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**Emerging geographies of mobility: the role of regional towns in Greece's  
'counterurbanisation story'**

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**Keywords:** mobilities, counterurbanisation, Greece, choice experiment

# **Emerging geographies of mobility: the role of regional towns in Greece's 'counterurbanisation story'**

## **Abstract**

Drawing on the 'mobility turn', research in rural studies has engaged with new explorations of mobilities, beyond the now well-explored counterurbanisation and rural gentrification processes, including local and temporary mobility in diverse socio-economic and cultural contexts. This paper explores past and potential future mobility patterns in two regional towns in non-metropolitan Greece in the context of the ongoing financial crisis. Using a choice experiment, we assess the importance of settlement types, family networks, previous residency in the area, cultural opportunities and change in employment type in informing future mobility decisions. The analysis finds evidence of diverse mobilities, and distinguishes between two predominant mobility groups, i.e. counterurbanisers and local movers. We further look at relocation preferences for the two groups and find similar preferences for regional towns. In this context, we provide evidence for the potential emergence of an alternative, i.e. not rooted in pastoralism, version of the Anglo-American 'rural idyll'.

Keywords: mobilities, counterurbanisation, Greece, choice experiment

## **Introduction**

This study explores recent and intended mobility patterns in a period of ongoing financial crisis, through a quantitative household survey implemented in two regional towns in non-metropolitan Greece. The paper contributes to the rural mobilities literature (e.g. Milbourne and Kitchen, 2014; Bell and Osti, 2010), first, by exploring diverse and 'messy' practices of residential mobility, inclusive of, but not restricted to counterurbanisation (see also: Milbourne, 2007; Bijker and Haartsen, 2012; Stockdale, 2016). Furthermore, we offer another lens in rural mobility research: that of financial crisis, an emerging research focus (Remoundou et al., 2016; Gkartzios, 2013; Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 2013). Mobility in rural areas tends to be associated with gentrification processes and a ubiquitous 'counterurbanisation story' is frequently

discussed, in which rural localities constitute spaces of residential and recreational consumption for urban middle class residents (Halfacree, 2008). In contrast to this counterurbanisation literature, we look at non-metropolitan mobility, beyond the middle class construction of the ‘rural idyll’ that counterurbanisation is usually associated with and, unfortunately, sometimes reduced to (Halfacree, 2008).

Emerging rural mobilities are discussed in the Greek context. Studies have looked at international migrant workers moving to rural areas (Kasimis et al. 2003; 2010), new, mostly younger and better educated, entrants in the agricultural sector (Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 2013; Kasimis and Zografakis, 2013) and, to less extent, the ‘reversed mobility’ (Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 2013) of people leaving cities for the countryside (Anthopoulou et al., 2017), or other regional towns in non-metropolitan Greece (Gkartzios, 2013). Remoundou et al. (2016) for example report stated preferences amongst urban residents in Athens for counterurban relocations in the context of the economic crisis, pointing towards a ‘potential counterurbanisation’ trend. This paper seeks evidence for such claims and explores the temporary nature of counterurban relocation, by investigating the conditions that would bring these residents back to the city, i.e. the hypothesis of a ‘counter counterurbanisation’.

Inherent in this exploration about mobilities in non-metropolitan Greece, is the question of the indigenous construction of rurality (socially, culturally, linguistically) and its international relevance. Admittedly, conceptualisations of ‘the rural’ vary across cultural and linguistic contexts (see some examples in Woods, 2011), encompassing a wide range of very different settlement patterns and industrialisation histories globally. While the rural is extremely varied, the monolingual academic discourse (i.e. English), inevitably,

