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Contrast Groups Based on Spatial Mobility and Social Position for Use in the Qualitative Sample

Technical Report of the "Transnational Mobility and Social Positions in the European Union" (TransMob) Project**

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Abstract

This paper provides detailed information about qualitative sampling for the "Transnational Mobility and Social Positions in the European Union" project. The sampling strategy is based on the SOEP-IAB Migration Sample survey. It is part of a sequential research design that uses various quantitative and qualitative methods to study the effect of spatial mobility on social positions and the role of social comparisons in determining how cross-nationally mobile people perceive their social positions. We describe how the quantitative part of the survey was used to create contrast groups that show different intersections of spatial mobility and social position as measured by the Erikson–Goldthorpe–Portocarero (EGP) scheme. In addition, we provide an overview of the main characteristics of these contrast groups. The section on outlook outlines further steps in this project and discusses the strategies used and the challenges faced in this mixed-methods research project.

Project Description: Transnational Mobility and Social Positions in the European Union

Movement across borders is considered to be crucial for an increase in life chances. During the past decade, studies of mobile populations' life chances within the European Union (EU), a space that offers freedom of movement for citizens of its member states, have become a vital field of research. Scholars frequently point out that not all migrants benefit equally from these increased mobility opportunities; instead, differences in life chances proceed along heterogeneities, among which the most important are legal status, gender, ethnicity and class. However, we know little about how mobility patterns and other heterogeneities influence people's objective and subjective social positions within the transnational social space of the EU. Unexplored are the social mechanisms that underlie how and under what terms migrants who rely on more than one national frame of reference would evaluate their social position according to their spatial mobility trajectory and other heterogeneities.

In the "Transnational Mobility and Social Positions in the European Union" project, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), we address these crucial links by pursuing three main objectives:

(1) To analyse the spatial mobility trajectories of migrants characterized by multiple heterogeneities;

(2) To link spatial mobility trajectories to social positions, according to the Erikson–Goldthorpe–Portocarero (EGP) scheme, taking into account the perceptions of and evaluations by mobile persons themselves; and

(3) To examine how the mechanisms of social comparison shape people's subjective evaluation of their social positions.

In this project we are investigating the role played by social comparison (i.e. the comparisons individuals make with reference groups) for evaluating social position and, to a greater extent, social inequality. All these issues are explored by means of a sequential, mixed-methods research design. Data from the SOEP-IAB Migration Sample, a panel survey conducted among migrants and descendants of migrants, are analysed to determine and evaluate typical mobility trajectories and to study the social position of mobile people according to these trajectories and other relevant heterogeneities. Complementary qualitative interviews will be conducted with selected SOEP respondents who have experienced mobility. These interviews will allow us to reveal the interpretations and meanings that individuals attach to spatial mobility and their social position over time. The overall objective of the project is to explore the role of social comparisons as the main social mechanism involved in the nexus of spatial mobility and social positions. The results of the project are expected to help explain how the experience of spatial mobility and the subjective and objective perceptions of social positions interact in social spaces that cross national borders.

1. Measuring Spatial Mobility Trajectories and Social Positions

In order to analyse the diverse trajectories of mobility in relation to individuals' social positions, as well as the way in which mobile persons interpret these positions, we chose a research design that allows the reconstruction of both 'objective' and 'subjective' social positions of mobile persons. By 'objective' social positions we mean a measurement that indicates someone's social position within a certain social hierarchy. In particular, we use the standardized indicator developed by Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero (the EGP scheme) (Erikson, Goldthorpe, & Portocarero, 1979) to describe the 'objective' dimensions of social positions – that is, dimensions based on theoretically derived categories of analysis according to internationally recognized measurement criteria for social positions. The 'subjective' dimension of social positions relates to evaluations and interpretations derived from the respondents themselves. Both types of dimensions are elements of the concept of social position that we would like to use. By convention, social hierarchies are embedded in national social stratification systems. Thus, migrants have experienced at least two national stratification systems, and this dual experience may also influence their personal assessments of their position as they compare the two systems.

