International Perspectives on Migration 14

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Characteristics of Temporary Migration in European-Asian Transnational Social Spaces

Springer

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Volume 14

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ISSN 2214-9805 ISSN 2214-9813 (electronic)
International Perspectives on Migration
ISBN 978-3-319-61257-7 ISBN 978-3-319-61258-4 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-61258-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017953002

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Acknowledgements

This book presents findings of the research project Transnational Migration in Transition: Transformative Characteristics of Temporary Mobility of People (EURA-NET), coordinated by the University of Tampere, Finland (see www.uta.fi/eura-net). The project was funded by the European Union under the scheme Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities, Collaborative project.

This report reflects only the authors' views, and the European Union is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

The authors are most grateful to the interviewees for their willingness to share their views and experiences. Thanks are due as well to a great number of people who helped the authors to find potential research participants and assisted in the conduct of interviews.

The authors also would like to thank Ms. Virginia Mattila and Mr. Jaakko Hyytiä for their great help with proofreading and preliminary copy-editing.

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Temporary Migration in European-Asian Social Spaces

Mustafa Aksakal, Kerstin Schmidt, Mari Korpela, and Pirkko Pitkänen

One of the key tendencies in the contemporary world is the increase in the volumes of people's mobility back and forth between nation-states for various reasons as well as the rise of people's engagement in cross-border social ties. People 'migrate, oscillate, circulate or tour' (O'Reilly 2007: 281) between their home and host countries, which means that they may leave one country, move to a second and then either settle there or return to their native country, or move on to a third.

In addition to considerable numbers of people who are mobile on a voluntary basis, there are also an increasing number of people who are, either temporarily or permanently, forced to leave their native countries, because of wars, natural disasters and other harmful situations. Moreover, it needs to be taken into account that the vast majority of human beings are not willing to migrate or are 'trapped' in their places of origin (Black and Collyer 2014). This latter aspect in particular points to the aspect of selectivity in migration (Haas et al. 2014; Skeldon 2014), indicating that only a small number of the world's population is in a position to engage in cross-border migration. Yet, from a 'mobilities' perspective (Urry 2007), regardless of people's physical immobility, they may be involved in and affected by various

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P. Pitkänen et al. (eds.), *Characteristics of Temporary Migration in European-Asian Transnational Social Spaces*, International Perspectives on Migration 14,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-61258-4_1

forms of mobility which also points to the significance of transnational social spaces (Faist 2000).[1]

Castles and Miller (1993) were among the first migration scholars who sought to provide a comprehensive analysis of the characteristics of the contemporary 'Age of Migration', meaning to identify the causes, processes and consequences of global human movements after the Second World War. Following this perspective, it can be argued that in today's world, many new transformational shifts are emerging. These transformations may shape migration (Castles 2010), or societies are altered in different ways by these human movements (Portes 2010). Some examples that provide insights into this 'migration and transformation nexus' (Faist et al. 2017) can be summed up in the following way: *first*, political and economic change under neoliberal globalisation has increased inequalities on a national and global level (Milanovic 2016; Harvey 2007), representing one major driver for conflicts but also for (temporary) outmigration; *second*, international labour migration, both temporary and circular, continues to be promoted politically in many destination countries (Castles and Ozkul 2014; Piper 2010); *third*, as a consequence, temporary labour movements (Lenard and Straehle 2010), as well as other types of temporary migration (Pitkänen and Korpela 2014), are on the rise; *fourth*, due to technological advances, the chains of transnational movements have lengthened and spread considerably (Pitkänen et al. 2012); and *fifth*, international migration, including temporary forms of movements, has significant effects on source country societies, such as on political processes (Kapur 2014), and on countries of destination, for instance, on the economic and social fabric (OECD 2017; Castles et al. 2014).

These developments not only provide the first indications of the current weight of temporariness and transnationality in international migration but also invite to provide an in-depth analysis of the current characteristics of temporary migration that is achieved by addressing processes and consequences related to human movements in the Asian-European migration context. This coincides with the general objective of this book, namely, to make a contribution to the study of temporary migration in Asian-European social spaces. In particular, the aim of this compilation is to provide from different disciplinary and spatial perspectives comprehensive insights on the reasons why people move on a temporary basis, the experiences they have while migrating temporarily as well as the ways in which different types of temporary migrants engage in transnational social spaces.

The findings discussed in each chapter in this compilation present the outcomes of some selected Asian and European national case studies that were part of the international research project 'Transnational Migration in Transition: Transformative Characteristics of Temporary Mobility of People' (EURA-NET).[2] In the remainder

[1] Social spaces, as understood in this book, refers to cross-border social ties and practices on different societal levels between temporary migrants and non-migrants that link places of origin with transit countries, as well as with previous and present countries of destination (Faist 2000).

[2] The project sought to attain an understanding of current temporary transnational migration between Asian and European countries. For more information on the project, see http://www.uta.fi/eura-net

of this introductory chapter, a general overview of theoretical and methodological accounts is provided with respect to temporary migration. In addition, the guiding questions are introduced, and hypothetical assumptions on influencing factors in temporary migration are discussed.

1.1 Current Temporary Migration Flows Between Asia and Europe

For many years, Asian migration was mainly directed to classical destination countries, such as the USA, Canada and Australia. Especially between 1945 and the early 1970s, Asian migration towards Europe gained in relevance and was based on colonial linkages, and to a minor degree, it was related to bilateral recruitment programmes (Castles et al. 2014).