reduces such complex debates in universal, somewhat ubiquitous characterisations (such points are already made in social science research, notably by Phillipson, 1992 and de Swaan, 2001). Urban-rural dualities don't necessarily translate in equivalent terms in non-Anglophone contexts, particularly in countries that did not experience intense industrialisation processes. This is particularly important in the Greek context because urban/rural separations are not strongly evidenced. In fact, many Greek social scientists (see *Sociologia Ruralis*, 1997; Damianakos et al., 1997; Zacoboulou et al., 2008) have long discussed hybrid social identities across the settlement pattern – encapsulated for example in Karavidas' terms 'petite bourgeois-peasant family' (*μιζομικροαστοχωρική οικογένεια*) and 'urban-peasants' (*αστοχωρικός*) (Damianakos, 2002; Sivignon, 2008). In this context, Zacoboulou (2008) argues that, in Greece, the city never competed with the countryside, because urban and rural spaces were never truly separated. Consequently, exploring mobility in, across, and out of 'rural areas' becomes not only 'messy' because of the diversity of mobilities observed or ignored by researchers (Stockdale, 2016), but also because of what is legitimised as 'rural' (and consequently as counterurbanisation too) in the academic discourse, which is heavily shaped by Anglo-American research (Lowe, 2012).

One of the main difficulties of the term 'rural' used in Greek is that it restricts meanings only to agricultural uses, spatialities and identities. The conceptual problematics of the word 'rural' are discussed by Kizos (2012) in relation to the translation of Michael Wood's 'Rural Geography' (2005) in Greek<sup>1</sup>. For this reason, we avoid referring

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<sup>1</sup> Two terms can be used for the word 'rural' in Greek: *αγροτικός* and *γεωργικός*, but both can be translated back as 'agricultural', leaving little imagination for other, beyond agriculture, interests and power struggles in non-metropolitan settings. The term *ύπαιθρος* is also frequently used in Greek rural studies literature

specifically to rural areas, but instead to regional towns in non-metropolitan Greece. We prefer to refer to non-metropolitan Greece as an extremely heterogeneous space which is encompassing more settlements (not only relevant to agriculture) and inclusive of regional towns as suggested by Gousios (1999), corresponding to Greece's fluidity of urban-rural identities.

Finally, the paper contributes to the application of quantitative methodologies in mobility research (see Smith, 2007) and in particular the use of a choice experiment. Choice experiments present respondents with a series of choice tasks and ask them to choose their preferred option. The stated choices can then be analysed to examine the importance respondents attach to the different characteristics that form the alternatives in the choice tasks. Although there are increasingly studies applying a choice experiment to examine residential preferences, migration and commuting patterns (e.g. Bullock et al., 2011; So, 2001; Zanni et al., 2008), socioeconomic and cultural aspects of the destination have not been given much attention in informing such choices. Our approach allows for socioeconomic considerations to be accounted for, and for trade-offs between such considerations and mobility motivations to be revealed.

### **1. Mobility research: rural dimensions**

Academic accounts regarding the 'mobilities turn' or the 'new mobilities paradigm' (Urry, 2007; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Cresswell, 2006) have offered an exciting frame to critically engage with diverse representations, practices and experiences produced by mobilities. The mobilities literature has interlinked with rural studies, particularly as

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(closer to the English 'countryside' perhaps), although it is not a term that is commonly used in modern Greek, creating unnecessary distance between academic and lay discourses of the rural.

regards the role of migration in rural restructuring processes (see, for example *Sociologia Ruralis*, 2010; Milbourne and Kitchen, 2014). Thus, it has influenced the academic discourse, in understanding migration as an open-ended event, sometimes even temporary, and its importance irrespective of distance in relation to urban centres (Halfacree and Rivera, 2011; Milbourne, 2007).

In this paper, we focus on recent and potential future mobilities. We are interested in evidencing different expressions of mobility, inclusive of counterurbanisation, lateral migration and local mobility as well as the factors that play a role in informing future residential choices. Of all diverse practices of mobility, the one that has dominated rural studies has been counterurbanisation (Champion, 1989; Boyle et al., 1998). Lateral (i.e. rural-to-rural) and local movements (i.e. within the same settlement patterns), although reported, are particularly neglected in the literature (Milbourne, 2007; Stockdale, 2016). The counterurbanisation literature has explored both cases of aggregate rural turnarounds (experienced for example in the 1970s in the US) and cases of rural population growth (attributed to selective in-migration) irrespective of wider regional and national population dynamics (Champion and Brown, 2012; Mitchell, 2004). Research in the field has investigated the social actors involved, diverse representations of the rural associated with counterurbanisation, as well as the implications of such mobilities on rural communities and rural development trajectories (some examples: Bosworth and Atterton, 2012; Halfacree, 2012).