In this paper, we focus on the objective social positions measured by the EGP scheme, with 'social position' meaning a concept that includes both social class and social status. Our understanding of social class and social status refers to Weberian thinking by which class and status can be understood as different dimensions of social structure. Class refers to property, commercial and social classes (Weber, 1978 [1922]), which typically allows for within-class social mobility (Swedberg, 2005). Social status refers to "a quality of social honor or a lack of it, and is in the main conditioned as well as expressed through a specific style of life" (Weber, 1958 [1921], p. 39). Although the description of social status typically relates to consumption, the concept of social class, by contrast, emphasizes production (Weber, 1978 [1922]).

The overlap of both concepts also becomes evident in social indicator research and the well-established measurement of social positions. The EGP scheme measures social class, whereas the International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI) (see Ganzeboom, de Graaf, & Treiman, 1992), for example, measures occupational social status. In any case, both measures are based on the International Labour Organisation's International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) (see Elias, 1997) for occupational groups, although they are operationalized in different ways.

Our previous research indicated that comparisons made by mobile persons often take on a cross-border dimension, because people compare themselves with others (abroad) who are relevant to them in certain aspects (see Faist, Bilecen, Barglowski, & Sienkiewicz, 2015). In transnational social spaces, people may develop and use multiple frames of comparison. Also, heterogeneities, such as legal status, gender, ethnicity or social class, may play a crucial role in shaping migrants' perceptions of their social positions and in making comparisons. Exploratory findings indicate that the migration experience and transnational comparisons are important for some migrants from Turkey in Germany, such as those who view the emotional experience (e.g. the extent of social support, respect and recognition) as being better in Turkey (Sienkiewicz, Hapke, & Faist, 2016). Research has also revealed that migrants create "transnational spaces of comparison" (Sienkiewicz, Sadovskaya, & Amelina, 2015) in which, for example, informal social protection is evaluated and distributed differently in the national context, meaning that the receiver of protection in the national context may be the provider of protection in transnational contexts. Until now, however, these different realms of comparison have not been studied systemically.

To arrive at a multifaceted picture of social positions, we used a sequential, nested, mixed-methods design (see Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Small, 2011). The project combines multiple research methods involving quantitative and qualitative approaches (Kuckartz, 2014). First, the data obtained from the IAB-SOEP Migration Sample (see Brücker et al., 2014) were analysed in order to construct contrast groups of mobile persons. In this paper, we document this first step in our research design. In a subsequent step, these contrast groups will be used for the qualitative sampling.

To identify the trajectories of spatial mobility and the other heterogeneities involved, we used data derived from the IAB-SOEP Migration Sample (2015), a new subsample of the general Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), which was begun in 1984. The migration sample survey was conducted for the first time in 2013 and included about 5,000 respondents living in 2,700 households in Germany. A supplementary sample was drawn in 2015. As part of the overall SOEP survey, the IAB-SOEP Migration Sample survey contains general information about the life circumstances of the respondents and members of their households. Unlike the other subsamples in the SOEP, the migration sample is unique in that it includes information on the migration biographies of respondents born outside Germany and detailed information about the condition of their arrival in different countries for at least three months before their last immigration to Germany. We used the latest sample wave (2015) and added available biographical information for all participants, some of whom were interviewed for the first time in 2013 and 2014.

Overall, 540 respondents (about 13%) have had multiple experiences of mobility, or 'staying abroad', either within or outside the EU. Using the information on migration and employment biographies available from the surveys (2013–2015), we were able to identify diverse trajectories of spatial mobility and link them with respondents' objective social position using the EGP scheme. For the qualitative sampling, we decided to use the EGP scheme because it is known for its high degree of international comparability and fits our goal of studying migrants' social position, which is shaped by social status and class in different national stratification systems.

2. Social Position and Mobility Experience as Determinants in Constructing Contrast Groups

For the qualitative sample, having fewer subgroups is desirable. The data can be split into three groups of social position (upper service, lower service and manual worker) and two spatial mobility groups (single and multiple mobility experiences). To be parsimonious while ensuring appropriate variety, we chose a 2 × 3 scheme for the contrast groups to achieve the best matches. One could say that at this stage we simplified the process by basing the qualitative sampling strategy on three 'coarse-grained' status groups in order to study the more 'fine-grained' perceptions of social position in the qualitative part of the research project.

