

# Travelling academics

Global citizens or short-term visitors?

*A focus on cosmopolitanism and identity construction amongst foreign PhD students and postdocs in Nijmegen, the Netherlands*

Micky Out  
Master thesis Human Geography

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## Summary

This thesis will focus on the identity construction of academics and scientists in relation to the concept of cosmopolitanism. This group of professionals is often overlooked in research concerning high skilled migration. This type of migration is growing in numbers with many countries now competing for high skilled labour. Still, there is not much known about travelling academics. However, mobility is increasingly becoming a requirement for an academic career. This makes travelling academics an interesting topic for research.

Two main concepts are at the basis of this thesis: identity construction and cosmopolitanism. The first three chapters will deal with operationalising these concepts. Different theories about cosmopolitanism and identity construction will be presented and critically examined. Identity is seen as a fluid concept, as individuals have multiple identities and identities can change. There are also several definitions of cosmopolitanism, but this thesis will focus on world citizenship as a form of cosmopolitanism. These two main concepts will then be brought together and linked to high skilled migrants, with a focus on academics and scientists (i.e. PhD students and postdocs). As a result, nine different variables will be determined as being important for the identity construction of academics and scientists. These nine variables are as follows: culture, language, social network, education, nationality, citizenship, cosmopolitanism, profession and mobility (in no specific order). These variables are central to the analysis of the collected data.

The experiences of the respondents will be the focus of the next chapters. The variables will be analysed and illustrated with several quotes to give the reader an insight into the daily experiences of the respondents. The analysis shows how mobility has impacted the lives of the respondents. Both positive and negative experiences will be heard. Although the respondents might share some characteristics, that does not mean that their identities will develop along the same lines. The analysis will show that cosmopolitanism is not one of the main aspects of their identity construction. There is much more to uncover about their identity. The respondents do have cosmopolitan experiences and have some cosmopolitan characteristics, but their identity is not centred around cosmopolitanism. As it turns out, local attachment is still important for the identity construction of the respondents. It makes them feel like they belong somewhere and it makes them feel at home. Although some respondents do identify as world citizens, they still value local attachment. Becoming mobile did not make them feel less attached to their country of birth, it only made them feel more attached to multiple places.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

In March 2016, Ross Douthat wrote a column in the New York Times titled “The Myth of Cosmopolitanism”. He describes the often typical image that we have of a true cosmopolitan: Western, educated, rich, eager to assimilate to foreign cultures, democratic and, above all, a global citizen. Cosmopolitans travel all around the world, from one global city to another and ‘... wherever the citizen of the world travels he already feels at home.’ (Douthat, 2016, p. 1). Globalisation has provided us with easier ways to travel, new forms of communication and technological revolutions. We can no longer be ignorant of world affairs with Wi-Fi hotspots popping up at every corner of the street and the media livestreaming international events. Will we then see an increase in cosmopolitans? Will this lead to global citizens attending global universities, while living in global cities and working, travelling and socializing with other global citizens? Douthat (2016) is rather critical of the term cosmopolitanism. According to him, cosmopolitans are not really on the hunt for new cultural experiences, they rather seek comfort and familiarity. He argues that global cities are interchangeable and therefore the cultural openness of cosmopolitans can be questioned (ibid.).

However, cosmopolitanism has not lost its meaning. In December 2016, Gianpiero Petriglieri wrote an article called “In Defense of Cosmopolitanism”. He argues that cosmopolitanism is still relevant today. While cosmopolitanism is often aligned with globalisation, they are not the same. He stresses that ‘...cosmopolitanism is what might help us counter nationalism and humanize globalization, pushing it to be a vehicle of freedom and opportunity for most, not just a privileged few.’ (Petriglieri 2016, p. 1). Cosmopolitanism is not just a theoretical concept. Nigel Warburton (2013) also has great hope for cosmopolitanism, because it offers ‘... a philosophical stance that transforms our outlook, a starting point for thinking about our place in the world.’ (Warburton 2013, p. 1).

### §1.1 Context

The roots of the word “cosmopolitanism” can be traced back to the Greek words *Kosmos* (universe) and *polis* (city) – meaning “world citizenship” or “citizen of the world”. The origin of this word is derived from the Greek philosopher Cynic Diogenes. When Diogenes was asked where he came from, in the fourth century BCE, he replied that ‘I am a citizen of the world [*kosmopolitês*].’ (Kleingeld and Brown 2014). Since this term was first coined around the fourth century BCE, its meaning has changed over the years. Vertovec and Cohen (2002)

argue that cosmopolitanism can be seen in different ways. It can be: a socio-cultural condition; a kind of philosophy or world-view; a political project towards building transnational institutions; a political project for recognizing multiple identities; an attitudinal or dispositional orientation; and/or a mode of practice or competence (ibid., p. 9). There is a wide variety of views that can be called cosmopolitanism (Nederveen Pieterse 2006, p. 1251), but this master thesis will focus on the concept of “world citizenship”.

The concept of cosmopolitanism implies an increased connectedness with people from all around the world. By being a citizen of the world, the social environment of cosmopolitans is not confined to their country of birth or a particular nation-state. A term that is often used to describe the complex of related processes that has led to the increased interconnectedness of social life in our modern world, is globalisation. Globalisation promotes intercultural communication through media, travel and migration, which brings people from different societies into direct contact with each other (Pacione 2009, p. 3-7). Castles et al. (2014) argue that recent studies have observed greater mobility in different parts of the world (e.g. Asia, Africa, Latin-America) as a result of globalisation. This increased mobility is facilitated by new transport and communication technologies, making it easier for migrants to stay in touch with their families and travel back and forth more often (ibid., p. 4-6). ‘In a world transformed by the digital revolution and complex globalisation processes, international migrations enable transnational everyday practices still unheard of as recently as a decade ago.’ (Nedelcu 2012, p. 1340). Cosmopolitanism is often linked to migration. When migrants travel around the world and spend time in different countries and different cultures, the expectation is that these migrants will adapt an open attitude towards cultural differences. They will no longer feel bounded to their nation-state or country of birth, but become global citizens (Kothari 2008, p.506-512; Skrbis and Woodward 2013, p. 2-11).

### §1.1.1 Wanted: high skilled migrants

Over the years, the number of migrants has increased. People have different reasons to migrate, but according to several authors high skilled migration is growing in numbers (see Hercog 2008; Harvey 2008; Burgers & Touburg 2013; Mahroum 2000; Mahroum 2001; Kim 2010; Ackers 2005; Kothari 2008). Most OECD countries have realised that high skilled migration will enhance their economies; states increasingly encourage and facilitate the migration of high skilled workers (Chiswick 2005). Metka Hercog (2008) and Beechler and Woodward (2008) even observe a global “battle for talent” where countries compete for

highly skilled labour' (Hercog 2008, p. 19). Many developed countries experience a shortage of adequately skilled workers and therefore start initiatives to attract high skilled migrants, who are eager to settle outside their home countries. 'The globalization of the economy and multinational corporations means that national borders are less relevant for the movement of not only goods and capital, but also people – with this movement being most cost effective for high-skilled workers.' (Chiswick 2005, p. 5). For example, countries can offer economic incentives (e.g. favourable tax regulations, wage distribution), possibilities for permanent settlement, access to social security provisions (e.g. health insurance, child benefits), recognition of foreign qualifications or provide more security for migrants and their families. However, the decision to migrate can be based on a number of aspects. Thus, it is important to '... take into account the political, economic and cultural structure of countries of origin and host countries.' (Hercog 2008, p. 21).

High skilled migrants are often portrayed as educated, cultured, open-minded and without prejudices. Are they then the ideal cosmopolitans? Kothari (2008) argues that 'global peddlers are members of transnational networks who accumulate and share knowledge about how to cross spatial and cultural borders. They create, exist in, and evoke global networks as they travel across the world, producing cross-cultural interactions and sensitivities.' (ibid., p. 501). According to Kothari (2008), high skilled migrants thus fit the description of a cosmopolitan; they often travel the world and experience different cultures which influences their state of mind (ibid., p. 500-514).

### §1.1.2 The knowledge migrant

Several authors argue that countries are competing for high skilled migrants. But who exactly are these migrants? It is important to note that *the* knowledge migrant does not exist. In an article called "Highly skilled globetrotters: mapping the international migration of human capital", Mahroum (2000) argues that '... the issue of migration and international mobility of highly skilled personnel is a complex and diverse one and requires, thus, very highly tailored and diversified policies.' (ibid., p. 23). High skilled migrants work in a number of professions and each migrant has his or her own personal experiences. Every migrant has to deal with different circumstances and incentives. Some migrants might move because of personal aspirations, others could migrate because of salary conditions or the labour market situation (ibid., p. 23-29).

However, Mahroum (2000, 2001) stresses that information and data about high skilled migrants is still lacking. They are often portrayed as a homogenous group, but there are many differences within this group. To better understand the different characteristics of high skilled migrants, Mahroum (2000) classified five groups: (1) managers and executives; (2) engineers and technicians; (3) academics and scientists; (4) entrepreneurs and (5) students (ibid., 25-28). He concludes that these five groups each have different motivations and limitations concerning their reasons to migrate. To show the variation within the group of high skilled knowledge migrants, this thesis will focus on *one* particular group classified by Mahroum: the academics and scientists. Because this group of professionals is still quite diverse, I will focus on a specific city within the Netherlands. Since my internship is hosted by the International Office at the Radboud University in Nijmegen, the focus will be on Nijmegen and the Radboud University for my master thesis research. I will elaborate on the arguments for these choices in the following chapters.

The group of academics and scientists is still broad, so for this master thesis I will focus on PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. It is especially interesting to study this group of researchers, because they are at the start of their academic career. Mobility is increasingly becoming a requirement in academia and many PhD students decide to gain experience abroad. Several programs (e.g. Erasmus+ from the EU) and scholarships also encourage young academics to become mobile and apply for a position in a different country. Furthermore, PhD students are often at a certain point in their life, both professionally and personally, where they *can* become mobile. They often do not have children (yet) and they are not tied to a specific university or a research institute. PhD students also do not have such a strict schedule regarding teaching obligations. So, they have the freedom to become mobile and to explore different possibilities (Roach and Sauermann 2010, p. 432-433; Mangematin 2000, p. 744-755; Lee et al. 2010, p. 878-879; European Commission 2018; Scholarships for Development 2018).

### §1.1.3 The situation in the Netherlands

According to the *Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving* (PBL – Netherlands environmental Assessment Agency) there are not that many high skilled migrants in the Netherlands, especially in international comparison. Although high skilled migration to OECD countries is increasing, as 30% of all immigrants in the OECD are highly skilled, the number of high skilled migrants in the Netherlands is relatively low. Out of the number of migrants that come

to the Netherlands, around 24% is highly skilled. When we compare this number to countries like Canada (46%), Denmark (38%) or Sweden (29%), we can see that these countries have a higher percentage of high skilled migrants. This comparison with other OECD countries shows that, in the Netherlands, the share of high skilled migrants in the total number of migrants lags behind. In 2012, only 3,4% of high skilled workers in the Netherlands were foreigners. This number lies below the EU-average of 5%. For example, foreigners make up 8,5% of high skilled workers in Belgium and 4,9% in Germany. Although the Netherlands adopted special regulations, like the *kennismigrantenregeling* (knowledge migrant regulation), policies aimed at attracting knowledge migrants still have not flourished. The Dutch government tries to initiate new policies to attract knowledge migrants since human capital is becoming more and more important for knowledge-driven economies. The foreign knowledge migrant is defined as a knowledge worker who is born outside of the Netherlands and has never lived in the Netherlands before his/her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Highly skilled usually implies a Higher Vocational Education (PBL 2014, p. 6-12 & 38-46; World Migration Report 2018, p. 15-29 & 67-74).

The knowledge migrants that are working in the Netherlands often work in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, the Hague or Eindhoven. These regions are known for their international character and are therefore popular places for international knowledge migrants. They do not always choose these places for work-related reasons, sometimes they choose a city because it fits their lifestyle or because of the presence of other (international) knowledge workers. Most knowledge workers are employed in international businesses, as managers or CEOs. Only a few work in education as, for example, a professor or researcher (ibid., p. 8). Most knowledge workers tend to stay in the Netherlands for a limited amount of time, especially when they come alone. If these migrants bring their family or meet someone while they are here, they usually stay longer (ibid., p. 13-16).

The study of the PBL (2014) states that policies aimed at knowledge workers are often put into practice as if this was a homogenous group, rather than looking at their different characteristics. The heterogeneity of this group should be more acknowledged within policies (ibid., p. 14).

## §1.2 Relevance

The research conducted for this master thesis is relevant for both society and science, for several reasons. There is already a lot written about cosmopolitanism, but in this research I

will link cosmopolitanism to the identification processes and the feelings of belonging of knowledge workers (i.e. academics and scientists) in Nijmegen. High skilled knowledge workers are often viewed as a homogenous group, but there are a lot of differences within this group. This research will show the diversity within the group of high skilled migrants, with a specific focus on PhD students and postdocs. I will elaborate on the relevance of this research in the paragraphs below.

### §1.2.1 Societal Relevance

Bochove and Engbersen (2015) argue that the identification process of knowledge workers differs from immigrants. It is important to focus on identification rather than identity, since identities are a social construction rather than a static entity. Their respondents experienced some kind of rootlessness, because they travel often for their jobs. Research also showed that most expatriates (including knowledge workers) often, at first, integrate in expatriate networks (Bochove and Engbersen 2015; Eve 2010). Since feelings of belonging are context depended, it is important to include knowledge workers in this kind of research. Where do these people belong and how does this influence their identity? Since there is not much known about this group of professionals, policies are also vague. Policies could therefore be improved, since knowledge workers, and in this case academics and scientists, each have their own experiences. On top of that, this master thesis will serve as an illustration of the current situation in Nijmegen. Research into this phenomenon can offer insights into how to adapt these policies so that they better suit the needs of knowledge migrants working at the Radboud University.

Furthermore, this research is relevant for the International Office at the Radboud University. My internship is hosted by the International Office and my research will include international employees working at the university. The results of this research could be of help to the International Office in, for example, the area of policy.

### §1.2.2 Scientific Relevance

Multiple studies, for example the ones conducted by Mahroum (2000, 2001), PBL (2014), Bochove and Engbersen (2015) and Butcher (2010), have shown that there is a knowledge gap concerning high skilled knowledge workers. This group, often seen as a homogenous group, is actually quite heterogeneous; *the* knowledge migrant does not exist. Because knowledge workers are often grouped together, the different characteristics of knowledge

workers were under-exposed, until Mahroum (2000) introduced his five categorisations of high skilled knowledge workers. Since there still is a knowledge gap, this is an explorative research. To really understand the different characteristics and experiences of high skilled knowledge workers in the Netherlands, this research will focus on *one* specific group of knowledge workers in *one* particular location. The focus will be on academics and scientists, because international mobility is becoming more and more important for an academic career (see Mavroudi and Warren 2013; Richardson and McKenna 2001; Gopaul 2016). This research will take place in Nijmegen, since this region is often overlooked in other studies. The focus is usually on Amsterdam, Rotterdam or Eindhoven, because these cities are more internationally orientated (PBL 2014). However, the Radboud University in Nijmegen has its fair share of foreign employees.

In this research, the concept of cosmopolitanism will be linked to the identification processes of foreign academics working and living in Nijmegen. The concept of cosmopolitanism is becoming more popular, but, has it lost its meaning like some authors argue (see Douthat 2016)? This research will investigate if the concept of cosmopolitanism is still applicable to high skilled knowledge workers. Can they be defined as cosmopolitans or are there other aspects more important for their identity?

### §1.3 Research objective

The aim of this master thesis is to further develop the theory about cosmopolitanism in relation to knowledge migrants (academics in this case) and their identification processes. In this research I want to show the diversity within the high skilled migrant workers group. The literature about knowledge workers usually refers to CEOs or managers of international companies who are sent abroad for a certain amount of time. However, there are many differences within this group of knowledge workers. Different kinds of professionals have different experiences (Mahroum 2000, 2001). Therefore, I want to focus on the group of foreign academics working in Nijmegen, since information about this specific group of professionals is still in development. There are of course different kinds of academics. Within this research I will focus on individuals who are working on getting their PhD or postdoc. These individuals are at the start of their (international) career and their experiences and aspirations can offer useful insights.

On top of that, most of the literature about high skilled migrants focusses on the Randstad region (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague). This area in the Netherlands is popular

for foreign knowledge workers, since there are already many internationals working and living in this part of the Netherlands (PBL 2014). Thus, this master thesis will serve as an illustration of the situation in Nijmegen, an area that might be less known within the high skilled migrant workers group.

The literature about knowledge migrants also refers to the concept of cosmopolitanism. It is thought that, since knowledge migrants travel frequently and live in different cultures, they show signs of cosmopolitanism. The knowledge migrant is often equated with the cosmopolitan: a citizen of the world with no attachments to local spaces and cultures; always on the move (Hannerz 1990; Mahroum 2000, 2001; Nedelcu 2012). For this master thesis, I want to research if this is the case for foreign academics working and living in Nijmegen. Do these academics identify themselves as cosmopolitans or do they still feel bounded to a specific place? And how do these people construct their identity when this identity is not bound to a specific place? How does the notion of cosmopolitanism influence their identity construction?

### §1.3.1 Research questions

The interest for this master thesis lies in two main concepts: I) the concept of *cosmopolitanism*; and II) the *identification process* of academics and scientists working and living in Nijmegen. The main research question is therefore as follows:

*What role do aspects of cosmopolitanism play in the identity construction of foreign academics in the Nijmegen region?*

In order to answer this question, a few sub-questions are formulated:

- 1) What are the characteristics of foreign academics in Nijmegen?
- 2) How does the concept of cosmopolitanism apply to this group of high skilled knowledge workers, i.e. academics?
- 3) Wat aspects are important for the construction of identity of foreign academics working and living in Nijmegen?

### §1.4 Thesis Structure

In the upcoming chapters, one will first come across the theoretical framework. This chapter elaborates on the theoretical ideas about international knowledge workers, cosmopolitanism

and identity construction. The next chapter will focus on the conceptual framework. The arguments made in this chapter, shaped the way this research was conducted. The theoretical and conceptual framework come together in a conceptual model, also discussed in Chapter 3. Next, the methodology of this thesis is elaborated upon in Chapter 4. This chapter will explain how the research is conducted, which methods were used and why. Chapter 5 will serve as an introduction to the region of Nijmegen and provide a bit more context. This chapter will also dig deeper into the arguments for PhD students and postdocs as respondents. The actual analysis of the data will follow in Chapter 6 and 7. Finally, conclusions, reflections and recommendations for further research will be presented in the last chapter of this thesis, Chapter 8.

## Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This master thesis will focus on high skilled knowledge migrants, working and living in Nijmegen. But before we can start, a few concepts need further explanation. Why is the focus on academics and what makes Nijmegen an interesting place of research? Since cosmopolitanism and identification processes are big theoretical concepts, these must first be operationalised. Therefore, this chapter will serve as a theoretical framework to understand this master thesis.