Nowadays, human movements between Asian and European countries represent an important migratory context. Regarding the migration stocks, Asian migrants, some 19 million people were in 2013 the most important foreign-born group in Europe. Likewise, and in the same year, European sojourners at 7.6 million were one of the most important foreign-born groups in Asia (UN DESA 2013).

Regarding migrant flows, in the period between 2005 and 2010, movements between Asian (including Oceania) and European countries[3] with roughly 3.2 million movements had the highest scores, in comparison to human movements between South and North American and European countries (2.9 million) and African and European countries (2.1 million). Moreover, migratory flows between Asian and European countries increased significantly between the periods of 1990/1995 and 2005/2010 by more than one million movements (Abel and Sander 2014).

Many of these movements represent temporary forms of migration that might be determined either by legal regulations, by migrants' intentions, or by a mixture of both. Moreover, people can be engaged in international migration between the two regions for a variety of purposes including international education, work, humanitarian protection, family reunification and the wish to improve one's quality life elsewhere. In the following paragraphs, annual flows of migrants in particular legal categories to EU countries are briefly discussed.

Accordingly, the number of highly skilled labour migrants who moved from non-EU countries to European Union member states increased between 2011 and 2015 by almost 12%[4], which includes a significant number of Asian highly skilled migrants. In the case of the Netherlands, for example, the number of highly skilled

[3] Abel and Sander (2014) consider in their calculations the most relevant 24 European countries of destination.

[4] Highly skilled migration includes according to the definition of Eurostat highly skilled workers, researchers and EU Blue Card holders. The numbers of this group of highly skilled migrants rose from 42,403 in 2011 to 47,373 in 2015 (Eurostat 2016a).

(temporary) migrants increased from 7210 in 2011 to 9754 in 2015, corresponding to an increase of around 33%. Almost 60% of these temporary labour migrants came from Asian countries, such as India, China and Japan (Eurostat 2016a).

Next to labour migration, the numbers of international students migrating temporarily from non-EU countries to the EU increased between 2011 and 2015 by more than 220% (Eurostat 2016b)[5], whereby many of these students were from Asian countries, such as China, India and South Korea (OECD 2016), and migrated to European countries, such as the UK, France and Germany (UNESCO 2016). In the case of Germany, international student mobility from all Asian countries increased from 66,422 in the winter term 2011/2012 to 88,619 in 2014/2015, corresponding to an increase of more than 33% (Federal Statistical Office 2012, 2015).

Humanitarian migration to the EU has also increased in recent years, and, especially between 2013 and 2015, there was an increase of more than 200%; a significant number of these people originated in the Middle East and other Asian countries.[6] This becomes apparent, for instance, in the case of Hungary, where the numbers of asylum seekers from Asian countries rose almost tenfold, from 18,895 in 2013 to 177,135 in 2015 (Eurostat 2016c).

The number of family members (i.e. spouses, children and other relatives, especially from India, China and Pakistan), joining a non-EU citizen living in the EU, increased albeit by only 2% between 2009 and 2015 (Eurostat 2016d). However, EU country-specific differences exist. For instance, in Finland, the number of family members joining a non-EU citizen rose from 4,828 in 2011 to 5,126 in 2015, corresponding to an increase of almost 20% over 4 years. Around 50% of these family members migrating to Finland came in 2015 from Asian countries, for example, from Thailand, China or the Philippines (Eurostat 2016d).

The discussion on the statistical trends shows that international migration from Asia to Europe is a trend that has been increasing in recent years. Yet this statistical information does not provide insights into the causes of international migration, including the reasons for temporary movements. It has been argued that among the key factors contributing to international migration, including temporary movements, are the growing role of foreign capital and economic activities of multinational corporations (Held et al. 1999), which notably affect societies of the Global South.

In line with this statement, Portes and Walton (1981) observe that 'structural imbalancing', meaning the penetration of subordinated societies by political and economic institutions from the Global North, would increase the labour migration pressure in societies of the Global South (Portes 2006). This is so, because these politico-economic processes cannot only lead to dispossession (Harvey 2007) but likewise undermine common ways of living and working (Sassen 1988) and consequently increase inequalities within societies (Milanovic 2016).

[5] First permits issued for education reasons (study) increased from 145,364 in 2011 to 470,033 in 2015 (Eurostat 2016b).

[6] The numbers refer to rounded aggregated data on asylum and first-time asylum applications and increased from 431,090 in 2013 to 1,322,825 in 2015 (Eurostat 2016c).

The emergence and expansion of global cities (Sassen 2005) may be an additional explanation for rising temporary migration, because global cities have a high attraction for labour migrants due to their high demand for both low and highly skilled migrant workers.

Next to these structural reasons that might give rise to international movements, there are also many factors that facilitate people's mobility in different temporary migrant categories, such as recruitment agencies and human trafficking networks that form part of the 'migration industry' (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013; Xiang and Lindquist 2014) as well as recruitment programmes launched by destination country governments (Castles and Ozkul 2014). In addition, flying has become relatively inexpensive, and it is also easy to communicate over long distances online (Castells 1996; Harvey 1990). In relation to this, people are becoming more embedded in transnational diasporic communities so that they can use existing social networks and social capital (Faist 2000; Massey et al. 1993) to reduce the costs and risks and also to maximise the benefits in migration processes.

Many of these approaches have been invoked in migration studies to explain in general terms why people engage in cross-border mobility. Yet little attention has so far been paid to the systematic study of the characteristics of temporary migration, related to the aspects discussed above which is the main objective of this contribution.