2.1 The EGP Scheme with Three Categories

A broad theoretical literature that goes back to the roots of sociology (Marx) and sociological classics (e.g. Bourdieu) addresses the question of how to study social class. Much research was conducted using quantifiable approaches to systemize people into different classes. During the development of this research strand, the most popular measurements for objective social positions (social status and social class respectively) became the ISCO-88 classification for occupational groups (Elias, 1997), the ISEI-Status 88 (Ganzeboom et al., 1992), Treiman's Standard International Occupation Prestige Scale (Treiman, 1977) and the Erikson–Goldthorpe class category (Erikson et al., 1979). Some measurements also include prestige measurements, such as Duncan's Socioeconomic Index (SEI) (Duncan, 1961) or the Hauser–Warren index (Hauser & Warren, 1997).

Many of these widely known measurements are included in the SOEP Migration Sample. The EGP class scheme allows differentiation according to the regulation of employment relationships (Schunck, Sauer, & Valet 2015). As Gayle and colleagues note:

> Individuals within a social class are considered to share similar 'market situation' (e.g. levels of income, economic security and chances for economic advancement) and 'work situation' (e.g. authority and control) […]. Accordingly, those individuals within a social class are thought to hold similar life chances and often lifestyles (Gayle, Connelly, & Lambert, 2015, p. 5).

This quote shows that the class measurements by Goldthorpe and colleagues include, in a Weberian sense, not only social class ("market" and "work situation") but also social status ("life chances" and "lifestyles"). Understood in this way, the measurement serves to capture social positions, and several publications emphasize not only its reliability in predicting individuals' social positions but also its parsimony (Parkin, 1971; Rose & Pevalin, 2003). EGP as an occupation-based socio-economic measure is more stable for describing people's social class than for describing their earning profiles (Goldthorpe & McKnight, 2006; Rose & Pevalin, 2003). According to a literature review, the EGP is commonly used as a measure of social class in social science research involving the SOEP data (Groh-Samberg & Voges, 2014; Lancee & Pardos-Prado, 2013; Schacht, Kristen, & Tucci, 2014).

Occupation-based measures can also be used to represent households rather than individuals, because not every household member is employed. In addition, to ascribe an objective social position to household members who are doing domestic work, for example, and are not officially employed, the stratification research offers 'individual', 'dominance' and 'conventional' approaches for social classification (e.g. Erikson, 1984). While the individual approach looks at the current or last occupation, the dominance approach looks at all occupations in the household and for the most part characterizes the household based on the dominant occupational status, which contributes most in monetary terms and in terms of time. The conventional approach uses the head of the household as the main reference for its assessment (see Gayle et al., 2015). In our case, we will use the individual approach, because the emphasis in analysing the qualitative interviews will be on individuals and their personal social comparisons.

The EGP scheme is based on the ISCO codes and covers eleven groups that represent social class. (For more details about operationalization in the SOEP data, see SOEP, 2012.) In addition, the EGP groups can be combined into more general groups. Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992) mention the possibility of applying their scheme in a similar way for seven-, five- and three-class versions. Owing to our research design and limitations in the data, it is appropriate to have a few groups representing big (macro-)groups of social positions. We are

not interested in micro-classes or in the general debate about how to construct a good quantitative measurement of social class that serves international comparisons (like Grusky & Sørensen, 2001; Grusky & Weeden, 2006). Because one of our aims is to connect the concept of transnational social comparison to the academic discussion about (perceived) social position in the nexus of spatial and social mobility, a well-established and more general classification obtained with the EGP scheme provides the best fit.

We decided to construct contrast groups with different patterns of social position and potential (trans)national frames of comparisons. It is preferable to define these different groups ex ante, because we assumed that the social comparisons made would be influenced by different social positions and experiences of mobility. This approach to data grouping allowed us to retain much greater control over the sampling frame than would, for example, cluster analysis, the reliability of which is a matter of controversy in the social sciences because it requires careful interpretation and a deep knowledge of the data (see e.g. Hartmann, 2011). Table 1 shows the distribution of the EGP scheme for the 2015 SOEP Migration Sample.