### §2.1 International knowledge workers: the academics and scientists

Mahroum (2001) argues that ‘immigration, particularly of the highly skilled, is becoming increasingly an inseparable segment of national technology and economic development policies.’ (p. 27). Several European countries (but also in the rest of the world) therefore implemented new procedures and legislations to strengthen their position in the international labour markets. These procedures have made it easier for high skilled migrants to immigrate and settle in countries such as the Netherlands, Sweden, Australia, Canada, the US, etc. Since European countries experience demographic change and skill shortage in the labour market, these new procedures are becoming more and more important to keep the economy going (p. 27-34). Thus, many countries are seeking (new) ways to attract high skilled migrants, but how can we define this group of migrants? According to Harvey (2008) this group has been ‘... poorly conceptualised within the theoretical literature although there have been avid attempts to clarify their meaning. ... Williams (2006, p. 590) is right to argue that it is problematic to create a universal definition of high skilled migrants because migrant groups are heterogeneous and do not fit neatly under one definition.’ (ibid., p. 1757). Mahroum (2000) tried to arrange skilled migrants by profession. He eventually identified five major groups: (1) senior managers and executives, (2) engineers and technicians, (3) academics and scientists, (4) entrepreneurs, and (5) students (ibid., p. 25). This thesis will focus on the group of academics and scientists, because ‘they may experience mobility and immigration policy in different ways to other groups of elite highly skilled migrants such as inter-company transferees’ (Mavroudi and Warren, 2013, p. 264) and business executives. It is also a relevant issue because academic mobility is increasingly becoming a crucial topic to the current and future dynamics of doctoral study and the professoriate: ‘geographic mobility is all but a requirement for the establishment of an academic career’ (Gopaul and Pifer, 2016, p.

227). Since academics are less dependent on a single employer for their career development, they can easily switch between different employers, institutions and countries. When academics become mobile they not only develop their personal career, they also help in strengthening the international position of their home university. Thus, being on the move can offer opportunities, but also has its disadvantages. It can come with high personal costs, like isolation, feeling left out and trying to maintain relationships across borders. Some academics therefore decline and reject career opportunities abroad because of personal reasons (e.g. not wanting to leave their family behind). ‘Thus, through reflections it is noted that while mobility may be an important or even necessary strategy for establishing successful academic careers, there are individual and structural factors that place limits on mobility for different people in different ways.’ (Gopaul and Pifer 2016, p. 238; Richardson and McKenna 2001, p. 67-77; Acker 2005, 103-108). Mavroudi and Warren (2013) therefore argue that further research is required into how high skilled migrants deal with immigration policy and international mobility in practical ways, and how this affects their lives, identities and mobilities (ibid., 262-263).

### §2.1.1 High skilled workers in the Netherlands

The Netherlands also try to attract high skilled migrants on the international labour market. Hercog (2008) even talks about “the battle for talent” since countries increasingly compete for high skilled labour. She argues that the Netherlands is affected by these developments since ‘it is an open, knowledge-driven economy with an ageing population.’ (Hercog, 2008, p. 19). The strongly internationally orientated Dutch economy benefits from international mobility. In 2004 the government ‘introduced a “knowledge migrant” scheme with the aim to improve the current situation of a relatively low share of foreign skilled workers in the labour force.’ (ibid., p. 20). The goal of this scheme was to make the Netherlands more attractive for high skilled knowledge migrants and talented scientists. If foreigners meet the skilled worker regulation, they can obtain a residence permit easier and quicker than those who apply for a residence permit via the regular procedure. This is only one of the ways in which the Netherlands offer rather generous possibilities for settlement in the country. On top of that, ‘the Netherlands has one of the more attractive taxation regimes when it comes to high skilled workers.’ (ibid., p. 22). Foreign high skilled workers in the Netherlands can profit from a 30 percent discount on income tax for a period of 10 years. This rule was specifically designed to attract high skilled foreign workers. There are different incentives for different kinds of

professionals. For a scientist this might be personal aspirations and scientific curiosity, for an engineer it might reflect salary conditions or the labour market situation in other countries (Mahroum 2001, p. 31-33).

## §2.2 Cosmopolitanism

The concept of cosmopolitanism is finding its way in our everyday discourse. It is often aligned with globalisation, multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity. ‘Cosmopolitanism is on the agenda in discussions of cosmopolitan democracy, cosmopolitan multiculturalism, cosmopolitan education, cosmopolitan cities, cosmopolitan Europe, etc. and in each case aims to be therapy for parochialism.’ (Nederveen Pieterse 2006, p. 1247). Historically, the concept of cosmopolitanism has been applied to those who look and journey beyond borders. Nederveen Pieterse (2006) describes three expressions of cosmopolitanism: (1) the experience and practice of world citizenship; (2) the institutions of world citizenship and (3) the ethics of world citizenship. As this description shows, cosmopolitanism is strongly linked to the concept of world citizenship. The focus in this master thesis will be on the experience and practice of world citizenship, since cosmopolitanism is not just a theoretical concept. It is also embodied, felt and imagined. In a way, cosmopolitans become cultural brokers, serving as a linkage between different cultures (ibid., p. 1247-1256; Hannerz 1990, p. 247-249).

### §2.2.1 Theorizing cosmopolitanism

Ulf Hannerz, a Swedish anthropologist, is a key thinker in the development of cosmopolitanism. In his article “Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture” (1990) he explores the phenomenon of cosmopolitanism. Hannerz (1990) acknowledges that there are different discourses about cosmopolitanism and that it occurs in different varieties and levels. But, ‘a more genuine cosmopolitanism is first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other’ (ibid., p. 239). The cosmopolitan wants not only to explore the world, but also the people and the culture in all these different places. When cosmopolitans travel around the world they strive to become locals, rather than tourists, and emerge themselves in the daily life of their new host society. ‘Perhaps real cosmopolitans, after they have taken out membership in that category, are never quite at home again, in the way real locals can be.’ (ibid., p. 248). Since cosmopolitans are always on the move in the world, are they able to really feel at home somewhere? (ibid., p. 237-250).

Although cosmopolitans try to adapt to a new society, there still are some differences between “real” locals and cosmopolitans. ‘The visions and priorities where it would be reasonable to expect locals and cosmopolitans to hold out different views refer to several important dimensions of social life. These include attachment to locales, states or countries, local cultures and the national economy.’ (Roudometof 2005, p. 125). Locals and cosmopolitans have a different degree of attachment. Where locals value being a citizen and have a sense of belonging to the country, cosmopolitans are likely to not value these attributes. Other indicators that could be used to measure the support to a local culture include religion, language and other cultural characteristics (ibid., p. 124-126).

Even though Roudometof’s (2005) conceptualization of how locals differ from cosmopolitans can be criticised, he did try to make an abstract concept measurable. However, Olofsson and Öhman (2007) argue that his model is too one-dimensional. Every-day life is always fixed in a geographical place, even when migrants maintain relationships in other parts of the world. People can feel attached to a locality without being rooted in that specific locality, because of the events in their every-day life. Olofsson and Öhman (2007) ‘therefore argue that cosmopolitanism is too complex and multidimensional to be reduced to a single cosmopolitanism-localism continuum; a person might, for example, be both locally attached in a geographical sense and at the same time open to foreign traditions, and vice versa.’ (ibid., p. 881). Their article shows that, in order to sustain cosmopolitanism, there must also be some sort of localism. One cannot survive without the other. For example, one can feel like a citizen of the world, but still feel somewhat connected to their country of birth or another specific locality. Or, as Beck (2002) argues, being a citizen of two worlds (Olofsson and Öhman 2007, p. 879-889; Beck 2002, p. 18-19).

Cosmopolitans are able to live in two worlds simultaneously because the process of globalisation has blurred (national) borders. ‘In other words: borders are no longer predeterminate, they can be chosen (and interpreted), but simultaneously also have to be redrawn and legitimated anew.’ (Beck 2002, p. 19). Cosmopolitans no longer identify themselves solely through the borders of the nation-state; they can identify with multiple societies in different places, on a global and local scale (ibid., p. 20-36).

### §2.2.2 Feeling at home away from home

Following the arguments made by Olofsson and Öhman (2007), cosmopolitans may be rootless, but they still have a place they can call home. Since high skilled migrants often

travel for their work, the concept of “home” can, however, become vague. Butcher (2010) further researched this concept of “home” for highly mobile migrants in her article titled “From ‘Fish Out of Water’ to ‘Fitting in’: The Challenge of Re-placing Home in a Mobile World”. She argues that the desire to fix home with particular meaning by attaching it to place is still apparent, even for highly mobile migrants. Cosmopolitans are expected to feel at home everywhere. Their lives are characterized by mobility, openness to cultural differences and the absence of homesickness. Migrants use different home-making strategies (e.g. social, material, imaginative) to make the unfamiliar, familiar. Still, many migrants have ‘the experience of feeling neither here nor there yet also here and there’ (ibid., p. 24), or, as Grillo (2007) calls it, ‘betwixt and between’ (p. 201-205).

A strategy that is often chosen by high skilled migrants to feel at home, is connecting to an existing (international) expat network in the region. Migrants try to fit in and re-place their imagination of “home” to a new setting. Since international expats are in the same boat, it can offer them comfort, a sense of belonging and they often share cultural similarities. However, this may not sound like a cosmopolitan thing to do. If a true cosmopolitan wants to experience different cultures and become more than a tourist, why would he or she then only interact with expats who often share the same norms and values instead of trying to connect to the local population? Still, several studies (see Butcher 2010; Eve 2010; Harvey 2008; Kim 2010; Grillo 2007; Van Bochove and Engbersen 2015) address the existence and importance of expat networks and the ‘international bubble’. It can be hard for migrants to establish social contacts with the local population. Expat networks then offer a starting point for establishing friendships with people who experience the same things. ‘So, for example, a high skilled professional moving to a new town via contacts with other professionals may create a network heavily centred on fellow professionals.’ (Eve 2010, p. 1237). Thus, the image of the cosmopolitan is conflicted. On the one hand, cosmopolitans move around in the world with ease, because they feel comfortable in many places and seek new adventures outside their comfort zone. On the other hand, cosmopolitans often integrate into existing expatriate ‘bubbles’, the only place where they can feel at home. (Van Bochove and Engbersen 2015, p. 295-296). The question then arises whether high skilled migrants, academics and scientists in this case, can be defined as true cosmopolitans or that they only move around in their international bubble.

### §2.2.3 A critical reflection on cosmopolitanism

If the image of the cosmopolitan is conflicted, is the concept of cosmopolitanism then still suitable for this research? As Miller (2002) states, ‘as always the first question to ask is what exactly we mean when we use the term cosmopolitanism’. (ibid., p 80). Several authors (see Calhoun 2002; Skrbis et al. 2004; Glick Schiller et al. 2011) struggle with the concept of cosmopolitanism because its meaning is diverse. Another problematic aspect of cosmopolitanism can be the identification, who exactly qualifies as a cosmopolitan? Skrbis et al. (2004) argue that ‘in the literature we find three populations that have been represented as archetypal cosmopolitans: global business elites, refugees and expatriates.’ (ibid., p. 119). These populations all have the capital to become cosmopolitans. They are rich in the “three C’s”: ‘concepts, competence and connections.’ (ibid., p. 119). Therefore, an often heard critique of cosmopolitanism is that it is something for the elite. Only those with enough money, the right (social) contacts and a good education would have the opportunity to travel the world and become cosmopolitan. There certainly is some truth in this claim. Having access to certain capital (whether its social, political or financial), can help an individual in becoming mobile and exploring other cultures (ibid., p. 115-121; Miller 2002, p. 80-85; Calhoun 2002, p. 870-876). However, the population central in this research – high skilled knowledge migrants (e.g. academics and scientists) – are also part of a global elite. They have had educational opportunities and this helped them to establish an international network with other scholars. This provided them with opportunities to go abroad and become mobile. This is also something to keep in mind during this research.

Since this research focusses on migrants, another concept that could be of help is transnationalism. Faist (2000) argues that with transnationalism ‘... we usually refer to sustained ties of persons, networks and organizations across the borders across multiple nation-states, ranging from little to highly institutionalized forms.’ (ibid., p. 189). It is a social phenomenon to describe the interconnectivity between people across borders, as social scientists are increasingly interested in the connections between “here” and “there”. Transnational migrants often maintain strong ties to their homeland, while they also form roots in a new host country. As a result, they often have multiple homes. ‘The concept emerged from the realization that immigrants abroad, rather than being uprooted, maintain ties to their countries of origin, making “home and host society a single arena of social action” (Margolis 1994, 29).’ (Bretell 2003, p. 48). So, the concept of transnationalism is focussed on the interactions in these linkages. “Transmigrants” keep those ties alive. It helps

them to maintain their (e.g. ethnic, religious, political) identity. However, this concept also has its shortcomings. Since the term was coined, conceptual disagreements soon emerged. Should the focus be on practices or relationships? And does transnationalism come from above or below? Waldinger and Fitzgerald (2004) therefore struggle with this concept. ‘... what immigration scholars describe as transnationalism is usually its opposite: highly particularistic attachments antithetical to those by-products of globalization denoted by the concept of “transnational civil society” and its related manifestations.’ (ibid., p. 1178). The authors also stress that migrants are also limited in making communities. States and the political system in their society also shape their options for transnational interactions (Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004, p. 1177-1182; Faist 2000, p. 189-195; Levitt and Jaworsky 2007, p. 136-140).

Thus, taking these arguments in consideration, it shows that both concepts have their shortcomings. Cosmopolitanism can be an elitist concept, but the research population in this research also has some elitist features. Access to certain capital allows them to travel and experience different cultures. Cosmopolitanism also has different meanings, but as was explained before, this research will focus on world citizenship. The concept of transnationalism does not quite match this focus. Transnationalism concentrates more on transnational links (on different levels), than on world citizenship. However, the two concepts are not entirely different, they do have some similarities as Glick Schiller et al. (2011) argue: ‘The scholarship on cosmopolitanism and transnational migration has shared an interest in moving away from conceptualizing social relations and identities as bounded – whether they have been envisioned as impassable, territorially rooted cultural differences or those differentiated by the national borders of nation-states.’ (ibid., p. 405). Both concepts argue that people increasingly live their lives across borders, which raises new questions about societal belonging. For the purpose of this research, cosmopolitanism is a more suitable concept. The research population is, indeed, made up of transnational migrants, but cosmopolitanism offers a different point of view. According to Nedelcu (2012) cosmopolitanism ‘... seems to be an appealing alternative to both “ethnocentric nationalism” and “particularistic multiculturalism” (Vertovec 2001), and allows for a new reading of the transnational actions and allegiances of migrant and non-migrant populations who enlarge their horizon of aspirations beyond home and host countries.’ (ibid., p. 1344). Cosmopolitanism also focusses on the interactions with the local population. These interactions were also an important aspect of this research. How do the knowledge migrants interact with the locals and do they feel at home here? Therefore, I think that the concept of

cosmopolitanism, when its meaning is clearly stated, is still valuable and suitable for this research (ibid., p. 1341-1346; Glick Schiller et al. 2011, p. 401-408).

## §2.3 Identity

One's identity can be influenced by multiple things: gender, race, class, family, social position, profession, etc. In recent years, globalisation and the growing scale of mass migrations have also led to the rise of trans-national identities – identities that transcend national borders. International migrant workers often experience changes in their identification process due to migration. Do migrant workers identify themselves through their country of birth, through their current place of residence or are other factors more important? (McDowell 2008, p. 491-493).

Migrants are increasingly on the move between different places, but they still keep connections between their “home” and “elsewhere”. Those linkages still exist and prove to be important for the lives of migrants, as well as for the construction of their identity. ‘Our identities as workers, citizens, friends, strangers are mutually constituted through social practices and patterns of engagement within and across different spatial sites and scales. Identities are not rooted or static but fluid and changing.’ (McDowell 2008, p. 504). When migrants leave their home, they are physically but not emotionally absent. They still have their roots, planted in a specific locality. These roots can be quite important, because it is something of their country of origin to hold on to. Without roots, migrants might feel like they do not belong anywhere (ibid., p. 495-505; Golden and Lanza 2013, p. 297-310). ‘Moreover, research findings have revealed that globalization undermines the sense of belonging to a familiar place, and creates a need to strengthen ties with a subgroup or community.’ (Nuttman-Shwartz 2017, p. 5-6). Cosmopolitans participate in everyday life and in that sense can have feelings of “everyday” belonging. However, they might not feel like they belong in a “symbolical” way, because they still differ from the local population. Expat networks and the international bubble then often substitute as such a community, as a place where they do feel that they also symbolically belong (Van Bochove and Engbersen 2015, p. 300).

### §2.3.1 Identity in scientific research

Identity can be a tricky theoretical concept. Everyone has one, but it can be a difficult concept to operationalise. How do we define who we are? In the literature about identity, which is quite extensive, there are two main theories: identity theory and social identity theory.

According to Hogg et al. (1995) there are some similarities. For example, both theories argue that one has multiple identities. They also have a similar language, but the words that are used often have a different meaning. ‘Identity theory is principally a microsociological theory that sets out to explain individuals’ role-related behaviors, while social identity theory is a social psychological theory that sets out to explain group processes and intergroup relations.’ (ibid., p. 255). Basically, identity theory is more focused on the individual and social identity theory focusses more on the individual in relation to others. Where Hogg et al. (1995) argued that identity theory and social identity theory should be separated, Stets and Burke (2000) suggest that the two will eventually merge together. Both theories stress that, ‘through the process of self-categorization or identification, an identity is formed.’ (ibid., p. 224). Both theories overlap and, as the authors argue, could achieve more and have a stronger basis if they are merged to one theory about identity. ‘We suggest that being and doing are both central features of one’s identity. A complete theory of the self would consider both the role and the group bases of identity as well as identities based in the person that provide stability across groups, roles, and situations.’ (ibid., p.234; Hogg et al. 1995, p. 255-261; Bruner 2005, p. 309-321).

Identity is a valuable concept in this research, because it is a concept that people also use themselves. We can identify ourselves with different things, be it work, family, sports, ethnicity or something else. These social categories can make us feel like we belong. Being a part of a social category provides us with a definition of who we are. Both theories also stress the fact that we have multiple identities. In different social settings, we take on different roles. Each role becomes a part of our identity. This can also make identity a difficult concept to work with during this research. How do individuals reflect on their own identity? What kind of “role” are they portraying during the data collection? And how can identity become a measurable concept? These concerns need to be taken into account as well. Furthermore, it must be noted that identity theory and social identity theory can have different implications. To give an example, groups can have different functions for its members. A member of a sports team might emphasize different group characteristics than a member of a religious group. This can affect their identity in different ways. Brown (2000) argues that this is an aspect that can be further developed and improved in social identity theory. ‘These observations suggest that there is much more to social identification than maintaining positivity through biased intergroup comparisons, prevalent though these may be. The important next step is to understand how all these various identity functions are related to

different forms of intergroup behaviour, both positive and negative.’ (ibid., p. 761 & 746-760; Hendry et al. 2007, p. 181-184).