1.2 Explaining Temporary Migration

According to King (2012), temporary labour migration that may refer to the movement of low-skilled or highly skilled workers is one of the categories of human mobility that have received the greatest attention in migration studies. In the past, temporary international migration was approached differently by source and destination countries. From a Global South perspective, the emigration of skilled population segments is often addressed critically as 'brain drain' or 'skill drain' (Ranis 2008). It is discussed in relation to losses of human capital in developing countries, either associated with absent returns on previous educational investments (e.g. the infrastructure for education, the training of teachers, etc.) (Docquier 2006; Langthaler 2008), connected to reducing productivity and per capita income and consequently to decelerated economic outcomes in migrants' countries of origin (Haque and Kim 1995; Lucas 1988) or associated with the loss of important tax revenue (Bhagwati and Hamada 1982).

The return of temporary highly skilled migrants is also seen as less useful for the development of source countries, because both scientific innovations and professional activities, for instance, in global cities – the places to which foreign highly skilled migrants often migrate – would commonly include types of training that are seldom in accordance with the developmental conditions in countries of the Global South (Portes and Walton 1981). In addition, it is argued that highly skilled migration would have only few outcomes for the migrants themselves. This is the case

because their migration would represent only a provision of flexible labour force for high-tech sectors in the Global North, which is frequently associated with unfavourable working conditions (Portes 2008) and 'brain waste' (Matto et al. 2008), meaning insufficient opportunities for social mobility.

In highly industrialised countries, the discussion was guided by different concerns in both academic and political discourses. Debates have pointed to the compensation of labour force shortages in many countries of the Global North after the Second World War through temporary migration, which has also been considered beneficial for migrants (i.e. in acquiring skills and competences) as well as for sending countries, especially after the return of temporary labour (Faist 2008; Kindleberger 1967). In response to these labour shortages in the past, many destination country governments have implemented bilateral recruitment schemes to attract foreign low-skilled workers, as in the guest worker programmes in many European countries (Castles and Kosack 1973; Castles 1986).

Temporary migration is currently a topical issue and understood politically in different ways. For instance, the European Migration Network proposes a very general definition and considers temporary migration as a process that 'involves a one-time only temporary stay and eventual return which closes the migration cycle' (2011: 21). UNESCO (2015a) understands temporary migrants as 'people who migrate for a limited period of time in order to take up employment and send money home', thereby reducing temporary mobility to labour migration and related activities to financial remittances.

Many destination country governments, including more industrialised European countries, are currently considering attracting temporary foreign workers as a part of their national development strategies. Although there may be some differences between the EU member states,[7] it can be argued that highly skilled migrants from non-EU countries are especially in the focus of current political agendas. This consideration points to the fact that from a policy point of view, certain types of temporary migrants are desirable in order to fill sectorial and/or seasonal labour gaps. These gaps may be related to demographic transitions, such as to an ageing population, which can be compensated for by incoming young labour force (Castles 2009) and to better competitiveness in the global markets, that is, the need to recruit labour with special skills or inexpensive labour force. Therefore governments, including those of European countries, have publicly discussed the temporary stays of highly skilled migrants – often with decidedly positive connotations – and have tried to create appropriate legal instruments to provide newly arriving temporary migrants with access to the domestic labour market.

From a critical viewpoint, it has been argued that temporary migration schemes in classical destination countries have served to reduce the social and political costs of migration. This means that the demands of employers are satisfied, while the idea that the migrants will not stay is thought to allay public fears and hostilities.

[7] For example, Korpela, Hyytiä and Pitkänen (in this book) note that in Finland, next to highly skilled, also low-skilled migrants represent a significant temporary migrant category, as seen in the case of seasonal berry pickers from Thailand.

In addition, it also entails that labour rights, entitlements as well as broader participation in society can be more easily restricted when migrants are only staying for a limited period of time (Castles and Ozkul 2014; Lenard and Straehle 2010). Some scholars argue that curtailing of labour rights and exclusion from entitlements and participation in public spheres may match with the general willingness of temporary migrants to accept unfavourable living and working conditions that are not only lower than the standards pertaining to the local population but also below the immigrants' living conditions prior to migration. This is so, because temporary stays are often linked to people's long-term intentions, potentially involving return or onward migration (Bauböck 2011; Ottonelli and Torresi 2012).

Sometimes these critical reflections are not only limited to temporary migration but also discussed in relation to circular forms of migration, meaning 'regular, repeated temporary labour migration' (Vertovec 2007: 3). In this regard, Skeldon (2012) argues that managing circular migration would mean introducing a range of institutional barriers that lead to the conversion of circular migration into a 'programme of temporary migration by another name' (Skeldon 2012: 53). This consideration indicates that circular and temporary migration schemes implemented by destination countries can sometimes pursue very similar objectives, namely, to 'bring in labour but not people' (Wickramasekara 2011: 86) which also shows the strong connection between the two concepts in political discussions.

Alongside these political debates, there are various academic approaches that address temporary migration and particularly emphasise migrant agency, such as those studies that focus on motivations for engaging in temporary migration. Piore (1979) introduces the term 'target earning' to explain that one important objective of temporary labour migrants is to accumulate sufficient financial resources abroad in order to build a house, start a small business or invest in other types of assets on returning home. It should also be noted, however, that many temporary migrants need to borrow money in order to be able to become temporary migrants abroad and they must then first earn enough money to pay back their debts (often with significant interest).