Table 1. Frequencies of Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero Values (Eleven Groups)

Last Reached Egp Value (Erikson, Goldthorpe, Portocarero)	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
[1] [I] Higher Managerial and Professio	229	8.45	8.45
[2] [II] Lower Managerial and Professio	390	14.40	22.85
[3] [IIIa] Routine Clerical Work	252	9.30	32.15
[4] [IIIb] Routine Service and Sales Wo	384	14.17	46.33
[5] [IVa] Small Self-Employed With Empl	34	1.26	47.58
[6] [IVb] Small Self-Employed Without E	48	1.77	49.35
[8] [VI] Skilled Manual Workers	508	18.75	68.11
[9] [VIIa] Semi- and Unskilled Manual W	828	30.56	98.67
[10] [VIIb] Agricultural Labour	35	1.29	99.96
[11] [IVc] Self-Employed Farmers	1	0.04	100.00
Total	2,709	100.00	

Note. Adapted from the SOEP Migration Sample 2015.

Our intention was to use this EGP scheme to create three large groups that would represent three different types of social positions. As mentioned earlier in this strand of literature, a social class scheme cannot be seen as necessarily hierarchical, but it often has an ordinal structure (Glass, 1954). Erikson and Goldthorpe themselves published a seven-class, a five-class and a three-class version of the EGP scheme. The three-class version distinguishes among non-manual workers, farm workers and manual workers. Because our data do not

include farm workers, we adopted some ideas from the more extended five-class and seven-class versions to create the three EGP groups (Table 2).

Table 2. Regrouping of the EGP Values into Three Groups

EGP (3 Groups)	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Upper Service Position	626	23.11	23.11
Lower Service Position	703	25.95	49.06
Manual Working Position	1,380	50.94	100.00
Total	2,709	100.00	

Note. Adapted from the SOEP Migration Sample 2015.

2.1.1 Non-Manual White-Collar Workers Representing the 'Upper Service Position'

The groups 'Upper Service' and 'Lower Service' (from the from the EGP scheme with elven classes) were defined as upper white-collar service positions and included engineers, university professors, computer professionals, managers, architects, pharmacists, teachers, lawyers, sales managers and so on.

2.1.2 Routine Non-Manual White-Collar Workers Representing the 'Lower Service Position'

Routine non-manual white-collar workers, such as social work associate professionals, bookkeepers, nursing associate professionals, nursery school teachers, stock clerks, shop salespersons and other office staff, were labelled as 'Lower Service Positions'.

2.1.3 Manual Skilled and Unskilled Blue-Collar Workers Representing the 'Manual Working Position

Migrants working as skilled workers (e.g. cooks, hairdressers, plumbers, painters, structural metal preparers, machine mechanics) and unskilled workers (e.g. waiters, protective service workers, cleaners, machine operators, drivers) were labelled more generally as 'Manual Working Position'. Agricultural workers were also included in this group.

2.1.4 Self-Employed Workers

Self-employed workers with and without employees are the most heterogeneous group, and it is difficult to assign them to a particular social position. General managers, IT professionals and secondary school teachers were included in this group, as were drivers, care workers and plumbers. One possible way to integrate this group within the three specified positions would be to split them into manual working, upper service and lower service positions according to the Ganzeboom ISEI social status scale. Research has shown that the average score on this scale is 40, with a standard deviation of 14 for an individual sample (Gayle *et al.*, 2015). Based on this value, we ascribed the self-employed workers to the manual working position if their ISEI score was lower than 26, to the lower service position for scores 26 to 54 and to the upper service position for scores 55 and above. This approach made it possible to differentiate this very heterogeneous group more precisely and according to their objective social position.

2.2. Mobility Experience

The operationalization of spatial mobility across borders is necessary in order to determine the potential frames of reference migrants' use when evaluating their social position and how it changes over time. One group includes those with a single mobility experience and thus 'dual (trans)national frames of reference for comparison'. These are people who were born outside Germany and who migrated once in their lifetime – to Germany – and also include descendants of immigrants to Germany who lived for at least three months in another country and returned to Germany. The other group includes those with multiple mobility experiences and thus potentially 'multiple (trans)national frames of reference for comparison', as well as people born outside Germany who migrated to Germany but also lived for at least three months in another country (before or after moving to Germany). This definition also covers a relatively small number of people who lived in four or more countries. Potentially, descendants of immigrants born in Germany who lived in at least two other countries could

be in this group as well. Table 3 shows the number of cases according to type of mobility experience and includes only those respondents with valid information on the EGP in 2015:[1]

Table 3. Frequencies of Respondents with Single or Multiple Mobility Experiences

. Experience of Mobility | Freq. | Percent | Cum.