However, I still believe that identity is a valuable concept because everyone can relate to it. Besides, this research and this thesis largely revolve around the concept of cosmopolitanism. The focus, as will be explained in the coming paragraph, will be on the implications of a cosmopolitan identity.

### §2.3.2 The cosmopolitan identity

If the image of the cosmopolitan is conflicted, is there then still a cosmopolitan identity? Individuals can identify themselves through many different aspects. Cosmopolitanism can be one of them, but this concept also means different things to different individuals. Van Bochove and Engbersen (2015) focus on the identification process of high skilled migrants, as this process differs from regular immigrants, and how this can be connected to cosmopolitanism. It is important to focus on the process of identification, instead of identity, since identities are a social construct rather than a static entity; they can change over time. Everyone has multiple identities, but migrants in particular can struggle with defining who they are. They might not describe themselves as a cosmopolitan, but they can be identified by others as such.

‘The most important findings are, first, that identities referring to cosmopolitanism and expat bubbles appear to be only moderately important; second, that homeland identifications prove to be rather significant for migrants who are often believed to lead “boundless” lives, and third, that the respondents do not seem to identify themselves in terms of their current place of residence.’ (ibid., p. 300)

Thus, it often depends on the context and the network that migrants are in if they will identify as cosmopolitans, either by themselves or by others. Migrants can struggle to adapt to a new society and when they feel overwhelmed they might turn to the ‘expat bubble’ where they can share their experiences. Migrants often integrate, at first, into these networks because they offer support. This research shows that, although individuals can be cosmopolitan, the need for local attachment is still relevant to feel like they belong somewhere (ibid., p. 295-307).

In a world which is less bound by nation-state borders and less tied to physical boundaries and where people become more mobile, the idea is that the cosmopolitan identity develops separately from the discourses of national or local identities. Cosmopolitanism injects a strong global element in the identification process and the opening up to cultural differences. But, for some individuals this is not only a positive experience. ‘Cosmopolitans were characterised within official discourses as intellectuals or opportunists, indifferent to preserving national heritage and culture at the expense of an alleged bourgeois internationalism.’ (Skrbis and Woodward 2013, p. 13). Having a cosmopolitan identity is not the same for everyone. It may rest on similar conceptual dimensions such as openness, curiosity, etc., but its objects can be diverse. Therefore, we should not only look at the absolute expressions of cosmopolitan identity, but to its performance and its manifestation across a diversity of settings by a range of citizens (ibid., p. 10-28).

### §2.3.3 The identity of mobile academics

Since academic mobility is desired, scholars are increasingly on the move (Iredale 2001; Franzoni et al. 2014; Gopaul and Pifer 2016; Mavroudi and Warren 2013). But how does this influence their identity? Miglietta and Tartaglia (2009) argue that factors such as cultural knowledge, linguistic competence and length of stay in the new culture influence the process of adaptation to a new host society. ‘A long-lasting stay in a host country makes it easier for immigrants to become familiar with their new social context’ (ibid., 48). The same goes for language, since language is also strictly related to identity issues and can distinguish between in-group and out-group status. To learn the local language can help migrants to integrate into the local society. ‘Linguistic proficiency eases daily interaction with host-culture members, which undoubtedly helps immigrants increase their comprehension of the norms governing social events and relations.’ (ibid., p. 56). However, migrants often value the use of their own ethnic language since this allows them to maintain ties to their own culture. Although the English language has established itself as the lingua franca of science, individuals can find it comforting to speak their own language at home or in their social network as this strengthens their identity (ibid., p. 46-50 & 55-58).

Colic-Peisker (2010) also writes about the identity-belonging of transnational knowledge workers. These career professionals migrate for their work and have spent extended periods of time in different countries. This is especially the case for PhD students, who go from one country to another since mobility is required at this stage of their

professional career. Becoming mobile also influences their identity. Colic-Peisker (2010) argues that, for transnational knowledge workers, their globally recognized profession forms the central axis of their identity-belonging, alongside a weak identification with their nation of origin. ‘... among the “intellectual workers”, the university sector was the most globally connected’ (ibid., p. 471) and many academics and scientists identify themselves through the institution or university they are a member of. This membership gives them social status, autonomy, fulfilment and pride which they can use to construct their identity. Along these lines, their profession can influence their identity just as much as their nationality or ethnicity. ‘A global system of both private and public institutions ensures that professional identity – embedded in educational qualifications, work experience and professional memberships – is globally valid and transnationally transferable provided it is achieved or at least validated in a Western context.’ (ibid., p. 474). Thus, academics are able to express their professional identity in different countries. Mobile academics might not feel connected to their national identity since they can be far away from home, but they can always rely on their professional identity. ‘For knowledge workers, professional identity-belonging and career-building may serve as substitutes for sedentarist fixities and sources of identities, anchoring and continuity.’ (ibid., p. 483 & 467-485).

#### §2.3.4 Citizenship and the digital age

Because migrants live transnational lives, the issue of citizenship can be complicated. Do migrants value citizenship of a certain locality as much as the local population does? Cosmopolitanism might imply world citizenship, but citizenship is still ascribed to a specific, geographical place and not a single world state could enforce a ‘cosmopolitan citizenship’ (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006, p. 1617-1618).

When migrants travel to different countries their identities and allegiances become deterritorialized, because they go beyond national boundaries. ‘In other words, the national community is not the main “community” in which individuals are embedded and participate, and identities are not just anchored in one national collectivity.’ (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006, p. 1618). The concept of ‘transnational citizenship’ might fit this situation better, as a form of citizenship that transcends national boundaries. Migrants often live their lives at multiple scales across national borders, to maintain relationships between their new and old place of residence. They ‘... identify with multiple communities – nations, ethnic, and religious communities – across borders.’ (ibid., p. 1626). Yet, Castles et al. (2014) emphasise the

importance of citizenship for migrants. They argue that citizenship can contribute to cultural belonging and acquiring a political identity.

‘Most modern nation-states are formally defined by a constitution and laws, according to which all power derives from the people (or nation). It is therefore vital to define who belongs to the people. Membership is largely marked by the status of citizenship, which lays down rights and duties. Non-citizens are excluded from at least some of these. Citizenship is the essential link between state and nation, and obtaining citizenship is therefore of central importance for newcomers to a country.’ (ibid., p.64-65).

Be that as it may, high skilled migrants (and especially academics who are increasingly on the move) may not always have the intention of staying for the rest of their lives. Since they may migrate to other countries, they mostly maintain citizenship in their country of origin. This can also strengthen their identity, as it is a way to stay connected to their country of origin and family. Of course this differs for every individual, since some migrants do eventually choose to get citizenship in their new country of residence. However, just because migrants still have citizenship in their country of origin this does not imply that they are unwilling to commit to their new host society. They can feel attached to multiple places at the same time and participate in multiple communities – living successfully in two cultures (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006, p. 1619-1630; Castles et al. 2014, p. 62-68; Berry 2005).

The internet and the widespread use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) have also played a part in this development. Transnational exchanges have intensified as it has become easier to stay in touch with family members or other social contacts. ‘Today, the Internet facilitates the co-presence of mobile actors in multiple locations and allows the emergence of a new transnational habitus.’ (Nedelcu 2012, p. 1340). Places might be geographically distant, but migrants are still able to live interconnected lives due to ICT possibilities. They offer migrants new ways of being together and belonging at a distance, with the help of functionalities such as Skype, Facebook or other social media. ICTs give a new dimension to migrant transnationalism, offering new possibilities to experience Otherness and an online community that keeps growing. ‘This phenomenon could trigger the inception of a shared cosmopolitan sensitivity (Beck 2006), i.e. the emergence of an awareness that one belongs to a globalised world of networks and complex interdependencies.’ (ibid., p. 1352 & 1340-1353).

## Chapter 3: Conceptual framework

This master thesis is centred around three theoretical concepts: identity, cosmopolitanism and high skilled knowledge migrants. The three theoretical concepts are combined in the conceptual model. The following paragraphs will sketch the conceptual framework that was used for this research and which is summarised in the conceptual model. The model, including further explanation, can be found on page 32 and in paragraph 3.2.

### §3.1 How we define ourselves

As is discussed before, identity is not a static concept. One's identity can change over time and intersect with other aspects of one's identity, depending on the context and the people we surround ourselves with. We use our identity to distinguish ourselves from others or other groups. Certain (social) institutions contribute in shaping our identity, for example: family, religion, education, the political system and the place where one works, to name a few (Giorgi 2016, p. 47-53). The identity of high skilled knowledge migrants is often shaped by their professional career and their workplace. Since they often travel to different countries and experience different cultures, they might rely more on their professional identity. Because they live boundless lives, they may attach greater importance to dimensions of their identity that are also boundless, like their education, their academic career and their current experiences. How do people then use their identity? According to Howard (2006), individuals construct, negotiate and communicate their identity through language. Not only in direct interaction, but also in indirect encounters through various forms of media. 'Individuals define their identities along two dimensions: social, defined by membership in various social groups; and personal, the idiosyncratic attributes that distinguish an individual from others.' (ibid., p. 369 & p. 370-376). For example, high skilled knowledge workers can, on the one hand, value speaking their native language as this strengthens their identity. On the other hand, they can also value speaking English, which has become the lingua franca of academics. Often, an individual's identity is made up of things that are in some way essential to the way he or she is. Since identity is a concept that is used by people themselves as well as researchers, it is both a category of practice and a category of analysis (Fearon 1999, p. 15-22; Colic-Peisker 2010, p. 470-482).

Still, the concept can give rise to confusion, because its meaning is diverse. Identities are symbolical, but also imagined, felt and experienced. To clarify some of this confusion,

Brubaker and Cooper (2000) distinguished a few key uses of the concept of identity. For the continuation of this master thesis, I will focus on one of these usages. My focus will be on identity:

‘understood as a core aspect of (individual or collective) “selfhood” or as a fundamental condition of social being, “identity” is invoked to point to something allegedly deep, basic, abiding, or foundational. This is distinguished from more superficial, accidental, fleeting, or contingent aspects or attributes of the self, and is understood as something to be valued, cultivated, supported, recognized, and preserved.’ (ibid., p. 7)

Individuals can identify themselves by their position in a relational web, for instance family relations, friendships or through a hierarchical order at work. Additionally, individuals can identify themselves through membership of a particular group of persons. The individual shares some categorical attributes with this group, like race, ethnicity, language, nationality, citizenship, etc. (ibid., p. 5-19).

The model on page 32 is inspired by the article by Abes et al. (2007) and Jones and McEwen’s (2000) model about multiple dimensions of identity (See Abes et al. 2007 page 4 for the original model). Although the article by Abes et al. (2007) and their conceptual model discusses the experiences of female college students (ibid., p. 4), with some adjustments it can be used for academics and scientists as well. The main aspect of the model by Abes et al. (2007) that inspired the model in this master thesis, is the fact that their model includes multiple dimensions of identity. One’s identity is not defined by *one* aspect. Thus, the model in this master thesis also includes multiple dimensions of identity. These dimensions came from several authors like Giorgi (2016), Howard (2006), Pollock et al. (2000) and Brubaker and Cooper (2000). So, the model acknowledges the existence of multiple identities and the fact that each dimension of identity cannot be fully understood in isolation. Each dimension of identity needs to be understood in relation to the other dimensions. ‘... the model of multiple dimensions of identity describes the dynamic construction of identity and the influence of changing contexts on the relative salience of multiple identity dimensions, such as race, ... culture and social class.’ (Abes et al. 2007, p. 3). The ‘core’ in the conceptual model consists of the individual’s personal identity, personal attributes and personal characteristics. Surrounding this core is the context, which includes family background, sociocultural conditions, current experiences, career decisions and life planning. It is in this

context that an individual experiences his or her life. Then, there are multiple dimensions which influence identity and play a bigger or smaller part in one's life. For this master thesis, these dimensions will also include aspects of cosmopolitanism, which will be further elaborated on in paragraph 3.2. Thus, the dimensions of identity in relation to cosmopolitanism will include: culture, language, social network, education, nationality, citizenship, profession and mobility. The model on page 32 shows that identity is fluid and influenced by multiple dimensions. The extent of this influence on one's identity is related to how much meaning an individual ascribes to certain dimensions (Abes et al. 2007, p. 1-20). As Somers (1994) states: 'There is no reason to assume a priori that people with similar attributes will share common experiences of social life, let alone be moved to common forms and meanings of social action, unless they share similar narrative identities and relational settings.' (ibid., p. 635). A group of people may share the same characteristics, but this does not imply that their identities will develop along the same lines. Some individuals might identify as cosmopolitans and others might not. Individual experiences are still valuable.

### §3.2 Globally-minded individuals

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, within this master thesis cosmopolitanism will imply world citizenship. Some aspects of cosmopolitanism which relate to the identity construction of academics and scientists will be highlighted in this paragraph.

Since identities are fluid and several dimensions can influence one's identity in various ways (Abes et al. 2007; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Giorgi 2016), individuals can experience different levels of cosmopolitanism throughout their (professional) life. From a historical point of view the cosmopolitan is considered to be completely open to any particular society or discourse, without prejudice. They are able to live at home abroad or abroad at home, residing in numerous places at once. So, how can cosmopolitanism be linked to identity? According to Pollock et al. (2000) 'cosmopolitanism is not just – or perhaps at all – an idea. Cosmopolitanism is infinite ways of being.' (ibid., p. 588). Cosmopolitanism can be a dimension of identity for individuals, although it depends on their personal characteristics and circumstances to what extent they value cosmopolitanism as crucial to their identity. High skilled knowledge migrants could also identify as cosmopolitan. They regularly experience different cultures and they are able to quickly adapt to new places and feel at home in a new environment. Since mobility is an unique feature of this group, the link with cosmopolitanism can easily be made. High skilled knowledge migrants can live a cosmopolitan lifestyle.

Certain values of cosmopolitanism (e.g. openness, world citizenship, international social network) often correspond with this group of migrants. Furthermore, there is not just one form of cosmopolitanism, it can be experienced in multiple ways (ibid., p. 577-590; Beck and Szainder 2006, p. 8-14).

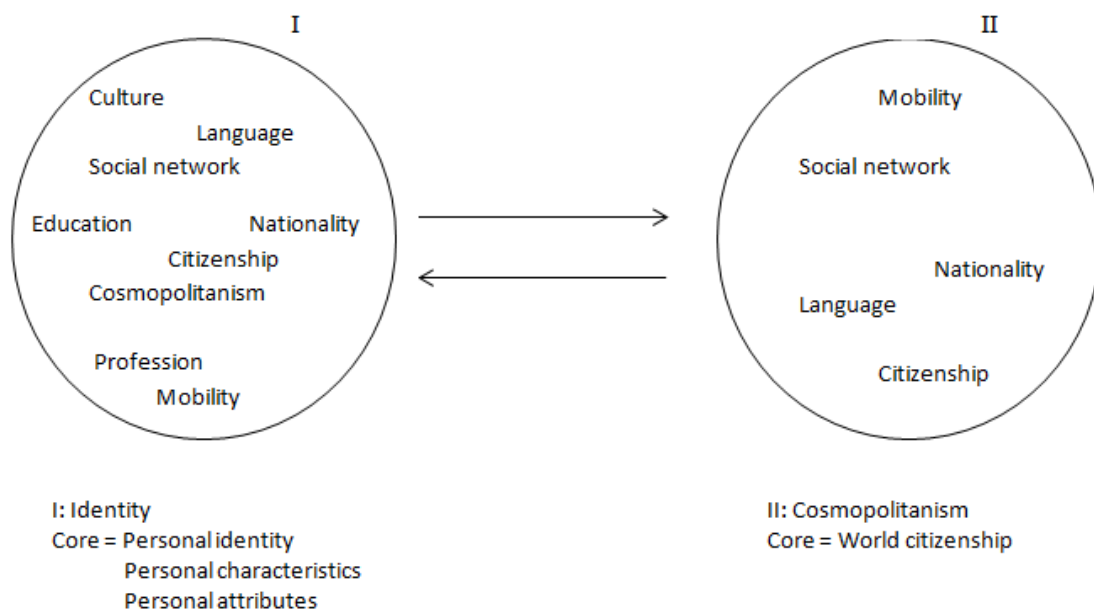
What are then aspects of cosmopolitanism that can be linked to identity? Smith (2007) argues that, 'as a moral ideal, cosmopolitan citizenship can be said to entail the possession of certain "virtues", understood as dispositions, qualities or character traits, the possession of which will make us sensitive to our cosmopolitan duties and obligations.' (ibid., p. 39). Being cosmopolitan involves having an open mind, talking with others and seeing things from a different perspective – and being open to these perspectives (Smith 2007, p. 37-49). Again, high skilled knowledge migrants deal with these experiences. Often they are in contact with different people with different backgrounds when they migrate. As they try to establish a new social network, they often make connections across different cultures. All these different perspectives have an impact on their life and can also change the way they think about things. High skilled knowledge migrants are often open-minded and open to new experiences (Eve 2010, p. 1236-1245 ; Colic-Peisker 2010, p. 482-485 ; Skrbis and Woodward 2013, p. 2-14).

Cosmopolitans identify with the world as a whole and are comfortable with living in different cultures, travelling beyond national boundaries and they are connected to international networks. Norris (2000) also argues that research points out that there is a relation between education and a cosmopolitan outlook. People with a higher level of education are more likely to develop a cosmopolitan identity. Other factors that influence a cosmopolitan identity are age, political affiliation, urbanization and if an individual has travelled. 'Migration requires individuals and groups to develop multiple loyalties and identities. This reality calls into question the idea of citizenship as having an unique focus of loyalty to a particular nation state.' (Osler and Starkey 2003, p. 243-244; Norris 2000, p. 10-17). Whereas locals are embedded in local cultural and social groups, often based on similarities, cosmopolitans are embedded in multiple communities on a local and global scale. Having multiple identities gives them the opportunity to participate in multiple communities (Pichler 2008, p. 1108-1109).

Which elements do then compose a cosmopolitan identity? According to Pichler (2008) 'cosmopolitanism refers to greater world openness, global awareness, loyalty to human kind, self-reflection and self-problematization in order to establish new communities.' (ibid., p. 1110). Skrbis et al. (2004) further elaborate on the characteristics of cosmopolitans.

‘... the cosmopolitan is characterized by an ability to be mobile, the capacity to consume diverse cultural symbols and goods, a willingness to take risks by virtue of encountering the ‘other’, the ability to reflexively observe and judge different cultures, the possession of semiotic skills to interpret images of others, and general openness to other people and cultures.’ (ibid., p. 122)

As these authors show, cosmopolitans are characterised as open-minded, appreciative of (cultural) diversity with an interest in worldly affairs and they are, above all, mobile individuals waiting to discover the world. They are not only mobile in the geographical sense of the word, they are also mobile in different cultures. These traits aside, the cosmopolitan does have a certain kind of “capital” at one’s disposal, e.g. intellectual, financial, cultural or linguistic resources and a social or professional network. This particular kind of capital should not be underestimated, since it can help in constructing a cosmopolitan identity. Furthermore, cosmopolitans are often in a position to get a job beyond national boundaries and move from one country to another. Since these aspects also apply to high skilled knowledge migrants, it shows that the concepts of identity and cosmopolitanism can be connected to this group of migrants. As Thompson and Tambyah (1999) argue, ‘... the cosmopolitan has become the lingua franca in many institutional sectors of the postcolonial global economy.’ (p. 219). The cosmopolitan identity is made up of many fragments, little pieces of different cultures and societies, collected throughout the years (Skrbis et al. 2004, p. 116-132; Waldron 2000, p. 227-235; Paasi 2001, p. 10-16).