Other scholars discuss the motivational factors in relation to the objective of achieving a better income as well as improved labour conditions. Steiner and Velling (1994) discuss these motivational drivers in the context of guest worker immigration to Germany, and Constant and Massey (2003) address these factors in the case of labour immigration to the USA. Again, for the case of the USA, Massey and Akresh (2006) find that life satisfaction in the destination country and assets in the country of origin have an influence on the organisation of migration and decisions about the stays abroad. Guarnizo (2003) discusses this topic in relation to the expectations of non-migrants, such as families and friends, as a relevant factor for decisions on the length of stay. Bauböck (2011) also seeks to conceptualise temporariness and discusses aspects that potentially influence the duration of stay of international migrants. On this account, he proposes making a distinction between three different analytical spheres of temporariness: first, as an 'objective social fact', it refers to real-life events characterised by a concrete temporary stay in a destination country that is concluded after a certain period through return or onward movements.

Second, as a 'subjective expectation', it can be understood as a stay abroad limited in time that is 'subjectively intended' by the migrant. The scholar argues that the length of stay can be affected by changing migrants' future plans that 'can then conflict with non-corresponding expectations in the wider society about their departure' (Bauböck 2011: 670). Third, 'normative constraints' represent another way of perceiving temporariness, meaning that temporary migration can refer to 'legally prescribed' frameworks that formally legitimise or prohibit the duration of stay by law. Moreover, normative constraints may be linked to moral norms that 'are invoked primarily when disputing the normative validity of such legal permissions and prohibitions and when proposing alternative justifications for temporary admission or permanent residence rights' (Bauböck 2011: 670) by migrants individually or collectively. The modes of subjective expectation and moral norms emphasises especially the role of people's agency in temporary migration, because migrants' intentions prior to and during their stays abroad involve many decisive factors that might shape migrants' behaviours and patterns, such as those expressed in the ways of incorporation into the destination society and labour market (Ottonelli and Torresi 2012).

The Asian and European country chapters in this book illustrate that legal norms and political practices on the level of the EU and the EU member states to control and manage migration flows can have an influence on temporary migrants and their subjective expectations, but that they do not guarantee that mobile people stay for a predefined duration, because migrant behaviours and intentions may subvert these political intentions in many different ways. This also means that intentions and legal barriers can be conflicting (Bauböck 2011) or exert influence over each other and that therefore separate analysis of both aspects is hardly useful.

Several scholarly contributions focus critically on existing political discussions and measures for temporary migration not only because the perspective of the destination country but also because temporary migration is emphasised in a rather uncritical way (Lenard 2014; Sager 2014; Piper 2010). Although these pivotal considerations constitute reasonable criticism, many of these studies limit their focus to temporary low-skilled labour migration.

However, there are many good reasons (e.g. the increasing relevance of human trafficking networks, technological advances in recent years and consequently the expansion of transnational support networks) to consider that next to labour migration; there are also other relevant types of migration significant for temporary mobilities, including movements between Asia and Europe. In addition, also the previously noted causes for migration not only provide important insights to the structural conditions for the temporary outmigration of labour forces but also have the potential to explain why people who are not searching for work move to other places.

That the movement of distinct migrant categories gains in importance is also confirmed by Castles et al. (2014), who argue that not only are the numbers of labour migrants moving towards new industrial economies growing fast but also violent conflicts are leading to mass movements of displaced people, especially

from the less developed regions. Additionally, it can be argued that new types of mobility are also emerging as increasing numbers of people move temporarily for education, marriage or retirement or in search of new lifestyles abroad, which also holds true for temporary migration between Asian and European countries.

1.3 Categories of Temporary Migrants

Pitkänen and Carerra (2014) identify international students, highly skilled professionals, low-skilled workers, family members, lifestyle migrants, humanitarian migrants and undocumented migrants as migrant categories that exist increasingly on a temporary basis. In practice, these categories may be overlapping, and an individual may change his/her status from one category to another over time. Many temporary movements in the noted categories are relevant in both directions, meaning that they proceed from Asian to European countries and vice versa, which may also include return migration. In addition, in different country cases, some of the categories may be more relevant than in others; the national case studies presented in this compilation reveal these differences. The most relevant temporary migrant categories can be defined as follows:

(a) *International students* can be defined as a type of international migrants who have left their country of origin temporarily and moved to another country in order to pursue education (OECD 2013). Student mobility can be differentiated into credit and degree mobility; while credit mobility refers to international students spending an exchange semester in a foreign university, degree mobility refers to enrolment in an entire degree programme abroad (Cairns 2014; King and Ragharum 2013).

(b) *Highly skilled migrants* are often perceived by destination country authorities as temporary migrants who possess 'a university degree or extensive/equivalent experience in a given field' (Iredale 2001: 8). There are also other considerations that are not linked to education, but, for instance, are related to occupation or salary levels (Parsons et al. 2014). The employment sectors of highly skilled persons may vary from local private companies to multinationals and also include education and health care in the public sectors (Cerna 2010). Next to many male temporary migrants engaged, for example, in the IT industry, female migrants may also be involved in temporary labour schemes. In fact, there are certain programmes that serve as formal channels through which female workers from the countries of the Global South are recruited to work in the countries of the Global North, as becomes evident in the 'triple win' programme that organises temporary nurses from the Philippines to work in German hospitals (Aksakal and Schmidt 2015).