Experience of Mobility	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Single	2,298	84.83	84.83
Multiple	411	15.17	100.00
Total	2,709	100.00	

Note. Adapted from the SOEP Migration Sample 2015.

We expect that those with more mobility experience will use multiple frames of references (national and transnational) to position themselves. This approach opens the discussion for multiple positions in transnational social spaces that can claim two or more national references and ideas about social positions. A systematic exploration of this neglected area of social comparisons research and transnational (class) studies will be needed to understand social inequalities beyond the nation state, as in the case of the EU. In this way, both assigned and perceived social positions can be combined in a transnational perspective. This perspective should supersede the prevailing ethnic lens and methodological nationalism (see Glick Schiller, Çağlar, & Gulbrandsen, 2006, and Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003, respectively), because the main classifying heterogeneities will then be objective social position and spatial mobility pattern.

[1] In addition, all respondents who came before 1961 (9 in total) were deleted because they could not be considered in terms of mobility within the EU.

3. Six Contrast Groups

Table 4. Cross-Tabulation of Mobility Experience and Three Groups of Social Position (Based on the EGP Classification)

EGP (3 Groups)	Experience of Mobility: Single	Multiple	Total
Upper Service Positio	483	143	626
Lower Service Positio	616	87	703
Manual Working Positi	1,199	181	1,380
Total	2,298	411	2,709

Note. Adapted from the SOEP Migration Sample 2015.

We found a total of 2,709 respondents who had personal mobility experiences and valid EGP information. Overall, the characteristics of the six contrast groups show similarities, but they also reveal differences (see Table 5), to be described next.

3.1 Gender and Age

Out of the 2,709 respondents 1,418 (52.3%) are male and 1,291 (47.7 %) are female. Notably, women are highly overrepresented in the lower service position with single or multiple mobility experience (about 75% of all respondents in this group). Men are similarly overrepresented in the manual working position with multiple mobility experiences and to a lesser extent when they have only a single mobility experience. In the upper service position, the proportion of women is slightly larger than that of men.

The mean age for all respondents is 38.6 years (s = 10.44), with the youngest respondent being 18 and the oldest 74 years of age. Also, the average age of people in the upper and lower service positions is lower than the general average, and people from the manual working position have a higher mean age (about 40 years).

3.2 Average Education

We used the CASMIN classification to describe the general tendencies and differences in educational level for the different contrast groups. In this case, a value of '1' indicates a low education level ("inadequately completed") and a value of '9' indicates a higher tertiary education. The mean value for all respondents is 5.1 (s = 2.74), which is the level of intermediate vocational training. The average in the upper service position is around 7, which indicates *Abitur* (comparable to A-levels in the United Kingdom) and is much higher than the averages in the lower service position (5.1/6.3 = intermediate general qualification/full maturity certificates) and in the manual working position (3.9/4.0 = intermediate vocational qualification or intermediate general qualification/vocational qualification). One interesting finding is that in all the social position groups, the more mobile respondents tend to have higher educational achievements.

Table 5. Description of the Six Contrast Groups

	Descriptive Analysis	**Single Mobility Experience**	**Multiple Mobility Experiences**
Upper Service Position	Total Cases	**483**	**143**
	Gender (m/f)	(258/225) (53.4%/46.6%)	(74/69) (51.8%/48.2%)
	Mean ***Age***	36.6	36.7
	Average ***Education*** (Mean of CASMIN[2])	7.2 (s = 2.40)	7.9 (s = 2.12)
	Legal Status on Arrival		
	Resettlers	58 (12.0%)	1 (0.7%)
	Germans (Abroad)	9 (1.9%)	5 (3.5%)
	EU Migrants	193 (40.0%)	39 (27.3%)
	Refugees	18 (3.7%)	2 (1.4%)
	Other Foreigners	176 (36.4%)	21 (14.7%)
	Missing Values	29 (6.0%)	75 (52.5%)

[2] The CASMIN (Comparative Analysis of Social Mobility in Industrial Nations) classification (see König, Lüttinger, & Müller, 1988) ranges from 1a ("Inadequately completed general education") to 3b ("Higher tertiary education"). In our descriptive analysis, we coded the lowest educational level with '1' and the highest with '9' and excluded all respondents who are still in school now. The means indicate the average educational level achieved within the different groups and give very general information about the educational level in these groups.