### §3.3 Connecting the dots

As was stated before, the model by Abes et al. (2007), which in turn is inspired by Jones and McEwen (2000), is based on female college students. But, this master research is not aimed at female college students. Therefore some adjustments were made to the model, so that it could be used in reference to high skilled knowledge migrants, in this case PhD students and postdocs. I maintained the 'core' because I think these are universal values that can be applied to everyone (because everyone has a personal identity). Another aspect that was still useable was the 'context'. I also maintained this aspect because everyone experiences his/her daily life in a certain context. Depending on the people we are with and what we are doing, our lives take shape within a context (for example career decisions). However, some adjustments were made so that it could be used for the research population of this master research. The model by Abes et al. (2007) illustrates that multiple dimensions can influence our identity. This also leads to one having multiple identities. Since this master thesis is focussed on high skilled migrants and the concept of cosmopolitanism, these dimensions were also included in the model. So, within the circle of identity we can now find dimensions that would be important for the process of identification for high skilled migrants (e.g. mobility, profession, language, social network, etc.). These dimensions were derived from the literature. The model by Abes et al. (2007) includes different dimensions that might play a role in the identification process of female college students. So by changing these dimensions, the model can be made to serve the purpose of this research and complement the research population. Cosmopolitanism is also a part of this circle because this might also play a role in the identification process of this group. The other circle shows some dimensions that are associated with cosmopolitanism, e.g. mobility, social network and world citizenship. Cosmopolitanism was not included in the model by Abes et al. (2007), this adjustment was made to illustrate the importance of cosmopolitanism in the conceptual model for this specific master research. Thus, the basic framework of the model by Abes et al. (2007) inspired the model in this conceptual framework. Their visualization of multiple dimensions of identity, led to the making of this conceptual model (*ibid.*, p. 1-9).

The model visualizes how the different concepts are linked to each other. The first circle shows the different dimensions of identity. For instance, individuals can identify themselves through their nationality, profession or culture. It depends on each individual which dimensions are most important. Of course, context also plays a role in shaping one's identity. Identity is also embedded in family background, sociocultural conditions, current

experiences and life planning. This context is also present in this model, although it is not visualized. However, the two circles are influenced by context since every-day experiences take place within a certain context/framework. Returning to the model, we can observe that multiple dimensions of identity can play a part in constructing one's identity. It shows that multiple identities are also possible, depending on which dimensions are more important. As is shown in the model, cosmopolitanism is also a dimension of identity. High skilled migrants might view themselves as cosmopolitan and therefore consider cosmopolitanism as an important aspect of their identity.

The second circle focusses on aspects that are connected to cosmopolitanism. These aspects or dimensions can be linked to identity construction. For example, the model shows that language, citizenship and mobility can be important dimensions for a cosmopolitan identity. These dimensions can also be found in the first circle. However, how individuals interpret these dimensions can differ. A social network, for instance, can be defined in two ways. An individual might value a social network that is mostly local and homogenous, e.g. people with the same culture, ethnicity or social background. This individual can then be considered as 'less' cosmopolitan. Another individual might value a more diverse social network, e.g. consisting of international social contacts from different ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds. This individual can then be considered as 'more' cosmopolitan. So, although the model includes the same dimensions in both circles, it is up to the individual how these dimensions are interpreted.

As the model shows, cosmopolitanism can be a dimension of identity. One can identify as a cosmopolitan, or, as the model also shows, identify with some aspects of cosmopolitanism, but not necessarily identify as a cosmopolitan. Certain cosmopolitan dimensions can influence the construction of one's identity, as the model demonstrates. Thus, there are some dimensions that can play a role in one's identity or in one's cosmopolitan identity. For example, an individual can identify himself/herself through their nationality. Their nationality can be linked to their country of birth, but it can also be linked to the world as a whole; world citizenship. The same goes for language. One can identify oneself through their native language or through the English language, the lingua franca of the world. The different dimensions within the circle can influence each other, the arrows illustrate this relation. Thus, one's identity is constructed through different dimensions, including cosmopolitanism. The conceptual model will be of help in analysing the collected data.

## Chapter 4: Methodology

In the following chapter, the methodological approach of this thesis is explained. To be able to answer the sub-questions and central question of this thesis, three main methodological approaches were used: literature analysis, interviews and the analysis of these interviews. The arguments behind these approaches will be further elaborated on in the following paragraphs.

### §4.1 Research philosophy

Before we continue to the research approach and talk about the different methods that were used for this research, we must pay attention to the philosophical framework in which this research is embedded. Within the social sciences there are two main philosophical traditions: positivism and interpretivism. In short, these traditions are both about the nature of reality. However, for the course of this master thesis I based my research in the philosophical tradition of interpretivism (Williamson 2006, p. 83-84).

‘Interpretivists believe that reality is constructed by social actors and people’s perceptions of it. They recognise that individuals with their own varied backgrounds, assumptions and experiences contribute to the on-going construction of reality existing in their broader social context through social interaction. Because these human perspectives and experiences are subjective, social reality may change and can have multiple perspectives.’  
(Wahyuni 2012, p. 71)

Within the wider framework of interpretivism there are multiple paradigms. One such paradigm is constructivism, which I used for this research. Constructivism focusses on the ways in which people construct their world. Using this paradigm provides the researcher with the opportunity to research constructions and meanings about wide-ranging concepts, such as identity construction and cosmopolitanism. This philosophical framework and corresponding paradigm were of particular interest because ‘the constructivist-ethnographic approach enables the meanings or perspectives of participants to be studied indepth and their particular words to be used to convey their meanings directly to the reader.’ (Williamson 2006, p. 98 & 83-89; Williams 2000, p. 209-215).

Thus, the concepts of interpretivism and constructivism formed the philosophical basis of this research. This school of thought was especially interesting because it offers a framework to study the perceptions, ideas and experiences of people. Interpretivism believes that people construct their own reality and social world, so to study this reality it is important to talk to people about their experiences and interact with them. It provides the opportunity to ‘... interpret the meanings and actions of actors according to their own subjective frame of reference.’ (Williams 2000, p. 210). On top of that, interpretivism is also often equated with qualitative research. According to Williams (2000) they are sometimes even used interchangeably. Since the focus of this master thesis is on the experiences of people, qualitative research methods were used. The reasoning behind these methodological choices will be further explained in the coming paragraphs.

#### §4.2 Research approach

There are of course different methods for doing research. In the world of social sciences, two major approaches can be used for research: qualitative and quantitative. As has been explained in previous paragraphs, qualitative methods were used for this research. Why did I choose qualitative over quantitative methods? Due to the nature of the research questions, qualitative methods seemed like the best option because it produces rich characterizations of social constructs. Yilmaz (2013) provides a useful overview of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research. She defines qualitative research as ‘... an emergent, inductive, interpretive and naturalistic approach to the study of people, cases, phenomena, social situations and processes in their natural settings in order to reveal in descriptive terms the meanings that people attach to their experiences of the world.’ (ibid., p. 312). Qualitative research is based on constructivist principles and explores social constructs. The focus lies on the perspectives of the people involved. Quantitative research has a different focus. Yilmaz (2013) defines quantitative research as ‘...a type of empirical research into a social phenomenon or human problem, testing a theory consisting of variables which are measured with numbers and analysed with statistics in order to determine if the theory explains or predicts phenomena of interest.’ (ibid., p. 311). So, quantitative research mostly produces numerical data. It seeks to establish universal laws that can be used to explain social behaviours by statistically measuring social reality. Thus, where quantitative research is focussed on numerical outcomes, generalisations and cause-effect relationships, qualitative

research is more aimed at interpretation, meaning and understanding social phenomena. Therefore, qualitative methods were used for this research (ibid., 311-323).

### §4.3 Research strategy

The literature analysis was the start of this research. In order to find out which group of high skilled migrants in the Netherlands would be most relevant for my thesis and internship, desk research was needed. The studies by Mahroum (2000, 2001) and by Van Bochove and Engbersen (2015) proved to be useful. Subsequently, I needed to formulate the theoretical and conceptual framework, which is also based on extensive literature research. Since my internship was hosted by the International Office at the Radboud University, it was only a logical choice that my research would focus on Nijmegen and employees of the university. I am aware of the fact that this research will solely take place in Nijmegen and this, of course, has its limitations. Nijmegen differs greatly from other cities like Amsterdam or The Hague in terms of population density, diversity, available institutions, existing international networks and I can imagine that social life also differs from a bigger city like Amsterdam or Rotterdam (PBL 2014). The results of this research will therefore be limited to the city of Nijmegen, but this does not only have unfavourable consequences. I focussed solely on Nijmegen because limiting myself to one location gave me the opportunity to study the situation in-depth, which provided rich and detailed data. Although this research is not a case study, there are some similarities. It is, for instance, a small research focussed on one location and one research population which is studied in-depth. However, the research is too small to be called a case study. Still, some strategies might overlap. Therefore this paragraph also describes the positive and negative consequences which are related to case studies.

Focussing on one specific location may not always be appreciated in academic circles. Some might argue that a small research like this is too subjective, that the research cannot be duplicated and that results are not generalizable. However, not everyone thinks like this. In an article, Flyvbjerg (2006) discusses the five misunderstandings about case study research. One of these misunderstandings includes the division between context-dependent and context-independent knowledge. He argues that concrete, practical knowledge (which is context-dependent) is just as (if not more) valuable as general, theoretical knowledge. Case studies offer specific insights of particular cases and they can help us in really understanding why something is happening, depending on specific circumstances. Another critique regarding case studies that is often expressed, is the fact that results cannot be generalized.

Generalization is an often used practice in the natural sciences, but in social sciences this practice is not as relevant. A descriptive, phenomenological case study can certainly be of value in gaining knowledge; precisely because they give a detailed explanation of social reality. The purpose of a case study is to understand it, not to make generalizations. According to Small (2009) the importance of the single case study lies not in 'statistical significance', but rather in 'societal significance'. Case studies are often small in numbers because qualitative methods (which are often used in this kind of research) take up more time. Therefore researchers usually do not have enough cases to make generalizations. If one would want to make generalizations to a large population, a survey would be more convenient. Furthermore, it is not my intention to generalize the outcomes of this research. My aim is to contribute to the debate about cosmopolitanism in relation to knowledge workers in Nijmegen at the Radboud University through this research. Therefore the focus is on one specific location and, due to practical circumstances (e.g. time), the research population is quite small (ibid., p. 18-22; Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 219-240).

Within this research I opted for a single location, instead of comparing multiple locations (e.g. other universities in the Netherlands). I know this choice is also susceptible to critique. According to Wahyuni (2012), case study research should ideally 'use a multiple case study design involving multi-sites to be studied and using multiple methods to analyse the collected data. The rationale behind the choice of a multiple case study over a single case study is to enable comparisons between the observed practices by subjects studied in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of these practices.' (p. 73). However, due to certain limitations (e.g. time, number of respondents) I was not able to include multiple locations. Nonetheless, this would still be an interesting option for future research. The results of this research in Nijmegen could then be compared to the results of other cities within the Netherlands.

Another way to gather more respondents would be with the help of a survey. A survey can be used to collect data on a larger scale. People can complete a survey in their own time, in their own home. However, a survey mostly collects quantitative data and often uses a standardised questionnaire. This method was not the best choice for this research, since it is hard to evaluate people's experiences by limiting them to a number of answer possibilities. It can be hard for people to write down their experiences and they might open up more when you engage with them. Nonetheless, a survey (and other quantitative methods) does offer the possibility to quickly gather the information one needs. Several researchers therefore argue

for the relevance of mixed methods research (for example see Johnson et al. 2007, Newman and Hitchcock 2011, Ivankova et al. 2006).

#### §4.4 Research methods

Now that the research strategy and the research approach are clear, it is important to think about data collection and respondent selection. As will be explained in paragraph §5.3, the respondents for this research are PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. These respondents were approached with the help of the International Office. A recruitment email was sent out to several departments at the Radboud University. From there the email was distributed to international employees by the local international offices at the different faculties. Another recruitment tactic was ‘snowballing’: using one contact to help recruit another contact, who in turn can put me in touch with someone else. In the end, eleven respondents participated in this research. Their characteristics will be further explained in Chapter 6. There is of course a bias in this research because only eleven respondents were interviewed and their experiences are central to this research. This has both positive and negative consequences. Their experiences are not generalizable to all international employees at the Radboud University. However, the goal of this research is not to make generalizations. Furthermore, the recruitment email was sent to many people, but only a few responded. Some experiences of other employees might be underexposed. Nonetheless, I think this research is still reliable and valid, because different experiences are being discussed. The respondents all have different backgrounds and work at different faculties at the university. This research aims to explore the experiences of high skilled migrants, working at the Radboud University. I still think that the results offer a valuable contribution to the debate about cosmopolitanism and identity construction.

Besides extensive literature research to build a strong theoretical base, the data was collected through interviews. Prior to the interviews, the respondents were asked to fill in a short questionnaire. This questionnaire included some basic questions, for example where they were born, how old they were, what their previous education was and how long they had been in the Netherlands. It also shed some light on the characteristics of the respondents, e.g. if they were married, if they had children and what their nationality was. This information helped me to prepare for the interviews and not lose valuable time by asking these basic questions. The interviews were semi-structured. Whereas a structured interview consists of pre-set questions, which one cannot divert, the semi-structured interview is more open. There

are some pre-set questions, but this form also allows new ideas to be brought up during the interview, depending on what the respondent says. This allows the researcher to dig deeper in certain subjects that are of particular interest to the respondent. ‘The use of an in-depth qualitative interview is considered as the appropriate format for case study research because in-depth questions cannot be answered briefly. It is anticipated that the researcher would need to ask for examples or more explanation on the answer given in order to gain a deep understanding of the issues.’ (Wahyuni 2012, p. 74). By using qualitative methods, researchers are able to collect, organise and interpret textual material that is derived from interviews. It gives them the chance to explore the meanings of social constructions as they are experienced by individuals themselves. According to Yilmaz (2013), respondents can explain their experiences in detail through in-depth interviews. Open-ended questions give them the chance to elaborate on their thoughts, feelings and backgrounds. Their own words are then central to the analysis. Experiences often cannot be captured in standardised, pre-determined categories or questions. Hence, semi-structured interviews were used in this research (Wahyuni 2012, p. 69-75; Malterud 2001, p. 483-488; Yilmaz 2013, p. 313-317).

#### §4.5 Methods of analysis

After collecting the data through interviews with several respondents, this data will be analysed by using coding methods. ‘Coding is a way of evaluating and organizing data in an effort to identify and understand meanings, and thus is fundamentally an *analytical* practice.’ (Cope and Kurtz 2016, p. 650). Coding can reveal different categories and meanings, but it is also a way to create an overview of the collected data. Codes help to establish more abstract themes and make it easier to create interesting connections within the data. Basically, coding means labelling. During the analysis of the data, different labels will be ascribed to certain passages. ‘Open coding is conducted by dismantling texts and distinguishing different themes and concepts found in the data.’ (Wahyuni 2012, p. 76). Thus, coding will be an important step in the analysis of the data. I will use the software tool ATLAS.ti to make codes. ATLAS.ti is one of the leading qualitative analysis software and I am familiar with this program. These codes can then be used to search for differences or similarities in the data. This will be the central method of analysis in this research. The semi-structured interviews provided a lot of data and with coding methods this data will be analysed. The analysis will provide the answers for the research questions. In order to illustrate the data and also highlight some of the experiences of the respondents, I will use some direct quotations. This gives the

reader the chance to really understand how the respondents experience living in the Netherlands and working at the Radboud University (Cope and Kurtz 2016; Crang 2003; Longhurst 2016).

#### §4.6 Methodological reflections

During this research for my master thesis, there were also some limitations. How these circumstances influenced the process of data collection and the reliability and the validity of this research will be further explained in the coming paragraphs. Nevertheless, I am still convinced that this research is able to meet the research objective and to give reliable and valid answers to the research questions.

The respondents in this research mostly consist of PhD students, with the exception of two postdocs. Although this group of respondents may seem homogeneous, there are still differences within this group. The respondents work at different faculties at the university, with different educational backgrounds and they have different colleagues. This leads them to have different experiences, since they move around in different environments. Although some of them do work at the same department, their daily experiences still differ. So, multiple perspectives are included which contributes to the validity of this research. Since literature about this specific group of academics in relation to concepts like cosmopolitanism is still lacking, this research can contribute to the discussion.

Reliability is always a difficult subject in qualitative research. As this kind of research often depends on the opinion and experiences of people, it can be difficult to measure the reliability of a study. After all, people can change their opinion and describe the same experience with different interpretations. So, if one would want to replicate this research, the answers might not be exactly the same. One way of ensuring the reliability of research is to have a large group of respondents. I wanted to interview 20 respondents in the beginning, but due to a limited time period to collect data this was not feasible. In the end, eleven respondents were interviewed for this research. Although the number of respondents is smaller than I set out to in the beginning, I think this research is still reliable. The eleven respondents still provided me with sufficient data to answer the research questions. Their different experiences and different backgrounds (since they were not all from the same country) further strengthened the reliability of this research.

Another important aspect to think about while doing research with respondents, is ethics. It is important that research is undertaken in ways that are ethically sound. Therefore,

the names of the respondents in this research are anonymised, to protect the respondents. The respondents were also aware of this, so that they had the opportunity to speak freely. Of course, during interviews, people can say one thing and act in another way. However, I did get the impression that the respondents felt that they could speak freely when they talked about their experiences. This is also confirmed by the fact that I did not only hear about positive experiences. The respondents also shared their negative experiences and felt free to criticise the Radboud University.

Thus, although this research does have its limitations, I still believe that the results are valid and reliable. The diverse group of respondents still shows us the different experiences of starting academics working at the Radboud University in Nijmegen. The data gives us an unique insight into their daily lives. Furthermore, it is important to remember that the goal of this research is not to generalize the outcomes. The goal is to contribute to the discussion about cosmopolitanism and identity. Keeping that goal in mind, I think this research is certainly valuable.

## Chapter 5: The Nijmegen region and the respondents

This chapter will serve as an introduction to the Nijmegen region and the Radboud University. As this research solely takes place in Nijmegen, the following paragraphs will provide more context about the region. Furthermore, paragraph 5.3 will elaborate on the arguments for PhD students and postdocs as respondents.