(c) *Low-skilled migrants* can be approached in two ways, either on the basis of the requirements for the job or on the educational level of the person who accomplishes it. Therefore, low-skilled temporary migrants 'can be either a

characteristic of the job or a characteristic of the worker' (Chaloff 2008: 127). While the needs of employers and the prerequisites of recruitment programmes focus on the level of skills required for the job, immigration policies focus on the migrants' level of education. The latter is in line with the definition by the OECD, suggesting that 'low-skilled are those whose education is less than upper secondary' (2011: 56). A particular category of low-skilled workers are the agricultural seasonal workers, for instance, those temporarily employed in the berry picking or the asparagus harvesting industries.

(d) *Family migrants* are defined by the UN as 'people sharing family ties joining people who have already entered an immigration country' (UNESCO 2015a). The right to family reunion for legal migrants is recognised by many countries, with the exception of some contract labour systems. Migration in the context of family reunification in most cases refers to spouses and children joining family members who are migrating or have previously migrated. Therefore the length of stay of the family members is usually linked to the length of stay of the migrant who (temporarily) works (or studies) in the destination country. Another form of family-related migration occurs when foreign spouses join partners already resident in the destination country in order to live together (Aksakal and Schmidt-Verkerk 2014). This form of family-related migration is typically more permanent, unless families decide to move on to live in another country or the relationship ends in divorce.

(e) *Lifestyle migrants* encompasses people from affluent industrialised countries 'migrating in search of a better quality of life' (Benson and O'Reilly 2009: 609), usually to destinations with a favourable climate and lower living costs in relation to the country of origin. These people may be involved in formal or informal labour markets, but, rather than pursuing career development, they move abroad in order to find a more meaningful and relaxed way of life. Life at the destination is often understood as more authentic than in one's native country, and the choice to live abroad is typically conceptualised as an escape from hectic, consumer-oriented lifestyles, the 'rat race', diminishing income opportunities and stressful working environments (Benson and O'Reilly 2009; Korpela 2010). Some Asian countries (e.g. Thailand and Malaysia) have particular visa categories for wealthy and healthy retirees, but in many countries lifestyle migrants reside on repeatedly renewed tourist visas.

(f) *Humanitarian migrants* may refer to both 'refugees' and 'asylum seekers'. The 1951 Geneva Convention defines refugees as people who are outside the country of their nationality 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion' (UNHCR 2006: 16). An asylum seeker is defined as someone who 'has applied for protection as a refugee and is awaiting the determination of his or her status' (UNESCO 2015b). In our project focusing on temporary migration, we included refugees and asylum seekers because, although many of them wish to settle in the destination on a permanent basis, in practice many end up being there only temporarily, either because they are not allowed to stay or because they move onward by their own choice.

Finally, it can be argued that many of these categories (e.g. international student mobility or humanitarian migration) have existed for many decades, but, as noted above, the number of human movements in these categories has risen dramatically in recent years. So far the literature has hardly perceived mobile people beyond labour migrants as temporary. This may be related to the fact that certain types of human movements have been and continue to be discussed in isolation from labour migration, as becomes apparent in the literature on student mobility, humanitarian or lifestyle migration. However, legal frameworks in many classical and newly emerging destination countries in the Global North and the Global South have enacted legal measures that provide these migrant categories with only temporary residence permits. Next to these legal constraints, subjective expectations merit consideration because, as will be discussed throughout the book, many mobile people involved in the temporary migration categories introduced above have different intentions prior to their departure from what they state later. This means that temporary migrants may initially plan to achieve their objectives in a limited period of time and thereafter to engage either in return or onward migration. Beyond the question if and why these intentions change during the stays, another question that emerges is what the consequences of both legal constraints and subjective expectations are for migrants and for destination and source countries. One response to these open questions might be related to temporary migrants' transnational engagements, a topic that this book seeks especially to address from different geographical angles.

1.4 Temporariness and Transnationality

Contrary to other approaches to international migration, the transnational perspective is one of the few viewpoints that emphasise migrants' agencies (Castles 2010; Faist 2010; Portes 1996) without limiting mobile people's motivations, behaviours and transactions to economic rationales, such as assumed in neoclassical theory (Harris and Todaro 1970; Massey et al. 1993; Sjaastad 1962). Moreover, studies on migrants' transnationality make it possible to avoid 'methodological nationalism' (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2003), which refers to the assumption that nation-states and related societies represent the natural framework of societal life. As a consequence, by considering national societies as appropriate units of analysis for studying social dynamics, social scientists have assumed that these societies represent an analytical container. This also holds true for migration studies, in which, for instance, immigration and the integration of incoming foreigners have been addressed from the national perspective of destination countries. As a side effect, the political interests of destination countries were conflated with academic objectives (Castles 2007).

In this broader methodological debate, the importance of the nation-states and their respective societies is not ignored, but it is argued that a transnational angle, i.e. using cross-border units of analysis, a range of migration experiences that

previously could not considered can now be studied and theorised (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2003). One of these units of analysis can be identified as migrants' transnationality (Portes et al. 1999), which refers to international migrants' cross-border ties and social practices with relevant non-migrants (e.g. family members, friends), left behind in their places of origin, previous destination countries or elsewhere. In other words, this means that the 'transnational perspective' focuses on the 'processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement' (Basch et al. 1994: 6).

