolitans. Globalisation is producing both kinds of people, but while the first kind are the evidence of a power differential between nations, the second kind shows that cultural diversity can be valorised as an element over which intercultural dialogue can be founded. The fact that cosmopolitism can coexist with a defined national identity, in fact, shows that the difference does not necessary represent a boundary, but can constitute the origin of a genuine interest towards the Other.

3.2: Is globalisation producing the conditions to guarantee Subjects’ action freedom?

One of the theoretical premises of the present research is that individuals meant as Subjects are active actors able to produce sense and changes. Euromovers are Subjects who experience a certain freedom of choice. As I noticed, this freedom of choice does not automatically convert itself in freedom of action, as new bonds come to limit Euromovers’ action possibilities.

Nevertheless, Euromovers seem to be able to actively react to adverse conditions either by taking opportunities on a global scale, or by changing some of the conditions which tie them. Euromovers overpass through their action, which is at the same time individualistic (the single mover) and collective (the expatriates community), the post-modern anomie and the uncertainty. They do that simply ignoring them, re-interpreting them, living together with them as normal elements of their mobile life. In this sense, Euromovers face uncertainty with the intensity of their professional objectives and their interest in discovering new realities, as well as with their ability to adapt to new situations and change their own lifestyle.

To say it differently, Euromovers operate a constant reflexive process of choice and adaptation, in which the role of interpersonal relationships is fundamental. The fact that Euromovers’ interpersonal relationships may present a high degree of instrumentality (for example: opportunity-driven relationships) or may be used as irreplaceable sources of social capital, as well as the fact that Euromovers seem to be generally aware about the benefits of their relationships abroad (for instance:
intercultural exchanges) show that Euromovers use their interpersonal relationships in a reflexive way, in order to realise their life project.

Final remarks

Given the qualitative statement of the present research, its purpose was not only to describe a type of European citizen, in particular the moving type, but also and most of all to provide concepts and theoretical frames to be used as instruments in the study of any professional high level migration. I have been going in this direction providing the following:

1. a typology of movers;
2. a classification of interpersonal relationships;
3. a typology of the social networks that a mover can be involved in;
4. a typology of the strategies to maintain distant relationships;
5. a typology of the approaches to meet strangers;
6. a typology of identity transformation;
7. a classification of the different kinds of national identity, including the European ones;
8. a list of the perceived differences among conceptualised geographical areas;
9. a typology of citizens of the world.

Concerning the Euromover’s figure, it raises lights and shadows. On the bad side, there is his high level of opportunism and the tendency to create instrumental relationships; on the good side, the fact that the Euromover is able to establish intercultural friendships which make him ripe as a person. On the bad side there is a generally weak European identity; on the good side, the fact that national identity may coexist with a cosmopolitan attitude. On the bad side there is the observation that Euromovers are a minority of people in the European landscape; on the good side, the fact that Euromovers show that a reflexive process of adaptation to post-modern uncertainty is possible.