### §5.1 Nijmegen and the international labour market

Nijmegen is a relatively large city in the Netherlands with approximately 176.000 inhabitants (Stads- en Wijkmonitor 2018). In 2008, a study titled “Feeling at home? Facilitating expats in the process of settling, working and living in the City Region Arnhem Nijmegen: a study on the composition, perceptions and needs of expats and their employers” was carried out in commission of the City Region Arnhem Nijmegen in corporation with both municipalities by *Research voor Beleid* (Research for Policy). The goal of this study was to serve as a basis for new policies aimed at attracting high skilled migrants to Arnhem and Nijmegen. The report states that ‘to effectively attract and keep expats, it is important to understand their needs and expectations when it comes to working and living. The City Region Arnhem Nijmegen currently lacks information on these matters.’ (Buiskool and Boer 2008, p. 9). This study provides more information on the current situation in the region of Arnhem and Nijmegen. This region was chosen because both cities attract skilled migrants. The Radboud University can be found in Nijmegen and Arnhem also offers Higher Vocational Education.

According to Buiskool and Boer (2008), Nijmegen employed approximately 850 high skilled migrants in 2008. They expected that this number would rise, since the demand for skilled workers is increasing. Buiskool and Boer (2008) stress the importance of adopting policies to attract these workers, since the region around Nijmegen (Eastern Netherlands) is generally not associated with job opportunities for (international) knowledge workers, since there are not many international companies in this part of the Netherlands (contrary to the Western part of the Netherlands).

‘In formulating a targeted policy for expats working and living in the City Region Arnhem Nijmegen, policy-makers must be aware that two distinct groups of expats exist: expats working for the private sector and those

working for the university. Each group differs in their composition, perceptions and expectations.’ (ibid., p. 21).

The Radboud University attracts a number of skilled migrants. These migrants expressed that their choice for Nijmegen and the Radboud University was motivated by career opportunities, an attractive scientific climate and because of study-related reasons (ibid., p. 31-41). The respondents in this study provided several answers regarding the recruitment channels used for finding information on their current job. Most of them used their academic/professional contacts, scholarships or other organised arrangements from their home university or personal contacts. This shows that informal contact between colleagues, academics and acquaintances play an important role in the mobility of high skilled knowledge workers. Having access to a professional network can help skilled migrants to become mobile (ibid., p. 42-45).

The city of Nijmegen tries to attract foreign high skilled migrants and the university is one of the main employers. Still, compared to other cities in the Netherlands, Nijmegen has a low share of foreign high skilled migrants. Most high skilled migrants work in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht or Eindhoven. According to research executed by the PBL, there were 1.062 foreign high skilled migrants in Nijmegen in 2014 against 3.913 low skilled migrants. For comparison, in Amsterdam there were 20.291 foreign high skilled migrants and 3.781 in Eindhoven, against 57.178 low skilled migrants in Amsterdam and 11.006 in Eindhoven (PBL 2014, p. 48-66).

Around the same time, the Ministry of Economic Affairs issued Decisio (a research agency) to carry out a regional report about Gelderland, the province in which Nijmegen is located. This report was, among other things, about international employees in the region. In 2013, the province had about 40.000 international employees working in different municipalities and at different companies. Of those 40.000 people, about 11% can be classified as high skilled migrants. The other 89% can be classified as regular labour migrants. So, in 2013 there were approximately 4.400 high skilled employees in the province of Gelderland (Decisio 2015, p. 9-17).

## §5.2 The Radboud University

The Radboud University in Nijmegen underlines the importance of internationalisation. In 2014 a report was published titled “Radboud University international staff and student monitor: 2013 – 2014.” (Hageman et al. 2014). The report indicated that, in 2013, around

2.000 international students and exchange students were enrolled at the university and that 23% of all academic staff was international. The Executive Board of the university is also focussed on promoting internationalisation. They want to boost internationalisation on all levels of their organisation: in research, education and operational management. It is safe to say that the Radboud University has a clear goal of increasing internationalisation in the coming years. Even though the university considers internationalisation as a priority, the report argues that ‘... we currently lack knowledge on the perceptions and opinions of international students and staff.’ (ibid., p. 5; ibid., p. 4-27).

The Radboud University tries to promote internationalisation through various programs. For example, the university has a program called the ‘Radboud Excellence Initiative’. This program was created to bring the most exceptional talents from every academic field to the Radboud University, while at the same time it strengthens international bonds between universities worldwide. To be part of this program, candidates must be nominated by an employee of the Radboud University who has received a grant (Vidi, Vici or ERC Grant), has won a Spinoza price or is a member of an internationally recognized association (e.g. KNAW, Academia Europaea). Furthermore, the Radboud University tries to promote internationalisation by financing international mobility. Foreign high skilled academics or scientists can apply for a PhD position, teaching position or research position. Through grants or scholarships foreign academics also have the chance to visit the Radboud University and become part of its community (International Office; Notitie internationalisering College van Bestuur 2013).

### §5.3 The PhD student and the postdoctoral researcher

The Radboud University also attracts foreign PhD students and postdocs. The majority of international PhD students choose to go abroad for career opportunities or they are sent by their employers. ‘Basically, PhD students invest in a PhD to be able to pursue a career that would be unattainable if they had not invested in a PhD. The PhD is needed to enter into academia. It may also be required for employment in private research labs.’ (Mangematin 2000, p. 742). International experience is getting more and more important for an academic career. International mobility offers students and researchers access to wider and more open scientific networks and this may have a positive impact on their career advancement (Cruz-Castro and Sanz-Menéndez 2010, p. 29-37; see Gopaul and Pifer 2016; Acker 2005).

Many foreign PhD students and postdocs need some time to get used to their new university and surroundings. They need to do research in a different culture and they might need to use new research methods. They can feel a bit ‘stuck’ between their old and their new university as they experience different writing practices, research methods and ethical values. So why are PhD students and postdocs interesting respondents for this research? Rizvi (2005) argues that students’ identities are changed and influenced by their mobility across national boundaries. When they travel to their new host country they experience the local culture, traditions and norms and values. But, this is not a one-sided relation. They also bring their own culture with them. ‘In this sense, they are cultural mediators.’ (ibid., p. 5). Since PhD students and postdocs are at the starting line of their academic career, they can shed a light on their experiences, expectations and future plans. Do they plan on being mobile? Can they be considered as cosmopolitans? How has mobility influenced their identity? Thinking about these questions, PhD students and postdocs are valuable respondents. Furthermore, Rizvi (2005) argues that ‘... international education is indeed a site where cosmopolitan identities are produced, but that the meaning that the students attach to cosmopolitanism is highly contradictory and is linked more to their strategic interests within the emergent global economy and culture than to any broader moral conception.’ (ibid., p. 3). So, following this line of reasoning, we can conclude that using PhD students and postdocs as respondents can provide rich data (Robinson-Pant 2009, p. 419-426; Rizvi 2005, p. 1-10).

## Chapter 6: Analysis

In this chapter the analysis of the interviews is discussed. After conducting and transcribing the interviews, the data was analysed with ATLAS.ti. The conceptual framework is the basis of this analysis. The codes that were used in the analysis, were derived from the conceptual framework. These codes will help link the data to the literature and provide an insight into the daily experiences of high skilled migrants working at the Radboud University. In total, nine codes (the nine variables out of the conceptual model) will be analysed. However, before we start with the analysis of the data, a short paragraph will elaborate on the profiles and characteristics of the respondents.

### §6.1 Profiles and characteristics

In total, eleven respondents were interviewed for this research. All of the respondents work at the Radboud University in Nijmegen, although at different faculties. This paragraph will serve as an introduction to these individuals. The data has been anonymised, so any name that will come up during this analysis is an ascribed, random name to protect the identity of the respondents.

There are three male respondents and eight female respondents. They are all around the same age, ranging from 27 years old to 41 years old. They come from different parts in the world. Three respondents were born in Europe; in Italy, Hungary and Russia. Four respondents were born in Indonesia, two in Brazil and the other two came from Mexico and Colombia. The amount of time that they had already spent in Nijmegen or the Netherlands also varied. Some were already living here for five years, while others just started their PhD and lived here for one to two years. So, the respondents are a diverse group of people with different backgrounds and different cultures.

Out of the eleven respondents, five of them are married. Some of them met their partner abroad and now lived together in the Netherlands. Others left their partner behind to pursue an academic career in Nijmegen. The decision to stay in the Netherlands or to go back to their home country was also strongly influenced through their situation at home. Two respondents also have children, so they also need to take their children's future and development into consideration when they make these kind of decisions.

All of the respondents live in the Netherlands, but not all of them live in Nijmegen. Two respondents actually live in Utrecht, for various reasons. Of the respondents who live in

Nijmegen, most were content with their place of residence. It is, of course, hard to find the perfect house or apartment (and not only for internationals). Five respondents made it clear that they would like to move somewhere else, whether to another place in Nijmegen or to another city in the Netherlands.

Furthermore, the respondents work at different faculties at the Radboud University. They work in social sciences, biology, medicine and some of them are doing research at the RadboudUMC, the university's hospital. Since the respondents work in different areas of research and at different locations at the university, they might also have different experiences working with colleagues and experience a different atmosphere. This will also be discussed in the coming paragraphs.

## §6.2 Analysis structure

The nine variables that will be analysed are as follows (in no specific order): culture, language, social network, education, nationality, citizenship, cosmopolitanism, profession and mobility. Some variables will be discussed more extensively, such as cosmopolitanism and culture, because these variables were also more frequently discussed during the interviews. This chapter is rather descriptive, since its aim is to give an overview of the data that was collected during the interviews. However, this chapter is necessary to understand the following chapter, which will bring it all together. In Chapter 7 the data will be further analysed and an answer to the research questions will be provided. Thus, the following paragraphs will shed a light on the experiences of the respondents working at the Radboud University in Nijmegen.

## §6.3 Mobility

As was stated in the literature, and was mentioned in the theoretical framework, mobility is becoming more and more important for academics (see Iredale 2001; Franzoni et al. 2014; Gopaul and Pifer 2016; Mavroudi and Warren 2013). Do these assumptions also come to the fore in the experiences of the respondents? As it turns out, they do. Every respondent acknowledged that mobility is an important aspect of their academic career.

*'It's very important to change location, change labs. For example, do two or three post-docs in different labs, so that you acquire more experience in how things work, also the social part. The structure of how it's organised, yeah, it's very important.'* – Ava, 33, Brazil

Knowledge is always evolving and in some places knowledge is more advanced than in others. Therefore many respondents also chose to become mobile, so that they were able to gain knowledge in a different setting. Most of them were also encouraged to go abroad. Working with people from different backgrounds challenged them as researchers, it gave them a new perspective because their new colleagues might approach things differently.

*'And moving here, in a sense of pursuing an academic career, was super important. I changed a lot, as a person and as a scientist.'* – Pedro, 35, Brazil

The respondents stressed that being mobile definitely has its benefits. Travelling to a different country and working in different settings not only enhanced their professional career, it also enhanced their personal life. A respondent mentioned that, to her, it was very important to gain experiences outside of her comfort zone. Being abroad, away from the 'comfortableness' of a familiar environment, challenged her to meet new people with different ideas. That was her first thought about becoming a mobile academic, to improve her skills and knowledge in an unfamiliar setting, outside of her comfort zone.

However, being mobile also has some negative aspects. Constantly going from one country to the next can be exhausting, not only physically but also mentally. It can be difficult to get used to another culture and workspace.

*'I think it's good in the curriculum, you know, to have different experiences in different places. So you can show that you can adapt to change and stuff like that. But it's difficult. Of course, if I want to change then I find something, another country that is not Mexico and not the Netherlands, and then I think it's very difficult to start over.'* – Emily, 31, Mexico

Starting over somewhere new is always difficult, also for mobile academics. Of course, it depends on your own perspective. A respondent, for instance, stressed that she only moved to the Netherlands for her PhD. She was not quite sure what she wanted to do when she finished her PhD, but she most likely will not stay here. For her, it is all temporary, and that of course affects how she experiences her stay here. Still, while most of the respondents mostly had positive experiences here, they of course missed their families back home. Being on the other

side of the world, it can be hard to maintain close contact. Luckily for the respondents, ICT developments in recent years and competing airlines have made it easier to stay in touch.

*'Yes, so Ryan Air really makes my life easy. I can go back there, I often do.'* – Isabella, 31, Italy

## §6.4 Citizenship

As high skilled knowledge migrants often travel, going from one country to another, citizenship can be an interesting topic. Do they stay a citizen in the country where they were born or do they decide to really become a citizen in their new country of residence? The respondents also struggled with these considerations. For some, especially the ones that did not come from Europe, becoming a Dutch citizen might have its advantages. A few respondents stressed that a Dutch passport could boost their mobility as it might be easier to get a visa for certain countries with a Dutch passport. The respondents from Europe had a different line of thought when being asked whether they would consider getting Dutch citizenship.

*'No... no, but I also don't really need it, right? Because I'm from the EU, I can live anywhere. I don't need [Dutch] citizenship. So that's why I would just not, never consider it.'* – Maria, 27, Hungary

*'The only reason would be to have the possibility to vote. Because I have all the rights being a EU citizen, I have all the rights. It wouldn't make a big difference or a huge difference for me.'* – Isabella, 31, Italy

Still, becoming a Dutch citizen is a complicated process which takes some time. Although it might offer new possibilities, there are still some things that need consideration. For instance, the fact that becoming a Dutch citizen might mean that they need to give up their 'other' citizenship. This detail was what most respondents struggled with. A Dutch passport might open doors for them, but it also closes others.

*'Yeah it's quite dramatic right. Because you lose your identity. Because I... I see myself as a Brazilian. I don't see myself as a Dutch, because I lived most of my live over there.'*  
– Ava, 33, Brazil

So, becoming a Dutch citizen might make things easier. For instance for respondents who met their partner while being here and the fact that Dutch citizenship would allow them to stay here. But, at the same time, it can feel like cutting ties with a part of their identity. To still be a citizen of their country of origin can strengthen their identity. It is a way to feel and stay connected to their country of origin and their family. Although they do not live there anymore, changing their citizenship might feel too drastic for some respondents.

*'It's at the moment, if I'm correct, I have to give up my Italian passport if I become a Dutch citizen right now. So that's not something I want to do or, I'm not ready for that. I will probably never be ready for that.'* – Isabella, 31, Italy

Several respondents also stressed that it would feel a bit weird, to change their citizenship. Stating that it would be strange to go back to their country on a tourist visa and having to leave again when that visa expires. Citizenship is a way for some respondents to still feel connected to their country and their loved ones. However, not everyone immediately rejected the thought of becoming a Dutch citizen. Some of them were really considering the possibilities. One respondent from Russia was even already in the process of becoming a Dutch citizen.

*'But if I would decide today, like yeah, you get a job and you need to give up your Brazilian citizenship, I'd be like, yeah sure. Here you go.'* – Pedro, 35, Brazil

*'Yes, I think it's a nice opportunity to live here, like the quality of life here is very good. So if, I don't know, in two or three years I feel like... everything is going well with my job and maybe I have, like, nice opportunities, yeah, then I will consider it.'* – Emily, 31, Mexico

## §6.5 Language

As Miglietta and Tartaglia (2009) argued, language is an important aspect of daily life. When people migrate to another country with a different language, learning the local language can help them adapt more easily. Being able to speak with locals in their own language might make it easier to integrate into the new society. However, as was also argued, migrants also value speaking their own language. High skilled knowledge migrants often resort to English, as this has become the lingua franca in academia.

Some of the respondents in this research are also trying to learn Dutch. Although they stressed that speaking Dutch is not exactly necessary, since they all thought everyone speaks English quite well in the Netherlands, some of them did want to learn the language. That does not mean that they did not struggle, since Dutch is a difficult language to learn.

*'My brain was melting every time after class. It was like, oh god. But I started again. Now I'm more confident.'* – Pedro, 35, Brazil

Some of the respondents therefore struggled with learning the language, as it takes quite some time and practice, and they are already busy with their PhD. The respondents all had different reasons for learning Dutch. While some of them thought of the Netherlands as a temporary place, others were considering several options to stay here. The ones who want to stay here stressed that learning the language was the respectful thing to do, since they planned on being in the Netherlands for a longer period of time. Learning the language is also a requirement for getting citizenship, so that also plays a role. Furthermore, they wanted to speak Dutch to really connect with the people here, not only their colleagues but also local citizens.

*'So then I would be really emerged in the culture and really know how people communicate. Because you just know a person after many, many years and when you speak the mother language of course. Because when we speak other languages, we kind of behave different right? Because we have to adapt to the language, style or way or stuff.'* – Ava, 33, Brazil

### §6.5.1 Speaking amongst colleagues

Even though English is widely used at the university, especially in international departments, Dutch employees still tend to speak Dutch. The respondents had different reactions to their colleagues speaking Dutch. Some felt left out, some made an effort to be included in the conversation and some did not mind it that much. Still, it is unfortunate that some of them felt excluded. One respondent from Hungary said that most of the communication within her department was in Dutch, including meetings and emails. She was told that if she, or any of the other international employees, had difficulty understanding the Dutch emails, they could ask someone about it or just use Google Translate. This did not really make her feel a part of the department.

*'Yeah, for example, on my first day there was this werkoverleg [work meeting], on my exact first day. And then the head of the department said [in English], "Hey everyone, so this is Maria our new PhD, hopefully she will learn Dutch and will understand these meetings." And from then on he started to speak in Dutch. And I was sitting there for one hour, on my first day, looking around like, oh my god, what did I get myself into? Well that was... weird.'* – Maria, 27, Hungary

She then found out that, since a PhD is a temporary job, you are not required to learn Dutch. So because of this negative experience on her first day, she was not really keen on learning the language. It has gotten better since, with more internationals joining her department, but this event still affected her experience. She was not the only one who struggled with colleagues that tended to speak Dutch more than English.

*'But it's also, sometimes, it's a bit weird because I feel like if I'm not there, then they can speak normally. But if I'm there, they have to... maybe to speak Dutch but very slow. Or to speak in English and so maybe this, I don't know, makes them uncomfortable.'* – Emily, 31, Mexico

*'Yeah it's difficult actually. Because the first time when I came here, when they automatically speak Dutch, I feel like I'm not welcome. And then I remind them [to speak English]. I spoke to one of my colleagues, she's Dutch, and she said that you have to be direct and say "English please" or remind them. So, "please don't speak Dutch all the time". And I reminded them the first time. Sometimes they automatically speak Dutch and at first it was bothering me. But now, well I don't care.'* – Yuli, 41, Indonesia

As it turns out, it really depends on the department you are in and the colleagues that you have. Some departments are more international with different nationalities, so it might be easier for everyone to speak English. In departments with mostly Dutch employees, they might resort to speaking Dutch more easily. Luckily, not everyone experienced the Dutch language as a barrier between themselves and their Dutch colleagues.

*'Of course they talk in Dutch when they want to discuss some issues that they consider to be silly, that "oh you don't need to know that", or something more private. But I consider that it's actually good, because I can listen and learn something. But once we are together, they are always speaking in English.'* – Ava, 33, Brazil

Some of the respondents stressed that they did not want their colleagues to speak English all the time because of them. They should be able to talk in Dutch if they wanted to. One respondent also said that, sometimes, you have to do something yourself to improve the situation. So either learn Dutch or encourage your colleagues to speak English when you are around. He said that it would be quite weird to not let people talk in their native language.