The result of migrants' and relevant non-migrants' continuous transactions is social formations, defined as transnational social spaces (Faist 2000). These spaces comprise migrant networks, which are important for co-ordinating and operationalising cross-border social practices, such as on a collective-level civil society activism and the strategic planning of common goals. They are defined as channels connecting 'migrants and non-migrants across time and space [through which] information, assistance and obligations' are exchanged' (Boyd 1989: 641). Very different transnational spaces may emerge, such as transnational kinship groups (e.g. households, families and other kinship relations), transnational circuits (e.g. advocacy networks, business or science networks) or transnational communities (Faist 2000). In addition, there is a transnational mindset: individuals may be socially rooted in several places, sometimes discussed under the concept of 'transnational identities' (Massey and Sanchez 2005; Vertovec 2001), 'transnational citizenship' (Faist 2007; Smith 2010) or 'flexible citizenship' (Ong 1999).

The introduction of the transnational approach was undeniably a significant achievement for migration studies, because it made it possible to address different aspects of migrant agency. Cross-border migration studies have paid keen attention to the relationship between migrants' transnationality and international circular migration (Skeldon 2012) and settled migration (Dahindem 2010). Only in a few studies have particular categories relevant to temporary migration been investigated with regard to their transnational linkages. One example is seen in the study by Saxenian (2005) on 'brain circulation'. The author found that Chinese and Indian highly skilled migrants, who after graduating studied and worked in Silicon Valley, were able to build start-up companies in their countries of origin after their return. As temporary migrants in the USA, they developed transnational business networks, in which they were also embedded after their return. Through these links, they were able to engage frequently in technological and knowledge transfers between the country of origin and the USA. Next to the noted investments and knowledge transfers, these actors, according to Saxenian, were also able to achieve political shifts in their home countries.

In the case of Germany, Schüller and Schüler-Zhou (2013) show how Chinese international students, at the individual level and through alumni associations on a collective level, maintain strong transnational links to families, communities and state institutions in China and thereby continue to interact with people in their place of origin and to demonstrate loyalty to the homeland. These examples illustrate how temporary migrants develop cross-border links during their stays abroad.

Despite the increasing relevance of both immigration policies that foster temporary recruitment schemes and the increasing number of mobile people engaged in temporary migration, there seems to be no general conceptualisation that systematically links migrants' transnationality and temporariness. The transnational lens is a useful approach to overcome both theoretical and methodological limitations in studying temporary migration; the strength of this perspective is that it makes it possible to address how social lives and relationships among migrants and their friends and relatives are subject to alteration by border-crossing formations. Regarding temporary migration, this can mean that cross-border ties may influence the choice of particular destination regions, migrants' intentions and behaviours. Certainly, not all temporary international migrants are necessarily engaged transnationally, nor does the transnational approach provide an all-encompassing explanation for temporary migration, because other influential aspects, for instance, those related to the destination country, may also be relevant (e.g. discrimination and xenophobia).

However, the transnational perspective provides an additional analytical tool to address the characteristics of contemporary temporary migration, which is also reflected in each chapter of this book. In light of ongoing advances in communication and transportation technologies, it can be assumed that a growing number of international temporary migrants' lives will be characterised by transnational relationships and frequent transactions in transnational social spaces. Consequently, transnationality may influence more and more migrants' motivations and behaviours. Understanding these social processes entails not only analysing the conceptions and experiences of migrants but also those of non-migrants located in countries of origin, transit or previous and present destination. This suggests that there is a need to produce more appropriate information on the current transnational features of temporary migrants in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the dynamics related to subjective expectations and factors in previous destination and source countries that may influence migratory trajectories.

With regard to the various relevant temporary migrant categories introduced above, it seems especially important to understand which forms of expression transnational social spaces assume and what kinds of political, economic and social practices are present in each category. Next to migrants' experiences in their countries of origin, this can provide a comprehensive understanding of the social processes involved in temporary migration. Related to these and other research gaps discussed above, the following questions are of particular interest:

1. Why do people migrate on a temporary basis and not permanently?
2. What are the daily experiences of various types of temporary migrants? And how does temporariness affect their migration experiences?
3. How does temporary migrants' transnationalism appear in the European-Asian transnational social spaces?

To answer these questions, in the EURA-NET project, the Asian-European social space was taken as the main unit of analysis for several reasons. First, the primary axis of the current international migration is along the states in the south to the north and from the east to the west. Second, Asia is a region experiencing particularly

intense emigration to Europe, often with the expectation of an eventual return to the country of origin or onward movements. English-speaking countries have attracted most migration flows, but recent developments show that non-English-speaking EU member states have also become popular among Asian migrants. It is likely that this development will continue, particularly in light of Brexit and the related efforts by the UK governments to restrict migration, including highly skilled and international student mobility. Third, not only do Chinese, Indians, Filipinos, Thais and other Asians have an increasing presence in Europe, but Europeans also increasingly move to different Asian countries. In many cases, these migratory movements are temporary in nature (Pitkänen and Korpela 2014). However, it is evident that migratory movements from Asia to the EU and from the EU to Asia are unbalanced in terms of volume; whereas the number of Asian migrants going to the EU has markedly increased, migration from Europe to Asia is still modest according to the statistics. According to Eurostat (2016e), inflows from Asian countries to the EU amounted in 2014 to 251,823,[8] and the number of emigrants from the EU to Asian countries amounted to 87,219.[9] It is worth noting that the significant difference in numbers remains even when taking into consideration that many Europeans who reside temporarily in Asia have not registered their sojourns in their European native countries, and thus these stays do not appear in the statistics.

