



School of Business
Research Seminar Series 2017-2018

“From Home to Host: The Instrumental Careers of Skilled Migrants”

Edward O’Connor

Date: Wednesday, 6 June 2018

Time: 12.00pm

Venue: Rye Hall Lecture Theatre, Rye Hall Building, North Campus

Paper Abstract

Increased worker mobility, along with an increased international demand for skilled and specialised labour (Fernando and Cohen, 2016), has resulted in skilled migration becoming a permanent feature of national and international economies (Crowley-Henry et al, 2016). Despite being a potential source of strategic value and competitive advantage for organisations (Zikic, 2015), studies to date underline that skilled migrants, moving to a new country without organisational support, are unlikely to be identified as a source of skilled labour and tend to be excluded from organisational talent pools (Crowley-Henry et al 2016). The extant skilled migrant literature presents skilled migrants as lacking agency (Al Ariss et al., 2012), under-employed (Almeida et al. 2014) and constrained from pursuing their careers in the host country by discrimination (Cook et al., 2011), structures and profession gatekeepers (Crowley-Henry et al., 2016).

While there has been an increase in academic interest in worker mobility studies (Andresen et al., 2014), there is still much to learn about skilled migrants’ career actions and career outcomes at the individual (Guo and Al Ariss, 2015, Zikic et al., 2010) and contextual levels (Smale et al., 2017). This research addresses this gap by utilising an adapted version of Barley’s (1989) model of career structuration “as a sensitizing heuristic” (Duberley et al., 2006, p.1131) in an exploration of the careers of skilled migrants. The study examines how skilled migrants from Poland and the Baltic Republics, who currently live and work in Ireland, cope with the institutional change and career disruption caused by their home to host country career transition. This research explores the legitimisation of skilled migrants’ careers by the protagonists themselves in the context of institutional influences, such as their family, profession and the state, in the home, host and wider global environments. It presents the surprising logic, as relayed through the individual skilled migrant’s career narratives, of how their careers have in fact unfolded in the host country.

About the Speaker

Edward O'Connor is an Associate Lecturer in Human Resource Management at Maynooth University's School of Business. Edward's research interests are in the areas of Careers, Skilled Migration, Expatriation and HRM. Edward has published in international peer-reviewed journals and regularly shares his research at national and international conferences. Edward is a John & Pat Hume scholar and an IRC scholarship winner. Prior to academia, Edward worked in management, mainly in the SME sector.

To RSVP, please email business@mu.ie