*'I mean, it's logical to speak Dutch, we're in the Netherlands. So we should be the ones, the ones learning Dutch. I mean, it's an excuse for us. It's just so easy with English. We are supposed to learn Dutch, we cannot expect people to speak English all the time, so I actually don't mind. Also at work, during coffee break or at lunch, they mostly talk Dutch. But they're also very kind to switch to English when you're around, but it doesn't happen every time. But that's just normal you know.'* – Isabella, 31, Italy

## §6.6 Profession

Doing a PhD requires a lot of your time. It is a fulltime job and according to the respondents, it sure feels like one. They spend a lot of hours in the university, sometimes working late into the night while also making sure to socialize with friends. It can be quite stressful, since you are supposed to finish within four years. However, some respondents experienced more stress about their 'end date' than others. Especially for people from outside the EU, it is essential to finish on time because once their residence permit terminates they have to leave the country. EU citizens are often a bit more flexible since they can either stay longer or are not suddenly on the other side of the world when their four years are over.

*'Because my residence permit is only valid until first of April 2019 and also with my scholarship it's... if I don't finish it by March it will be a problem.'* – Diana, 41, Indonesia

With this in mind, most respondents were also already thinking about their future plans. Some were considering the possibilities of doing a postdoc. They would not mind doing a postdoc in the Netherlands, but some thought that it would be better for their career if they moved to another country to gain more international experience.

*'Because now I need to, for my career, I need to move somewhere else of course. So coming from Italy and staying a few years in the same place is not, well it's good, but*

*they require you to move, to be on a constant move. At least for the next few years. So, I hope so, I hope it will be a plus.* – Isabella, 31, Italy

One respondent stressed that although moving to a new country would be a nice experience for him, that would not be his main motive.

*I would be looking for, for specifically which kind of lab I could get into, to be really relevant for my career. Not just going to a country because I think it's cool. That would be interesting for my personal life, but for my career probably not. And for the next years I still want to achieve some goals in my profession.* – Pedro, 35, Brazil

Most respondents were still enthusiastic about doing research and continuing a career in academia. However, while everyone kept their eyes open for possibilities, some were also thinking about working at a company. It can be difficult to find a postdoc position, especially when you are not from the EU.

*So the plan is, I think it would be, it would make sense to stay here because I do like to teach and I do like research. And I think there's more opportunities for that here. But I'm not entirely sure how easy it is for "foreign immigrants" to find jobs in academia here in the Netherlands. Because just for the PhD it was already really competitive.* – Daniel, 29, Indonesia

Another recurring theme in the future plans of the respondents are job opportunities. Almost everyone enjoyed their time here, but some missed home more than others. Eventually, being mobile can take its toll on someone. Living abroad for a number of years affects everyone in a different way. Some respondents were considering moving back home, but job opportunities might be less. This can also result in higher stress levels and insecurity.

*Sometimes I feel like I... it would be nice to go back to Mexico. Because, I don't know, I like it. But also the opportunities are less, so then... yeah. Also, I like it here but I still don't feel like home, you know. I really, yeah I don't know, I feel like in between. Sometimes I feel like I want to stay here and sometimes I feel like I want to go back. I don't know if in four years that's going to change or going to be the same, so I will just look for a job and see where I can find one.* – Emily 33, Mexico

More respondents mentioned this ‘feeling in between’. Their job requires them to be mobile, but it can be difficult to start over again in a new country. After living in different countries over the years, the concept of home might become vague. Some respondents mentioned that they did not quite feel at home yet in the Netherlands, but when they went to visit their families back home, that also did not really feel as home anymore. More on this subject will follow in the coming paragraphs about cosmopolitanism.

## §6.7 Education

All respondents came to Nijmegen to gain more knowledge. Throughout their PhD program they have the opportunity to take multiple courses, ranging from how to present yourself to a mindfulness course, which were all highly appreciated. Several respondents mentioned that they wanted to come to Nijmegen/Europe because the level of education is very high here, plus the fact that PhD programs are entirely in English. Most of them did not specifically chose Nijmegen, Google searches mostly directed them in this direction, but all of them were enthusiastic about the educational standard and eager to start their PhD.

*‘I started working and then I decided okay, I’ve had enough of work and I want to pursue a masters. And start a career in academia. So I, you know, googled, did my research and I applied for scholarships and everything. And then you know, here I am.’ – Daniel, 29, Indonesia*

They not only wanted to educate themselves, several respondents stated that they would also like to use their newly acquired knowledge to give something back.

*‘And I thought, I would learn a lot, I would return to Brazil and then I will have my own research group. I do research over there, I want to contribute to my country.’ – Ava, 33, Brazil*

*‘But for sure I would like to one day be able to expand this, all this knowledge that I’m acquiring and that I have acquired with others and help them to achieve also... greater goals than the ones that I have already. I think this is how it works.’ – Pedro, 35, Brazil*

They passionately talked about developing their own country with their newly acquired knowledge and sharing their experiences. If they, eventually, leave Nijmegen or the

Netherlands they would use their knowledge to educate others. While they were here they did not only acquire theoretical knowledge, they also got acquainted with certain Dutch traits, such as directness. Although most of them struggled with this in the beginning, they eventually started to appreciate it and also incorporated it into their own lives.

*'And people here are really good in communication. And we Brazilians are not very good in communication. So we talk a lot, but we don't communicate [laughing]. You know, the... correct things you have to communicate. Yeah it was very difficult to learn, but I'm still learning actually.'* – Ava, 33, Brazil

## §6.8 Social network

The respondents all underlined the importance of having a social network to fall back on. While they all worked very hard on their PhD, they also made sure to enjoy their time here. While it can be stressful to finish a PhD within four years and it might feel like their lives only consists of their PhD, it is also important to relax and meet with friends and do other things that they enjoy.

*'Yes, that's very important. Because I see people who just do the PhD, they don't enjoy the things, they get frustrated very easily and very fast. Because that's the only thing that makes their life fulfilled.'* – Ava, 33, Brazil

It certainly takes some effort to get to know people and meet new friends in a foreign country. Some respondents struggled more with this than others. A few respondents stated that it took some time before they established a social network in the Netherlands. Of course, you can not immediately be friends with everyone and a lot of it also depends on your personality. Some respondents were more outgoing and had less trouble making friends than others. Cultural differences and different perspectives also played a role in establishing a social network.

During the interviews, their social network was a recurring topic. Since there is a lot of information about this topic, this paragraph will be subdivided into two subparagraphs. One paragraph will focus on the social interactions at work with colleagues and the other paragraph will focus more on social interactions with friends and family.

### §6.8.1 Getting along with colleagues

Several respondents mentioned that they found it more difficult to make friends during their PhD than when they were a student. Working on their PhD is a big part of their daily life and it can be difficult to meet new people outside of work or the university. You have to find other activities to get to know people. This can be a challenge, as one respondent commented that she met all her friends through work, because she did not really meet people outside of academia. While most respondents got along with their colleagues – both Dutch and international – some struggled to really make a connection. When do you stop being just colleagues and start being friends?

*'Well my feeling is that here, I just, I have colleagues... a few of them maybe I could, I don't know, I would consider them friends. I don't know if they consider me a friend. So that's the thing.'* – Julia, 31, Colombia

A similar feeling was mentioned by another respondent. Especially respondents with a more 'Latin' background (so from Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, Italy), stated that they had a different cultural perspective on friendships. One respondent, from Colombia, said that she definitely got along better with other Spanish people or Italians, because she felt like they were more culturally similar.

*'I didn't have many Dutch friends. And for me it was difficult and weird. Because in Mexico it's normal that you have classes with people and then they are your friends at the end of the semester. And then it was more or less the same when I came to Nijmegen. Because, most of my colleagues are Dutch and then they are really nice, really helpful and everything, but there's always this barrier between work and friendship, or something like that. So even if we go out to have drinks or something, I really don't feel a lot of connection.'* – Emily, 31, Mexico

*'I feel better adapted now, but also because, well I have nice Dutch colleagues, but right now I'm more hanging out with either Colombians or with a group of internationals. So I think now my life here is much more... comfortable and less stressful. But this is not necessarily because I found a bunch of Dutch friends that I started hanging out with, it's more... because I got more support from foreigners.'* – Julia, 31, Colombia

Most respondents found it easier to befriend other internationals, because they are ‘in the same boat’. They are also away from home, away from their friends and family and to have this in common can be the start of a friendship. That does not mean that their Dutch colleagues are not nice to them or that they never see each other outside of work. Their Dutch colleagues are really nice and helpful, but to really get to know someone can be difficult. Another recurring comment was that Dutch people often already have an established social network and it can be quite difficult to become a part of that. Furthermore, a respondent mentioned that people told her that making friends with Dutch people could be difficult because they know that she is going to leave at some point. So why invest time in meeting someone that is going to leave?

*‘But also, how you reflect on this depends a lot on your personality. Because if you are like, more extrovert, it’s way easier to connect. But if you are introvert, then you don’t really make the effort to, yeah, get in. And what I actually realise is it’s very easy to have the first contact with Dutch people, but it’s more difficult to get deeper in the friendship. But then you have to... that was my actual strategy: keep trying.’ – Ava, 33, Brazil*

Luckily, most respondents had positive experiences with their colleagues. One respondent mentioned that her colleagues regularly asked her how life was going and that they were really interested in her life. Another respondent stated that her boss also played a big part in how they all get along at work. He really promoted interaction between them, both Dutch and international colleagues, and this really helped her to establish a social network with her colleagues.

## §6.8.2 Friends and family

When asked about if they had more Dutch or international friends, the responses were mixed. In the literature, there is quite some information about the ‘international bubble’. This mostly concerns students, but some of the respondents were definitely in an international bubble. That is not necessarily a bad thing, since common experiences are often the starting point of a friendship. Still, it was interesting to see that the respondents were often more in contact with other internationals.

*‘Well it’s true, it’s easier to meet international people. Because everybody comes here alone, everybody’s looking for people to, well sort of have a new family or a new group*

*of friends, so they are much more, not open, but they all have the same needs. Whereas Dutch people already have their friends, their families, so they have less time also.’ – Isabella, 31, Italy*

*‘It’s funny that we talk about internationalisation but then if you’re really in a group with your other peers from your nation, you really just stick together.’ – Maria, 27, Hungary*

Another example can be provided by the Indonesian respondents that were interviewed. A few (not all) talked about the Indonesian association in Nijmegen. Apparently there are not many Indonesians at the Radboud University, but they are very close to the people from the association. They meet at least once per month, for activities or just eating together. Although the respondents missed their families at time, the Indonesian association made them feel a bit more closer to home. Their social network mostly consisted of other Indonesians, which really strengthened their ties to Indonesia.

However, for most respondents it took some time to establish a social network. A respondent mentioned that she learned a lot in the years she now lived abroad. She started to appreciate her connections with people more. Because when you live at home, close to your friends and family, those connections are self-evident. Living outside of your comfort zone really challenges you to meet new people. By now she has a stable social network, but it definitely took some time. The respondents all had different strategies to establish a social network, for example trying to find groups with the same interests. And most of all, to just keep trying.

*‘But I was also not pushing too much to become friends. I think it should be something more natural. I don’t think it’s hard, it’s just a process of knowing each other and sharing a common interest or goal.’ – Pedro, 35, Brazil*

*‘I met, well I met a lot of people. Of course I become close friends with some and with others not. Well they are not like really friends, but people that I know. That... yeah I never felt lonely or... yeah I had a really positive [experience].’ – Isabella, 31, Italy*

*‘The social aspect was actually fine because I’m very sociable, so then it was not a problem to make friends or to get into contact with Dutch people. Because people are very polite, and it gives a nice welcoming feeling.’ – Ava, 33, Brazil*

It might have taken some respondents more time than others, but overall they are pretty satisfied with their social network. Some of them also really made an effort to befriend Dutch people. This made them feel more integrated and more at home. To have a good, stable social network is also important for someone's wellbeing. Some respondents mentioned that they missed their friends and family back home, but with today's technology that is not a big issue anymore.

*'The people I miss, but then it's with technology, it's really relatively easy to get over that, right? Skype and WhatsApp and yeah, it's not a problem. I still talk to my parents quite often. Which is good. And they seem to be quite happy. It makes it more difficult for me if I... for example, if they're sick then I get worried about their health, it makes it more difficult of course to kind of take care of them because of the distance.'* – Daniel, 29, Indonesia

Thus, it can be hard to make friends at first. However, over time, all respondents found other people with similar interests and became good friends. Dutch people might be difficult to approach at first and it might be difficult to get into their inner circle, but in the end it turns into a long-lasting friendship. These social networks often also transcend national borders. The respondents stayed in touch with friends back home and also stayed in touch with new friends who moved to another country.

*'Yeah all the time. WhatsApp or like, with my family, sometimes they call me, sometimes I call them. Sometimes I also Skype with friends, or like, there's always someone coming to visit. I think every year at least two people come to visit. Like friends or family, so then it's nice to see them here. And I also go back once a year at least.'* – Emily, 31, Mexico

## §6.9 Culture

Moving to another country with different cultural norms and values is always a challenge. It takes some time to integrate, or, in the words of some respondents, to adapt to a new society. Most of them did not really have a "culture shock" when they got here, but there were still some things that they needed to get used to. An often heard remark, not only in the interviews but in general, is that it takes some time to get accustomed to Dutch directness or straightforwardness.

*'Yeah I think one of the biggest things I saw when I arrived was the directness. So, yeah, I didn't... sometimes it was weird to, that people tell you when they don't agree with you, very straightforward, no. So at the begin I was like, I thought that was like a bit rude or something, but then I understood, okay, no, they don't see it, there's nothing bad to know the truth. But for me, we always have a way of saying things, that it doesn't sound so, so direct.'* – Emily, 31, Mexico

*'I mean, the straightforwardness is a little bit, is the toughest thing to get used to of course. Because you can be straightforward about a lot of things. Including things that I don't necessarily, that I am not necessarily comfortable with at first. But then after a while you kind of get used to it and you're like, "okay, I appreciate straightforwardness so that's, let me try to be straightforward with you as well". And that took some practice, but then in the end it actually works out as well.'* – Daniel, 29, Indonesia

So, eventually, most respondents started to really appreciate straightforwardness and also incorporated it into their daily lives. They also picked up on other things that they associated with Dutch culture. For instance, multiple respondents commented on the fact that Dutch people are very structured. Dutch people tend to plan ahead and this sparked some respondents to also start planning their lives more. Furthermore, respondents mentioned that people in the Netherlands are more rational, thinking about the implications of their decisions. One respondent said that that is what she likes about the Netherlands. People are quite rational, and that was what she was missing in Colombia, where people tend to be more emotional, too emotional sometimes. So, she also strived to be more rational. Several respondents stated that it was refreshing to experience “the Dutch way of life” since it was different than what they were used to and it shaped them as a person. Another thing that really seems to be at the heart of Dutch culture is bicycles. Although not everyone was used to riding a bike, or the fact that it seems like there are more bikes than people in the Netherlands, they all came around and enjoyed to ride their bike around town.

*'The whole cultural aspects of the Dutch way of living, for example also how to deal with money, how to deal with family, and to learn also about the individualistic part was very important for me.'* – Ava, 33, Brazil

*'This kind of progressive or open-minded factor. That was really a factor to make, which made my decision to come here.'* – Pedro, 35, Brazil

*'I feel like certain values of the Dutch culture like staying healthy, being active, being efficient productive, is what I like. And I want to, I kind of associate myself with that. Even though I was late today for this meeting. I felt so bad, like, I haven't done that in years! Why do I have to be late?'* – Julian, 29, Russia

*'I would say in general it's more like a... like I think that, from my point of view, the Dutch life is more, or the Dutch philosophy is more like "me first". But in a positive way. Like first me because I want to have my own wellbeing and then I see it in the streets, like people like to go out and have dinner late, and have a good life.'* – Julia, 31, Colombia

*'Safety also. That's also a very important thing. I think it's a safe country and I cycle at night, in the day, everywhere. And I never felt unsafe. So that is also very much something that I appreciate.'* – Isabella, 31, Italy

Still, adapting to Dutch society can take some time. While the aspects mentioned above positively influenced the respondents, some still did not feel really connected to Dutch culture. As was mentioned in paragraph 5.8 (Social network), some respondents feel that Dutch people are a bit distant. This feeling was mostly shared by respondents from South America. They were used to call someone a friend after hanging out for some time and having things in common, whereas in the Netherlands they had the feeling that they really needed to know someone for a long period of time before they could call them a friend. These different cultural perspectives on friendships influenced their social network.

You might think that people from Europe had an easier process of adapting to Dutch society because they are already familiar with a European lifestyle. However, although respondents from Europe did identify with some aspects of Dutch culture, they also found it hard to integrate into society here.

*'And then these two and a half years I also figured that it just is a very different culture, even though we all look the same and we all, like if you go to Hungary, people behave the same way like here, but still there are so many cultural differences of course. But maybe I phrased it in the wrong way, it's not really hard to integrate, but hard to adapt, maybe that's how I would phrase it.'* – Maria, 27, Hungary

Going from one country to another and experiencing different cultures comes with positive and negative outcomes. A respondent from Indonesia mentioned that you start to develop a

kind of adaptability. You learn new things in each country and some things you appreciate while others do not appeal to you as much.

*'And I think it's because as a kid, since I was 2 I've always been moving around. So, I know my own culture and I know the good parts of it and I also know the crappy parts of course. But I don't completely identify with it, because I've also taken in stuff from other cultures.'* – Daniel, 29, Indonesia

So, as the respondents go from one country to another, they take things from that culture that they like. It might make them think about their own culture and certain values that they appreciate or not appreciate at all. Every new experience enriches them as a person and encounters with different cultures makes them think about their own culture and how they are used to behave in certain situations. Another often heard comment during the interviews was the level of individuality in the Netherlands. The respondents liked the fact that they can be on their own here and focus on themselves. Thus, by incorporating some Dutch cultural traits, they also grow as a person. They might become more cosmopolitan as well, but more on that later.

*'Yes, I think it's a big plus, knowing people from everywhere in the world. And living their lives and joining them in their part of their lives. Or, in a personal point of view, it gives you a lot. I was in the wedding of a friend of mine, a month ago, and there were 18 different nationalities. Yes, a lot. And we met at work. So that's, yes, probably what it means to be an international and what it brings to you. It was really beautiful. And I think it really enriches you as a person, to open your mind.'* – Isabella, 31, Italy

Living away from home also gave them the opportunity to reflect on their own country. How things are going in the Netherlands might not be ideal, but how it was back home was also not always perfect. Perspectives change over time. A respondent from Indonesia said that, in the beginning, she would complain about the situation she was in. When she was in Indonesia, she would complain that certain things would never happen in Nijmegen and vice versa when she was in Nijmegen. Eventually, it made her appreciate her time in Indonesia and the Netherlands more, because it are two entirely different countries. Another respondent mentioned that it took some time to see the negative aspects of Dutch culture, because in the beginning everything seemed perfect. After this period, she felt like she could adapt better to

Dutch society because she was able to also acknowledge things she did not entirely agree with.