Nevertheless, the picture emerging in the country reports of the EURA-NET project (see Pitkänen and Carerra 2014; Pitkänen and Korpela 2014) is that many Europeans are adopting increasingly mobile transnational lifestyles and Asia is an increasingly popular destination. In relation to temporary migration, it is relevant to consider the role of external aspects that may be linked to sending, transit and/or receiving societies and how they influence subjective expectations and migration behaviours, including the duration of stay. This suggests that temporary transnational migration can be perceived as a more or less ongoing process, the trajectory of which depends to a large extent on diverse politico-legal, socio-economic and sociocultural factors located in different places that might affect distinct types of temporary migrants in different ways. Hypothetically the following can be argued for:

Influential factors in the politico-legal sphere: The governments of wealthy destination countries in particular aim to manage cross-border migration, which is often expressed in immigration policies that are selective in nature (Beine et al. 2015; De Haas et al. 2014). Although migration policies may often fall short of predefined goals (Bhagwati 2003) and thus have unintended consequences (Castles 2004), they may shape – regardless of the political purpose – the trajectories, general experiences and intentions of temporary migrants. For those temporary migrants from Asia living in the UK, this means that after Brexit in 2017, they may fear

[8] Data from Germany, Greece, France, Cyprus, Malta, Poland, Portugal and the UK are not provided by Eurostat; consequently these countries are not considered in this number.

[9] Data from the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, France, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Austria Poland, Portugal, Romania and the UK are not provided by Eurostat and are not included in this number.

restrictions to their career/educational opportunities or living conditions that may convince them, contrary to their initial purpose of staying for a certain period of time in the UK, to move on to another EU country or even to return to their countries of origin.[10]

Highly skilled migrants may enter certain EU countries through the Blue Card scheme, which means that at the beginning of their stay they are officially temporary migrants. As highly skilled migrants working in sectors with labour shortages are supported substantially by host country governments in obtaining a fixed-term resident permit after a certain length of time (e.g. in the cases of Germany and Finland after 4 years), temporary migrants may decide, contrary to their initial intentions, to stay long term.

Furthermore, from a transnational viewpoint, it can be argued that currently many countries of origin are interested in maintaining close links to their citizens abroad, such as discussed by Caĝlar (2006) for the case of Turkish local governments' engagement with their citizens living in Germany. In some cases this also means that governments are aiming to attract them back home for instance by offering highly skilled migrants new incentives as returnees and promoting these through transnational channels.[11]

Influential factors in the socio-economic sphere: As earlier research has shown, migrants' motivations for permanent or temporary stays abroad are often related to achieving better incomes and working conditions. Especially in the case of highly skilled temporary migration, this can mean that the availability of adequate employment opportunities, wages and working conditions, related to the expectations of personal career advancement, is important and affects decisions about the length of sojourn and the migratory trajectory. Decisions about the length of stay may also be influenced by economic conditions and developments in the places of origin. For example, an economic boom may make return particularly lucrative. Influential socio-economic factors may not only be relevant for labour migrants but also for international students, whose primary intention is to enter a particular host country temporarily with the objective of completing university studies. Most receiving EU countries provide graduate students with an opportunity to stay after graduation in order to seek for an appropriate job in the host country, such as in the cases of Finland, Germany and the Netherlands. Hence, if the economies in the receiving countries offer adequate working and career opportunities, the probability that international graduates will stay on is relatively high. This implies that migrants may

[10] The migratory conditions occasioned by the Brexit referendum in the summer of 2016 and the UK's request in early spring 2017 to exit the EU were at the time of this research not relevant and at the time of the publication of this book still very uncertain. Travis (2017), for instance, in a recent report in The Guardian suggests that the net temporary inflows into the UK decreased sharply after the referendum. Yet, there is no certainly about the consequences for migration flows after the Brexit petition, neither is there certainty about the effects on migrant trajectories of those who already lived in the UK previous to the Brexit negotiations.

[11] Fangmeng and Xiaojiang (in this book) for the case of China and Rajan, Suresh and Mahalingam (in this book) for the case of India found that both of these sending countries are very actively engaged in return.

change their intentions from staying temporarily to staying longer than they intended or longer than their legal status initially permitted. Socio-economic factors in the countries of origin may also influence the length of stay, for example, when economic conditions deteriorate and additional capital is required through migrant earnings, leading to an extension of the stay abroad. In contrast, transnational ties to family, friends and professional contacts may serve as social capital through which information on occupational opportunities in the country of origin is exchanged. This information may offer international students incentives to return without taking up employment after graduation, which may not have been their intention at the beginning of the sojourn.

Influential factors in the sociocultural sphere: Migrants' intentions and the final decision to stay or leave may also be influenced by sociocultural conditions in different societal spheres. Particularly in the destination society, this means that migrants who may be granted the right to permanent residence may decide in the course of their stay to leave earlier than intended due to difficulties in their integration process, including linguistic and cultural difficulties or experienced hostility (Castles 2013). For instance, humanitarian migrants or highly skilled migrants who are granted the right to permanent residence may change their status from permanent to temporary migrants by returning to the home country or by moving on to a third country, for instance, because they or their families experienced discrimination in everyday life or fear violent attacks. On the other hand, social conditions in the country of origin may influence the duration of stay, for instance, related to a more appealing lifestyle and a perceived greater freedom for personal development in the country of destination, leading to the intention to stay longer than initially envisaged. Or alternatively, one may miss one's native country and the people there, and this may contribute to an earlier than intended return. From a cross-border perspective, familial responsibilities in the source or previous destination countries may constitute an important reason for leaving earlier than initially planned.