	Average ***Year of Immigration*** to Germany	2004		2009	
	Employment status				
	Full-Time	343	(71.0%)	105	(73.4%)
	Part-Time	84	(17.4%)	20	(14.0%)
	Vocational Training	16	(3.3%)	0	(0.0%)
	Marginally Employed	15	(3.1%)	7	(4.9%)
	Not Employed	25	(5.2%)	11	(7.7%)
Lower Service Position	Total Cases	**616**		**87**	
	Gender (m/f)	(164/452) (26.6%/73.4%)		(21/66) (24.1%/75.9%)	
	Mean ***Age***	36.7		37.4	
	Average ***Education*** (Mean of CASMIN)	5.1 (s = 2.55)		6.3 (s = 2.76)	
	Legal status on Arrival				
	Resettlers	115	(18.7%)	2	(2.3%)
	Germans (Abroad)	10	(1.6%)	2	(2.3%)
	EU Migrants	192	(31.2%)	11	(12.6%)
	Refugees	58	(9.4%)	7	(8.1%)
	Other Foreigners	224	(36.4%)	29	(33.3%)
	Missing Values	17	(2.8%)	36	(41.1%)
	Average ***Year of Immigration*** to Germany	2002		2006	
	Employment status				
	Full-Time	265	(43.0%)	33	(37.9%)
	Part-Time	180	(29.2%)	25	(28.7%)
	Vocational Training	35	(5.7%)	7	(8.1%)
	Marginally Employed	84	(13.6%)	14	(16.1%)
	Not Employed	52	(8.4%)	8	(9.2%)
Manual Working Position	Total Cases	**1,199**		**181**	
	Gender (m/f)	(772/427) (64.4%/35.6%)		(129/52) (71.3%/28.7%)	
	Mean ***Age***	40.5		39.9	
	Average ***Education*** (Mean of CASMIN)	3.9 (s = 2.23)		4.0 (s = 2.29)	
	Legal status on Arrival				
	Resettlers	263	(21.9%)	16	(8.8%)
	Germans (Abroad)	12	(1.0%)	1	(0.6%)
	EU Migrants	380	(31.7%)	20	(11.1%)
	Refugees	115	(9.6%)	4	(2.2%)
	Other Foreigners	405	(33.8%)	36	(19.9%)
	Missing Values	24	(2.0%)	104	(57.5%)
	Average ***Year of Immigration*** to Germany	2002		2008	
	Employment status				
	Full-Time	742	(61.9%)	128	(70.7%)
	Part-Time	192	(16.0%)	18	(9.9%)
	Vocational Training	29	(2.4%)	6	(3.3%)
	Marginally Employed	127	(10.6%)	23	(12.7%)
	Not Employed	107	(8.9%)	6	(3.3%)
	(Sheltered Workshop)	2	(0.2%)	---	

Note. Adapted from the SOEP Migration Sample 2015.

3.3 Legal Status and Average Year of Immigration to Germany

The general description of migrants' legal status upon their arrival in Germany shows a majority of third-country nationals (891 cases) and EU citizens (835). There are also a substantial number of resettlers from Eastern Europe (455) and refugees (204). A comparatively small group comprises Germans who were born or lived abroad (39).

Of interest are the missing values for this variable. The majority of the 285 missing values are distributed in the group with multiple mobility experiences (more than 50% of the values are missing for the upper service and the manual working positions). To determine why respondents were not willing to answer this question regarding legal status, it is necessary to systematically study these missing values in greater detail (especially if the respondents consciously chose not to answer), because the reasons for such a pattern would provide some further insight.