*'I have also discussed this with some people that, you have this idea in your head that everything is good where you were, no? And then you go back and then you realize that it's not so nice. So then it's like, you're always with these ideas in your head that it's better somewhere else.'* – Emily, 31, Mexico

*'Because I also wanted to live something very different from my own culture.'* – Ava, 33, Brazil

Lastly, when high skilled knowledge migrants come to the Radboud University they are not left alone to figure this all out by themselves. Through the International Office several introduction days and workshops are provided, to make them familiar with the university and life in the Netherlands. The respondents really appreciated this effort to help them feel welcome and at home. Still, there is some room for improvement, as one respondent mentioned.

*'Yeah and they give the foreigners this kind of intercultural workshop, so for us to know, that okay you might face these situations. But then, I think it would be also nice if to Dutch people, because people have admitted that more and more immigrants come, I think it would be nice if the Dutch people also get some kind of orientation about how other countries are. Because I think it's just unavoidable that foreigners will start coming more and more often.'* – Julia, 31, Colombia

### §6.9.1 Work culture

High skilled knowledge migrants not only need to get used to a different culture in the country that they are living in, they also need to get used to a new work atmosphere. Overall, the respondents were quite satisfied with the working climate at the Radboud University. Multiple respondents stated that they really appreciated the fact that there is not much hierarchy in their department. They felt like they were treated equal. They could talk to their boss or supervisor when they wanted to. In other countries they did experience a hierarchy at work and it was refreshing to not have the same experience in Nijmegen. This made their working experience more enjoyable. Another important aspect of working at the Radboud

University was the level of independence and individuality. This was something that some respondents missed in their previous experiences, but they really appreciated it now.

*'Because I am a very independent person and I am independent, but that doesn't mean that I cannot be cooperative. It's just that I need autonomy in my work. And I can, while doing that, also be cooperative. But in Indonesia I cannot do that. Every time we have be in a group of colleagues, I don't like it.'* – Diana, 41, Indonesia

*'And in a work related way, yeah, more or less, people in the university always work hard. So from the lab that I came from to this, there was not much difference. Except for the fact that people here have a working agenda. They have like, they work from 8 to 5 or something. And in Brazil it's like you work whenever. In Brazil you work until you finish. You have probably more hours to come into the lab and you don't have an hour point where you should leave.'* – Pedro, 35, Brazil

*'Because I really like how everything is organised here. Well, and the workers protection here is like social benefits, that's what I like. That people get a vacation here when they deserve it and in the United States I have many friends who work without vacation or work with 10 days of vacation in two years.'* – Julian, 29, Russia

One respondent even mentioned that, as a part of the 'Dutch way of life', she felt that the work-life balance was better here. People at the university worked hard, but they also made sure to live a good life. This was very important to her. Researchers can become quite busy with their projects, especially if you are doing a PhD, but it is still important to relax and find a good balance between work and free time. While she is here, she also learned to find that balance.

## §6.10 Nationality

Nationality, the status of belonging to a particular nation (whether by birth or by naturalization) can have different implications for everyone. People can attach value to their nationality since it can be an important factor in identity processes. To have a certain nationality makes you belong to a particular nation and can provide a national identity, e.g. a shared ethnicity and culture. The respondents interpreted their nationality in different ways. Some really valued their nationality as a central aspect of their identity, while others did not think about it that much.

*'I'm not attached to, I don't have this nationalistic idea of, I need to be Brazilian or this would disrupt my image as the person who I see I am. So. But I also don't spend that much time thinking about it.'* – Pedro, 35, Brazil

Nationality can especially play an important role in the life of migrants, since their nationality still binds them to their nation and their family. This sentiment was also expressed by multiple respondents. Their nationality makes them feel attached to their country of birth, it gives them roots.

*'If I give up my Colombian nationality I would feel like, then I would feel like... like that would be cutting completely with Colombia. That would feel really, that would feel sad.'*  
– Julia, 31, Colombia

So, to distance themselves from their nationality can be quite hard. This issue also came up during questions about their citizenship and Dutch nationality. As of now, the Dutch government wants to limit dual nationality as much as possible. There are some exceptions, but if people want to acquire Dutch nationality through naturalisation, they are required to give up their other nationality (Government of the Netherlands, 2018). Several respondents stated that they were not quite ready for something so drastic, as it felt like they would be cutting ties with their country of birth completely. However, a few respondents had a different outlook on this situation.

*'To me, nationality is about where my heart is. Where I belong. Not only on the piece of paper or passport. My heart doesn't belong to Indonesia anymore.'* – Diane, 41, Indonesia

This respondent interpreted nationality as a more abstract concept. In her eyes, nationality is not bound to a specific geographical place. She already felt Dutch and identified with the Netherlands, even though she was not officially Dutch. So, nationality is an important aspect of her identity, not in the sense of geographical attachment, but more in a way of emotional attachment.

## §6.11 Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism is not really an every-day term that is used in conversations. People may not see themselves as a cosmopolitan, although they can be defined as such by others. So, during the interviews with the respondents, I did not want to put words into their mouths. They did not explicitly describe themselves as cosmopolitans, but they definitely shared some characteristics.

### §6.11.1 Feeling at home

A statement that is often made of cosmopolitans, is that they feel at home everywhere. They easily switch between different countries and cultures, always at ease. How well does this correspond with the experiences of the respondents? While some had more difficulty adapting to the Netherlands, others immediately felt at home here. Their experiences of feeling at home here are related to other aspects of their daily life, for instance how satisfied they are with their social network, their job and even the house or apartment they live in. How the respondents view their stay here also plays an important role. Several respondents stated that, at first, working and living in the Netherlands was a temporary experience. So, to look at their situation as a temporary experience did not always lead to an attachment to the Netherlands. This line of thought corresponds with the idea of cosmopolitanism and always being on the move, looking for new experiences.

*'I think in my situation or like I guess in the situation of, we foreigners who live like this way, it comes... your brain kind of adapts that you have to feel fine wherever you are.'* –  
Julia, 31, Colombia

So, when does someone feel at home? Several respondents stated that they had everything they needed to feel at home here. Of course they missed their families, but they already established a social network in the Netherlands and staying in touch with relatives has become easier over the years. A few respondents also talked about how they missed certain foods, but that, if they really wanted to eat a particular dish, most of the time they could get all the ingredients and cook it themselves. Eating a particular dish from back home made them feel home here as well, as it made them feel connected to their country of origin.

*'I guess it's also how you define home right. So most of the time people say that home is where your, you know where they're born and stuff. And I can totally say that by that*

*definition then home is definitely Indonesia. But I mean, over time, I kind of learned to define home as where my significant others are. So, I don't know. Well right now, this is home. But Indonesia is also home because my parents are there. So it's, I have two homes. Can I say that? Yeah I'm going to say it anyway.'* – Daniel, 29, Indonesia

More respondents followed this line of reasoning. Their definition of home has changed since they became mobile. Home is no longer a fixed place, but it has become more fluid. Many respondents also said that they had multiple homes now. Their family would always mean home to them, but they established a life here and made their own home in the Netherlands.

*'Yes I feel a bit attached to the Netherlands. I feel here... more or less the same as I would feel in Brazil. If it would help to understand, it's like my deepest feeling is like I belong to... both parts. More to Brazil of course, but I don't really have now roots, like okay in Brazil I can go back and I have my family over there. But it's not like I have something fixed.'* – Pedro, 35, Brazil

How did the respondents then feel when they visited their families back home? Several respondents stressed that it also felt a bit weird to go home again, because it did not really feel like home anymore. A respondent mentioned that this made her feel 'in between', because she did not feel entirely at home in either places. Being mobile and living abroad for a number of years has changed the way the respondents view their home and home country.

*'But then when I go there [Colombia], it's so crazy, because many times I don't feel like I belong there because... just you go out and you see the prices raised a lot. So in my mind things were much cheaper when I left and now just everything changed. The house, I go to visit my parents and then everything has changed in the neighbourhood. The city. Every time I go, the city has a new building and it's too crazy now for me to go there.'* – Julia, 31, Colombia

*'Yeah now I don't know anymore. I have memories, like that feeling at home, but if I return there [to Brazil] I don't know if I fit in the society, because now I'm just so used to being more straightforward and... and the way that people behave here, it's so different. The choices people make, every day, I'm so different. Because when people travel abroad and they spend more than one year, there is always this that you are in between. That you don't fit in your own culture anymore, that you... and because especially I didn't find...*

*myself I really had this strong identification with people here. So yeah. It's, it would be very hard, I don't know if I would feel at home.* ' – Ava, 33, Brazil

So, like cosmopolitans, they are not really attached to a particular country. They feel in between because they are moving from one place to another. They do start to feel at home here and several respondents stated that they did feel attached to the Netherlands. The question remains if that attachment is temporary or permanent. Several respondents said that they want to stay here longer or even start a family in the Netherlands. Can they then still be considered as cosmopolitans?

### §6.11.2 World citizens

As was stated before, in this master thesis the focus will be on world citizenship as an expression of cosmopolitanism. This subject was already touched upon in previous paragraphs. The respondents each have different experiences towards their citizenship and nationality. Not all of them can be classified as cosmopolitans, but some of them do share some characteristics. Being mobile made them feel attached to the world as a whole and not specifically just their country of birth.

*I am attached to Italy, definitely I am. But, no, I am definitely more open, I feel closer to the world, as to say than I was before. I am a proud Italian for all things, but at the same time I would not live in Italy at the moment. (...). So no, I would feel... I am Italian, I will always be Italian, but I feel more like a citizen of the world.* ' – Isabella, 31, Italy

Experiencing different cultures made them rethink their views on citizenship and being a global citizen. Being mobile made them feel closer to the world. This does not mean that they no longer feel attached or connected to their country of birth, but rather that their connection to the world expanded.

*'So the first year was hard, but now I prefer to think that I'm a citizen of the world. Then thinking I'm from here or from there, because if you start thinking too much about it, it's like, oh no, I don't belong anywhere. If I would be here for just 1-2 years and I know that I leave, I don't get attached. But at some point I realised, okay, I'm staying here quite long. Now I could admire it, like I just prefer to think I like to be happy wherever I'm living. Could be that we move somewhere else, to Italy or Sweden, to who knows where.*

*So it's more like your mind goes into "okay, let's enjoy the moment" and the now.'* –  
Julia, 31, Colombia

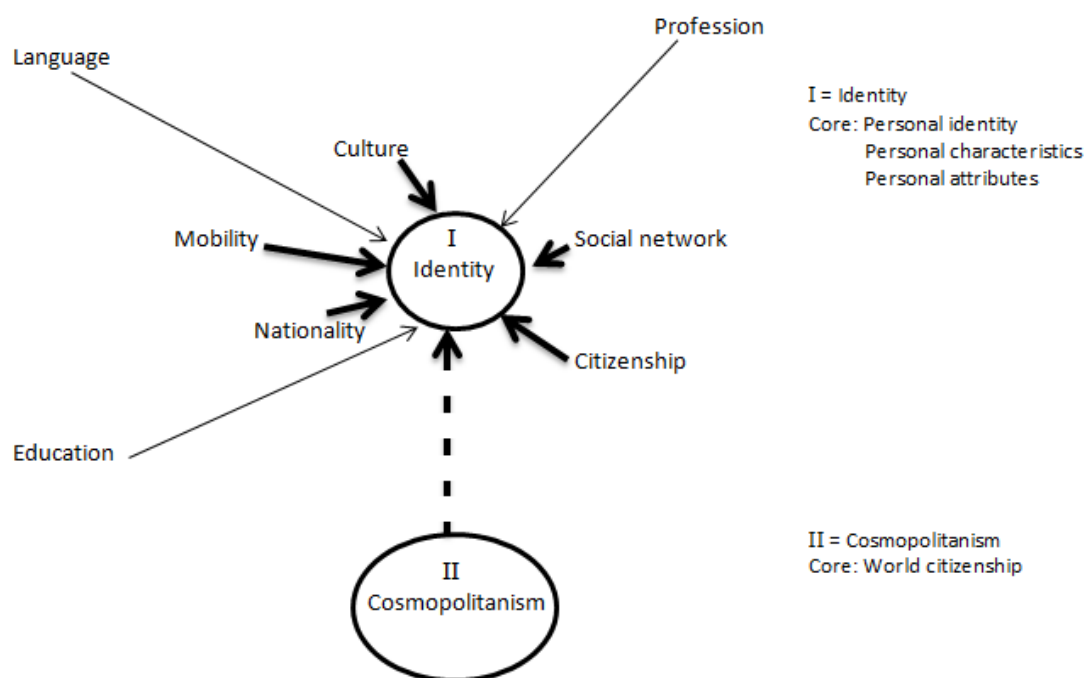
Being mobile also made the respondents more aware of what was happening in the world. Their worldview expanded, and as was argued in previous paragraphs, this experience made them look at things differently back home. As global citizens they still feel attached to certain places, but it also strengthened their attachment to the world.

*'I just don't feel like... that a passport has any value for me. It just makes my life difficult. And Russian political situation in the world hasn't been improving in the last five years, so more and more countries want to put all kinds of, want to disconnect from Russia politically or we... as we discussed, the Russian citizenship hasn't made my, it doesn't help my ability in the world and as a scientist you have to be mobile.'* – Julian, 29, Russia

This respondent mentioned that he definitely feels more like a citizen of the world. However, he feels like his Russian citizenships holds him back. So, he is in the process of obtaining Dutch citizenship. He would like to move freely around the world and Dutch citizenship could really help him, his access to the world would expand immediately. So, for him Dutch citizenship is a kind of intermediate stage to becoming a citizen of the world.

## Chapter 7: Results

In this chapter, the results of the analysis of the data will be discussed. Chapter 6 provided an insight into the experiences of the respondents and showed how they feel and think about certain topics. After analysing the variables on their own, this chapter will bring them together. The conceptual framework also plays a role in this analysis. However, while analysing the data I came to the conclusion that the conceptual model would benefit from some changes. Therefore, an adjusted model is presented below.



How do the different variables relate to each other? How do the variables relate to identity and what role does cosmopolitanism play in the identification process of the respondents? And lastly, how do identity and cosmopolitanism interact with each other? The following paragraphs aim to answer these questions.

### §7.1 Uncovering identities

As was mentioned before, identities are constructed out of different aspects. The variables presented in the conceptual framework all played a role, although in different magnitudes, in the construction of the identity of the respondents. The respondents may share the same characteristics, but as Somers (1994) stated, that does not mean that they have the same experiences and develop similar identities (*ibid.*, p. 634-636).

The respondents identified with the different variables, but some variables had a greater impact on the construction of their identity than others. This is now visualized in the conceptual model. The variables that are closer to the circle of identity played a bigger role in the identification process of the respondents. This is also made clear by the thickness of the arrows. The variables nationality, mobility, culture, social network and citizenship have a stronger relation with identity (hence the thicker arrows) than the other variables. The variables language, profession and education are further away from the circle of identity. Their influence on the identification process of the respondents is not as significant and so these arrows are also thinner. The concept of cosmopolitanism has a slightly different position. As chapter 6 showed, none of the respondents explicitly identified as a cosmopolitan. However, the respondents do have some cosmopolitan characteristics. Therefore the relation between cosmopolitanism and identity is visualized with a discontinuous arrow. This shows that cosmopolitanism *can* be an important aspect of identification, but this is not the case for every respondent. When it does play a role in one's identity, it can be quite significant (hence the thickness of the arrow).

Throughout the interviews it became clear that becoming mobile was one of the biggest influences on their identity. Becoming mobile and moving from one country to another led them to experience different cultures, different people, a different way of life and this changed their worldview. For some respondents, becoming mobile meant that they felt less attached to their country of birth. Since people often identify with their country of birth, this experience certainly influenced their identity. However, for other respondents this experience led to the exact opposite. Some respondents felt an even stronger connection or attachment to their country of birth.

Mobility also influenced other variables in the conceptual framework. Becoming mobile changed the way the respondents viewed their own culture, their social network, their nationality, their citizenship and their profession. Travelling to different countries exposed them to several experiences that changed the way they looked at themselves and the things they identified with. Their worldview is no longer confined to a single country. The respondents learned from their experiences and encounters with different cultures and different individuals. They incorporated cultural traits from other cultures that they identified with, like Dutch directness. They still identify with their own culture back home, but this is no longer the only culture they identify with.

Giorgi (2016) mentioned a few aspects which shape one's identity and most correspond with the variables in the conceptual model. However, the interviews show that the

respondents do not identify with each variable to the same extent. Some variables were more important in the construction of their identity than others, as was shown in Chapter 6. Some variables influenced their daily lives, like language (and specifically the Dutch language), but this did not really play a big part in their identity construction. Their profession and education are also a part of their identity, but becoming mobile did not alter this part of their identity drastically. They identified as a scientist or an academic, but in their daily life they also constructed their identity around other aspects. Their identity as an individual is made up of different aspects and their profession is only a part of it. Culture, nationality and their social network played a bigger role in their identity construction, which is now visualized in the adjusted conceptual model. Although cosmopolitanism is incorporated into the conceptual model, none of the respondents explicitly identified as a cosmopolitan. This does not mean that they do not have any cosmopolitan characteristics, but that they do not identify themselves as a cosmopolitan. As it turns out, several respondents could be classified as a cosmopolitan. Their identity is not just solely constructed around cosmopolitanism. As was discussed in the literature, individuals can have multiple identities, depending on the context and the people we surround ourselves with.

Thus, when we take a closer look at the identity construction of high skilled migrants, mobility is one of the biggest influences on their identity. Becoming mobile results in all kinds of experiences which shape the respondents' identity. These experiences change the way they think about their nationality, citizenship, culture, social network, language, etc. and how they identify with these aspects. Chapter 6 showed that each respondent has an unique experience and that they construct their identity in different ways. Becoming mobile can either be a positive or a negative experience and this also influences their identity construction.

## §7.2 The cosmopolitan

As was mentioned before, none of the respondents actually used the word cosmopolitanism. However, the respondents do have some cosmopolitan characteristics. Becoming mobile allowed them to live a more cosmopolitan lifestyle. The respondents interact with people from different cultures and their social network transcends national borders. They are no longer limited to their nation-state; their social environment has become much bigger than that. The respondents are more aware of global events while also following the news back home. The concept of home also changed as a result of becoming mobile. Several respondents stated that

they felt at home in different places. Home was no longer attached to a specific locality, but had more to do with emotional attachment. Travelling from one country to another, the respondents (although not all of them) were able to feel at home in these different places. Their experiences largely follow what is described in the literature about cosmopolitanism, as mentioned by Pollock et al. (2000), Beck and Szainder (2006) and Smith (2007).