As this brief consideration shows, migrants' intentions may change during the migration process, because diverse real-life developments may influence people's intentions and change temporary sojourns into permanent ones and vice versa or even lead to different patterns of migration. Moreover, some people have more freedom than others to choose their destination and how long they stay there, meaning that while for some migrants decisions on temporariness are voluntary, for others the duration of stay is determined by force of circumstances. Analytically, it is also important to consider time as a crucial aspect in temporary migration. This means that next to formal aspects, migrants' experiences in the course of their living in a destination country may shape their intentions, including the duration of stay. To address these various, sometimes interlinked factors affecting people's decisions to stay or leave, it seems appropriate to analyse temporary migration in relation to politico-legal, socio-economic and sociocultural factors located in places of origin, destination and transit.

1.5 Methodological Approach of the Study

As discussed in the preceding sections, temporary movements are an underresearched social phenomenon in current migration studies. The EURA-NET project sought to bridge this gap. The study could not focus on all migration from EU countries nor embrace human movements from all relevant Asian countries but captures a selection of countries that are on the one hand insufficiently studied and at the same time represent increasingly relevant national entities in the Asian-European migration context.

The study therefore focused on five non-English-speaking European Union countries (Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary and the Netherlands), because less research has been done on them and they have also been less popular migration destinations. Moreover, two European (Turkey and Ukraine) and four most significant Asian countries (China, India, the Philippines and Thailand) are included in the study.

Migration scholars have argued that to study human mobility adequately, it is useful to carry out an interdisciplinary (Favell 2008; King 2012), multi-scalar (Caĝlar and Glick Schiller 2015; Castles 2007) and comparative (Martiniello 2013) analysis. Following these claims, the EURA-NET research consortium was composed of interdisciplinary research teams from Asian and European countries, and in the chapters of this book, they address features of temporary migration in countries of origin, transit and destination. The authors address these features from the disciplinary perspectives of sociology, political sciences, demography, economics, ethnology, social anthropology, education and human geography. To grasp the very different aspects that shape temporary migration, the case studies address influential factors at the macro-, meso- or micro-level, which means that several contributions focus on two or even all three scales. Moreover, the authors engage in each chapter in comparative analysis of different temporary migrant categories, which will be complemented in the conclusion by a wider comparison of temporary migration features between the countries studied.

To capture the vast variety of people engaged in temporary migration, the project addressed the type of spatial movements which last between 3 months and 5 years, with variations in this range depending on the migrant category. This was based on the fact that within the EU policy framework, stays of less than 3 months are typically defined as tourism and do not require a residence permit, while people staying longer than 5 years are considered long-term residents. In addition, we included seasonal agricultural labourers who come to work in the EU countries on a 90-day Schengen visa. To sum up, rather than people's touristic activities, the research project was interested in the mobility of people whose motivation is related to work, education, lifestyle, protection or family reunification.

Transnational practices and the lived experiences of individual migrants were made visible through semi-structured interviews among people with experiences of temporary migration between Europe and Asia. Interviews were conducted in China, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, the Netherlands, the Philippines,

Thailand, Turkey and Ukraine. Some of these countries are predominantly migrant receiving societies (Finland, Germany, the Netherlands), while others typify migrant-sending societies (China, India, the Philippines, Thailand), and some are so-called transit countries (Turkey, Greece, Hungary and Ukraine). It is important to acknowledge that in practice, all the above-mentioned countries actually send and receive migrants and the aspect of transit migration is likewise to some extent relevant for a range of countries considered.

When conducting the interviews, account was taken that transnational migration may affect both those who migrate and those who 'stay behind' and that transnational movements are not just one-way flows from 'source' to 'destination' but rather a dynamic process consisting of a sequence of events across time and space and that the migratory flows involve people not officially defined as 'migrants' (e.g. degree students, lifestyle migrants[12]). Thus the target groups of respondents included both migrants and non-migrants, not just movers but also former movers (returnees) and non-movers (those who have not left home, e.g. family members of migrants living in the country of origin).

A total of 883 interviews were conducted among highly skilled professionals, low-skilled workers, university students, family-based migrants, humanitarian migrants (refugees, asylum seekers), returnees and migrants' family members staying behind. In some countries the group of respondents also included entrepreneurs. The number of respondents in each country was about 80. The interviews were completed in winter and spring 2015, just before the massive increase in humanitarian migration flows from Asia, particularly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, to European countries.

In each county, the respondents were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure that different groups of temporary transnational migrants were equally represented in the group of respondents (the size of each sample was proportional to the relative size of the group in the country in question). The interviewees included men and women, representing diverse national, educational and religious backgrounds and social classes. People were interviewed at various geographical locations in the project countries. Interviewees were gathered by using 'snowball methods', with the help of social media, migrant organisations and relevant NGOs.

The interviewees were asked the same questions in all the participating countries, with minor modifications depending on the context and the type of the interviewee. The questions were first formulated in English and then translated into local languages. Interpreters were used when needed. The questions covered the following themes: migratory background, characteristics of the interviewees' transnational activities and ties, their adaptation to local and transnational contexts as well as the consequences of temporary migration in the lives of the interviewees and their family members. The interviews were conducted predominantly face to face; telephone and Skype were used in a few specific cases. All the interviewees signed

[12] Lifestyle migrants are seldom a recognised category at all but considered tourists in spite of their long sojourns at the destination.