The majority of the migrants in the upper service position are EU citizens, followed by other nationalities outside the EU (for those with a single mobility experience). The largest proportion of third-country migrants can be found in the lower service position. There is also a substantial proportion of EU migrants and resettlers within the single-mobility experience group in the lower service position. The manual working position is dominated by third-country migrants, followed by EU migrants and resettlers. The comparatively largest proportion of refugees can be found in the manual working position with a single mobility experience (115). Although people with one mobility experience tend to have lived in Germany longer (average year of immigration 2002–2004), on average the more mobile ones came later (2006–2009).

3.4 Employment Status

A total of 1,616 (59.7%) respondents are employed full-time, 519 (19.1%) are employed part-time, 93 (3.4%) are receiving vocational training, 270 (10.0%) are employed on a reduced part-time basis (< 25%), 209 (7.7%) are not employed and 2 work in a sheltered workshop for the disabled.

The data show that employees in the upper service and the manual working positions tend to work more often in full-time positions. The upper service position has a small proportion of respondents who do not work but have worked in Germany at least once during their participation in the SOEP. In the lower service position, we see comparatively low proportions of full-time employment in the single- and multiple-mobility experience groups (43.0% and 37.9% respectively) and strong representation in the group of part-time employment (29.2% and 28.7% respectively). This corresponds to the fact that women are overrepresented in this

group, and we know that it is much more likely that women rather than men will be employed part-time, particularly in Germany. The employment arrangements in the manual working position are dominated by full-time employment, with less part-time employment compared with the average.

4. Outlook

This paper documents the construction of mobility and social-position contrast groups that will serve to elaborate a sampling strategy for the planned qualitative interview phase involving members of these different groups of migrants. In total, we plan to conduct about six interviews with members of all six contrast groups (i.e. a total of about 36 interviews). Respondents will be contacted by means of an invitation letter that offers a small financial incentive to participate. The sampling and recruiting process will be conducted in successive waves, because the wide geographical scope, as well as several logistical obstacles to the collaboration of different institutions, prevents us from contacting all the sampled respondents from the six contrast groups at the same time. The experience of other SOEP-based mixed-methods projects indicates that the response rate is relatively low (Legewie & Tucci, 2016), although the number of respondents who belong to contrast groups with a large number of cases and who are available for a qualitative interview might exceed six, should many respondents agree to participate. In this case, we will adapt our design to accommodate additional interviewees. We plan to begin by sending out invitation letters to a sample of 100 cases in the largest contrast groups and will increase this number if the response rate is lower than expected until we arrive at the required number of interviewees in all contrast groups. As described, our sampling strategy is grounded in theoretical assumptions concerning the classifications of social position groups and aims to achieve gender representation in each group. In addition, we want to understand how people, who are not working outside the home or are registered unemployed position themselves. This is why the initial sample frame of 100 cases in each of the six groups will include similar percentages of women and men and also – in as much as this is possible – a substantial share (around 20 %) of respondents who are nonworking or registered as unemployed (Table 6).

Table 6. Description of the Sampling Plan

	Single Mobility Experience	**Multiple Mobility Experiences**
Upper Service Position	100 out of 483 respondents predominantly in NRW	100 out of 143 respondents from all over Germany
Lower Service Position	100 out of 616 respondents predominantly from NRW	All 87 respondents from all over Germany
Manual Working Position	100 out of 1,199 respondents predominantly from NRW	100 out of 181 respondents

Note. NRW = North Rhine–Westphalia.

Conducting the interviews will be challenging, because the respondents may reside anywhere in Germany. In order to make this process easier to manage and less costly, we decided to contact migrants in all three contrast groups with a single mobility experience who actually now live in the federal province of North Rhine–Westphalia, which hosts large numbers of migrants and descendants of migrants.

During the interviews, we will also ask our respondents for permission to link their interviews with the data from the SOEP sample (record linkage) in order to match information from the qualitative interviews with the standardized SOEP data. This will allow us to obtain a wide range of information about the whole household setting and potential other dominant earners in the household from the quantitative sample as one factor in addition to many other key social science variables (e.g. gender, age) that may influence the perception of people's social position. The availability of that information in the SOEP data will make it possible during the qualitative interviews to focus on aspects that are at the core of our research questions but cannot be captured from the survey data.

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