As was discussed in Chapter 6, several respondents stated that they felt like citizens of the world, rather than citizens of a particular nation-state. Although they did not describe themselves as cosmopolitans, they do fit the description within this research. Again, mobility played a big part in feeling more connected to the world as a whole. New experiences changed their worldview and made them feel less attached to a specific nation-state. However, this does not mean that they do not feel attached to any place at all. As Bochove and Engbersen (2015) argued, individuals can lead a cosmopolitan lifestyle and also feel attached to certain places. The respondents stressed that they did feel attached to the Netherlands and their country of birth (although to a lesser extent), but overall they felt attached to the world. Local attachment is still important to feel like they belong somewhere. Cosmopolitans are often portrayed as travelling individuals that do not get attached and are always planning their next move (see for instance Nederveen Pieterse 2006; Mahroum 2000, 2001). However, during the interviews it became clear that individuals can have cosmopolitan characteristics and still feel the need for local attachment. To be a cosmopolitan, you do not need to be on a constant move. Local attachment is often important to integrate or adapt to a new society, establish a social network and to feel like home.

Thus, when we take a closer look at the cosmopolitan features of the respondents, the variables in the conceptual model influenced their sense of cosmopolitanism. Their cosmopolitan lifestyle is characterised by their desire to be mobile and become world citizens. Speaking different languages, interacting with different cultures and maintaining a social network across borders has changed their worldview. They are not cosmopolitan at all times, but these cosmopolitan experiences have enriched their lives.

### §7.3 Assembled identities

Another interesting aspect about the conceptual framework is the interaction between the concept of identity and cosmopolitanism. What is happening in this exchange? How do identity and cosmopolitanism relate to each other and do the respondents then develop a cosmopolitan identity? As was discussed in Chapter 6, every respondent has an unique

experience in the Netherlands. Several respondents can be classified as a cosmopolitan within this research. They enjoy living in another culture, have a stable social network, feel like global citizens and would start over in another country without a second thought. However, not all respondents feel like this. A few respondents struggled to adapt to the Dutch society and plan to go back home after their four years are over. Different experiences lead to different identification processes. By travelling they all became a little bit cosmopolitan, but only some of them really identified with cosmopolitanism. For those respondents, cosmopolitanism can be seen as a part of their identity. They do not necessarily express themselves as a cosmopolitan in their everyday life, but as Howard (2006) argues, their identity depends on the context and the people they surround themselves with. Still, cosmopolitanism is only a part of their identity. Their identity is not solely constructed around the concept of cosmopolitanism, it is made up out of many different aspects. The respondents still identify with their nationality, because it reminds them of their family and the place they grew up in. In certain situations, for instance when they hang out with people with the same nationality, their nationality is a big part of their identity in that moment. Thus, being cosmopolitan does not mean that nationality and citizenship are meaningless, it just is another aspect of their identity. As Bochove and Engbersen (2015) argued, cosmopolitanism only plays a minor role in their identification process. They also argued that migrants still identify with their homeland and that this does play a major role in their identification process. Again, this turned out to be true. Lastly, Bochove and Engbersen (2015) stated that migrants do not identify themselves with their current place of residence. However, this research has showed different results. For the respondents in this research, their current place of residence is also important for their identification process. Several respondents stated that they felt Dutch and identified with Dutch culture and the Netherlands. Thus, the focus should not only lie on cosmopolitanism, local attachment also influences their identity. ‘The’ cosmopolitan identity does not exist, because every individual gives their own meaning to the concept.

#### §7.4 Notable differences

There are several noticeable differences between the respondents. For five out of the eleven respondents, this was not their first time living abroad. They already experienced living in another country before and this influenced their experience here. In a way, they already knew what to expect and how they would feel in a different environment. Their previous experiences helped them to adapt easier. These respondents also had a stable, international

social network and overall found it easier to make new friends. They were also open to the idea of moving to another country and starting over again when their work in the Netherlands was finished. Their identity was already more constructed around the idea of mobility and they already had cosmopolitan experiences.

The experiences of the respondents also differed in another aspect, namely the fact that they work at different faculties of the university. The respondents are from the social sciences, the biology department and a few of them work at the Radboud UMC (the hospital). Because they all work at different faculties at different locations on the university campus, they all encounter different people. This also influences how they meet new people and how they interact with their colleagues. For instance, the hospital has its own restaurant. While most employees of the university eat at the Refter (the university's central restaurant), employees working at the hospital also have the possibility to stay there. Thus, this is one of the ways in which interaction between the hospital and other faculties might be limited. Respondents working at the hospital might therefore interact more with their colleagues than respondents working at the other faculties. The respondents that work at the faculties that are more centrally located on campus might have more interactions with employees from different faculties because it is easier to run into them. However, this is something that might be interesting for future research, as this was not one of the main objectives of this research.

## Chapter 8: Conclusion, reflection and recommendations

The aim of this master thesis is to further develop the theory about cosmopolitanism in relation to knowledge migrants and their identification processes. The final chapter of this thesis will discuss the answer to the main research question that was presented in Chapter 1:

*What role do aspects of cosmopolitanism play in the identity construction of foreign academics in the Nijmegen region?*

The three sub-questions that were also formulated in Chapter 1, were already dealt with in previous chapters. The characteristics of the respondents can be found in Chapter 6 and the analysis in Chapter 6 and 7 shed a light on important aspects of their identity construction. So, paragraph 8.1 will provide the answers to the main research question. Reflections on how this research was executed can be found in paragraph 8.2. Furthermore, this chapter will discuss several possibilities for future research. The last paragraph of this chapter will consist of recommendations to the International Office of the Radboud University.

### §8.1 Final conclusions

Nowadays, mobility is increasingly becoming a requirement for an academic career. Scientists work at different universities in different countries to gain experience. They not only encounter a different working environment, they also need to adapt to a new society with a different culture. These changes have an impact on someone's life. Travelling academics are often portrayed as cosmopolitans, but is this truly the case?

The respondents in this research all had cosmopolitan experiences, but can we then also identify them as cosmopolitans? This research underlined the importance of multiple identities in analysis. High skilled migrants, in particular, have multiple identities because they live a mobile life. They come into contact with different cultures and different people, which enriches their identification process. They incorporate certain cultural traits that they identify with and, depending on the context and the people they are with, they portray different identities. These different identities do not exclude each other, since identities are fluid and malleable. One of the biggest factors that influenced their identity, is mobility. Becoming mobile gave them the opportunity to experience different cultures and to live in another country. For some respondents this experience made them feel closer to the world. A

few even stated that they felt like global citizens. According to the definition of cosmopolitanism that is used in this research – world citizenship – these respondents can thus be seen as cosmopolitans. Still, there is much more to be discovered about their identities.

Not all respondents identified with cosmopolitanism to the same extent. However, they all had some cosmopolitan characteristics. They all appreciated the opportunity to experience different cultures. They also have an international social network, maintain relationships across borders and speak several languages. Another cosmopolitan characteristic is that cosmopolitans are always on the move. They do not get attached to places easily, since they often migrate. However, not all respondents shared this desire. While most of them acknowledged that they needed to stay mobile to further their academic career, not everyone was that enthusiastic about starting over somewhere new. In fact, the data showed that local attachment is still very important. As the respondents started to connect to the Dutch culture, they also started to get attached to the Netherlands. Some of them even wanted to stay here for a longer period of time, which is not necessarily a cosmopolitan thing to do. But, local attachment is important to feel like you belong somewhere and to feel at home. A few respondents did identify as global citizens, but they also still felt attached to their country of birth and the Netherlands. Becoming mobile made them feel connected to multiple countries and thereby to the world.

Most respondents also really made an effort to integrate into Dutch society. They started to take Dutch language courses and some of them were even looking into the possibilities to acquire Dutch citizenship. This is, of course, not something one would do if staying here was just a temporary experience. Again, this is not very cosmopolitan. But, these actions did make the respondents feel more at home here. It is still important for them to feel grounded somewhere. Cosmopolitans often lead boundless lives, but this is not the case for the respondents. They might live here temporarily, but the respondents do invest in establishing a social network, getting in touch with the locals and enjoying their life here. The Netherlands might be a temporary place where they live, but their experiences here have a permanent effect on their identity construction.

Thus, foreign academics do show aspects of cosmopolitanism in the construction of their identity (e.g. openness to the world and different cultures), but cosmopolitanism plays a minor role in their identity construction. As a mobile academic they can be quite cosmopolitan, since they aim to gain experience in different countries. Looking at their social network, this is also a result of their cosmopolitan lifestyle. But when it comes to citizenship, most respondents still valued to be a citizen of their country of birth. Their passport made

them feel connected to their family, their childhood and their memories of home. This connection was not lost by becoming mobile. Even though some respondents had cosmopolitan aspirations, they still valued being, for instance, Brazilian, Italian, Colombian or Hungarian. Their nationality is still important for their identity construction.

Concluding, this research has showed that there is much more to know about the identification process of high skilled migrants. It is wrong to assume that they solely identify as cosmopolitans. Multiple dimensions influence their identity. To really uncover these larger concepts, individual experiences are still important. Every respondent had their own experiences and these cannot be generalized. Their cosmopolitan identity can often be seen in relation to other aspects of their identity. Although they value local attachment, they do become global citizens since their social environment expands beyond national borders. Local connections make them feel grounded, even when they are on the move. So, the travelling academic is not just a short-term visitor, but on its way to become a global citizen.

## §8.2 Reflection

Every research has its shortcomings, since research almost never goes as planned. Reflecting on the research executed for this master thesis, there are both positive aspects and limitations to be identified. There are two aspects which, in my opinion, have contributed to the quality of this thesis: the theoretical framework and the in-depth interviews. Extensive desk research has resulted in a solid, theoretical basis. This literature review not only helped in constructing a conceptual framework, but it also pointed out what was missing. With this thesis I tried to contribute to the ongoing discussion about cosmopolitanism in relation to high skilled migrants, but there are still many opportunities for future research. Another positive aspect about this research was the use of qualitative research methods. The in-depth interviews also provided a lot of information and gave an insight into the daily life of the respondents. Their experiences, thoughts and feelings are central to the analysis of the data. The direct quotations also provide the reader with different perspectives and they help to understand all the different factors that are at play. I still think that qualitative research methods benefitted this study.

At the beginning of this research, the respondents were originally employees of the Radboud University. I wanted to include different types of employees, e.g. professors, visiting researchers, PhD students and postdocs to show the diversity of people working at the Radboud University. Specifically, I wanted to interview a diverse group of respondents to show how different academics also have different experiences. However, during the selection

of the respondents it became clear that the group of respondents would largely be limited to PhD students. The recruitment e-mail that was sent out did not get the response I hoped it would. So, the focus of the respondents shifted to PhD students, with the exception of two postdocs that did participate in this research. While at first this seemed to be a setback, it worked out in the end. By focussing on PhD students, we are provided with an unique insight into the life of a starting academic. These respondents turned out to be quite valuable for this research.

In the end, eleven respondents participated in this research. Originally, I aimed to interview 20 respondents. Not to be able to make generalizations, but because I wanted to include multiple perspectives and experiences. However, this research cannot go on forever and I did not have time to interview more respondents. Still, the eleven respondents provided sufficient data to complete this research and I was also able to include different perspectives and experiences. If I had more time, it could have been interesting to interview the respondents for a second time. The interviews lasted for one hour on average, but a follow-up interview might provide new information. It could have also given me the chance to dig deeper into certain subjects, which might not be fully explored now.

Overall, I think this research certainly contributes to the discussion about cosmopolitanism, identity construction and high skilled migrants. While many authors assume that high skilled migrants are cosmopolitans, this is actually not always the case. The collected data showed that many respondents still feel the need to have roots somewhere and that they still value local attachment. Despite some of the limitations that occurred during this research, I think the results are still valid and reliable.

### §8.3 Recommendations for future research

This research set out to explore the variation within the group of high skilled migrants. This group is often portrayed as an homogenous group, but there are actually many differences within this group. Mahroum (2000) already divided this group of high skilled migrants into five categories, including academics and scientists which was the focus of this study. The interviews already provided a lot of data, but there is much more to be discovered. Within this research, the conceptual model was adjusted. But, future research can also help to improve this model. Therefore, I will suggest some possibilities for future research in this paragraph.

Originally, I wanted to include different kinds of academics in this research, e.g. professors, visiting researchers, PhD students, postdocs, etc. However, this did not work out

in the end. This research is centred around PhD students and two postdocs. But, it might be interesting to expand this research to include other respondents as well. PhD students are often at the start of their academic career, but long-time professors have already established their career. It can be interesting to compare their experiences to the experiences of PhD students, since they are in a different phase in their life; professionally and personally. This can also offer new insights into the identity construction of individuals who have more experience and maybe have travelled to more countries. Overall, it would be interesting to include a larger group of respondents for this kind of research. Due to a limited time period to collect the data, I was not able to include a larger group of respondents. But, since individual experiences provide rich data to work with, it would be interesting to include more respondents.

Secondly, a possibility for future research would be to expand the analysis area. For this research I focussed solely on Nijmegen. However, I can imagine that scientists in different universities, in different cities, have different experiences. Comparing different universities in the Netherlands can also lead to policy changes, since it is also an opportunity to exchange knowledge. This can help foreign academics to adapt more easily. During this research, several respondents stated that they found Nijmegen a bit ‘boring’ sometimes. They often went to Utrecht or Amsterdam because there was always something going on there. These cities are also more popular and well-known in the group of high skilled migrants. So, it might be interesting to discover how foreign scientists experience working and living in of these cities.

Thirdly, it might be interesting to revisit these respondents in the future. As of this moment, they are at the start of their academic career. Some of them are planning to stay mobile and gain experience in different countries. It could be interesting to follow the respondents on their journey and to find out how these experiences influenced them. Identities are always changing, so it would be interesting to see how mobility affected them over the years. Will they become more cosmopolitan or will they settle down somewhere for good?

Lastly, the concepts of cosmopolitanism and identity construction are still evolving. The literature is regularly updated and new theories keep popping up. I think these concepts will stay relevant in the future. Thus, it will still be interesting to combine these topics with the group of high skilled migrants and academics and scientists in particular. There are still plenty of opportunities for future research on these issues.

## §8.4 Recommendations to the International Office

As was previously mentioned, my internship was hosted by the International Office at the Radboud University. During my research, they helped me to gather respondents and also provided me with a workplace. This paragraph will focus on some recommendations that the respondents mentioned for the International Office.

Overall, the respondents were quite satisfied with the International Office (IO). The IO helped them in finding a room/apartment, they organise several workshops/lectures throughout the year, the PON (PhD Organisation Nijmegen) also organises excursions and opportunities to meet other people and the respondents felt like they could contact the IO if they had any other questions. Since each department at the university has its own international office, there were some differences in the experiences of the respondents. The ones that work at the hospital were the most satisfied with how the international office operated.

Still, the respondents did have some recommendations. They mentioned that the international office could include more activities that also involved family members, especially children. The respondents stated that, as of this moment, there are not that many activities that are being organised that include children. But, to also include children and spouses can really help to make the whole family feel at home. High skilled migrants who come to the Netherlands to work at the Radboud University might also bring their family and joining these kind of activities will make them feel welcome and this will help them integrate more easily.

Another aspect that was mentioned during the interviews, was the fact that their Dutch colleagues still tended to speak Dutch instead of English. Not all respondents were bothered by this, but some respondents still felt excluded. Of course, how the respondents experience this also depends on their personal viewpoint. Some saw it as an opportunity to learn Dutch, while others struggled to remind their colleagues to speak English in their presence. The situation also differs at different faculties. In faculties where the majority of the employees is Dutch, it might be easier to speak Dutch. In other faculties where there are more international people, English might be the easier language to speak. Some employees might not even realise that they tend to speak Dutch more. So, it can be difficult to develop some kind of policy around this issue. However, it would do no harm to remind faculties and employees to try to speak English around their international colleagues.

Additionally, a respondent commented on the workshop that is provided for them at the start of their stay. International employees follow an intercultural workshop that helps

them to prepare for Dutch culture and some interesting things that they may encounter (like Dutch directness). Overall, this workshop is appreciated since it helps to clarify some of the experiences that they have. So, the international employees are being prepared to work with their Dutch colleagues. But, one respondent mentioned that it might be helpful to also prepare the Dutch colleagues to work with their international colleagues. It will, for instance, remind them to speak English and to make their new colleagues feel included.

Lastly, the International Office is already working on a buddy project. I think this project will really be of help to some international employees. Not everyone has the need for a buddy, but for some individuals who struggle to connect with their colleagues and Dutch culture, a buddy will be helpful. I think some of the respondents in this research would also appreciate this project. Having a buddy can help them adapt to Dutch society more easily. So, I think this project will be successful.

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## Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where were you born?
4. Where did you grow up?
5. What is your nationality?
6. Are you married?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
7. Do you have children?
  - a. How many children do you have?
  - b. How old are your children?
8. Where do you live?
9. How long have you lived there?
10. What is your living situation?
  - i. I'm living with family.
  - ii. I'm living with roommates.
  - iii. I'm living on my own.
  - iv. Something else.
11. How did you find a place to stay? (E.g. with the help of Radboud University)
12. Home-ownership concerning a house, apartment, room, etc.
  - i. I'm renting a house, apartment, room, etc.
  - ii. I bought a house, apartment, room, etc.
13. Do you want to live somewhere else?
  - i. Definitely yes.
  - ii. Probably yes.
  - iii. Might or might not.
  - iv. Probably not.
  - v. Definitely not.
14. What is your prior education?
15. Do you have any educational opportunities provided to you through work?
16. Where do you currently work at the university?

17. In which area of specialization do you work?
18. How long have you worked in this position?
19. Does this job correspond well with your prior obtained education?
20. Do you have a temporary or open-ended contract?

## Appendix 2 – Interview guide

### Interview guide/topic list

#### 1. Start interview:

- Can you tell me about your experience of migrating to the Netherlands?
  - And how did you experience the move to Nijmegen?
    - Why Nijmegen?
    - Is living in Nijmegen different than what you expected?
  - Do you know how long you will stay here?
- How do you experience working at the Radboud University?
  - Do you work with a lot of other foreign academics/colleagues? How do you experience this?

#### 2. Identity

- How do you experience your mobility as a foreign academic?
  - How does mobility influence your work/career?
  - Is mobility important for your career development?
  - Were you encouraged to work abroad?
- Do you think being mobile has influenced you?
- How do you think others view you? (E.g. cosmopolitan, expat, foreigner, etc.)

#### 3. Cosmopolitanism

- How would you describe your connection to Dutch culture?
  - How do you experience different cultures/different cultural settings?
  - To what extent do you feel at home here?
- When it comes to citizenship, where would you consider yourself a citizen of?
- Do you feel like a citizen of the world?
- Do you feel attached to a specific place?
- What or where would you consider home?
  - Did being mobile change your perception about ‘home’? In what way?
- Are you more in contact with other internationals or locals?
  - How did you get in touch with them?
- On what scale do you follow the news? (E.g. global or local)

#### 4. Conclusion

- Would you like to add something?
- Do you have any questions?
- Could I contact you again if I need more information?
- Would you be interested to receive my master thesis once it is completed?