Representations of the rural have preoccupied researchers, particularly in more industrialised countries, and the construction of a romanticised rurality is often discussed in order to rationalise counterurbanisation and wider rural in-migration processes (see

Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). Such representations are important because, drawing on Cresswell (2006), they demonstrate that residential mobility is associated with particular meanings and expectations about 'the rural', which constitute counterurbanisation both ideological and political (Gkartzios and Scott, 2015). Idyllic representations of the rural, imagined or real, have attracted the middle classes who bring new and sometimes contested values about what the countryside is and for whom, and usually have the power to shape development policy narratives on their own terms (Murdoch et al., 2003; Satsangi et al. 2010).

Despite the abundance of literature on these subjects, in light of Milbourne and Kitchen's (2014) comments, the rural studies literature has overlooked other mobilities beyond counterurbanisation (for example: transient, non uni-directional movements, beyond urban and rural dichotomies; see also Milbourne, 2007; Halfacree, 2001; Stockdale, 2016). Counterurbanisation research has also been criticised for its Anglo-centric tendencies which may have created a 'counterurbanisation imperative', in the way this academic discourse is reproduced across non Anglophone countries. Several authors have questioned intellectual borrowings of counterurbanisation outside the UK and the US (Halfacree, 2008; Gkartzios, 2013; Grimsrud, 2011; Hoggart, 1997). The hegemony of Anglo-American research in rural studies (Lowe, 2012) may pose significant challenges, particularly in countries where the rural idyll (or pastoralism in the context of Murdoch's et al., 2003 'differentiated countryside') does not constitute such a dominant discourse in both policy prescription and popular culture, as it does in Anglo-American contexts (Bunce, 1994).

Pastoralism constitutes far from a hegemonic discourse in representing Greek rural realities. While the British Romantics were extolling rural-natural environments during a period of industrialisation, Balkan rural areas were generally characterised by economic and technological backwardness (see Mouzelis, 1976a; Koliopoulos and Veremis, 2002). Meraklis (1992) reports that a 19<sup>th</sup> century ethnography of Greek villages, evidenced the harsh living conditions of rural people, ‘leaving little space for emotional rural idylls’ (p. 29). In fact Meraklis (1992) argues that the Greek intelligentsia turned to a ‘classical idyll’ (drawing on classical Greece), than a rural one. During the years of formation of the Greek state, Meraklis (1987) argues there was little disagreement over the Greek rural life: ‘nobody claimed a rural idyll; there were no portraits of rural paradise, but instead of rural hell’ (1987, p. 129). This, however, does not mean that Greek rural idylls have not been discussed in Greek academic research. In fact, plenty of authors have reported on research in relation to the rural idyll. Examples include governmental documents that support agritourism on the basis of a romantic rural life (Kizos and Iosifides, 2007) and popular ‘biophilic’ representations of nature in Greek primary school textbooks (Korfiatis et al., 2004). However, this does not imply the hegemony of an idyllic construct that shapes realities and policies about the Greek countryside. On the contrary, a common narrative of Greek ruralities, at least in Murdoch et al.’s (2003) terms, is its modernisation need, associating the countryside with a notion of ‘backwardness’ (Verinis, 2014; Mouzelis, 1976b), lagging technologically and culturally. In this context, our research challenges the lifestyle-driven ‘counterurbanisation story’ by exploring the nature of mobilities in non-metropolitan Greece, a country with slow and late

industrialisation trends that does not fit the usual urban-rural dichotomy often discussed in more industrialised countries.

Finally, while mobility research is becoming increasingly important in the field of rural studies (Milbourne and Kitchen, 2014), mobility research in the context of the global financial crisis is only emerging (Anthopoulou et al., 2017; Remoundou et al., 2016). Recent research demonstrates that rural areas demonstrate highly diverse experiences regarding the financial crisis with some areas witnessing higher risk of poverty and deprivation, while others acting as spaces of refuge due to lower costs of living and availability of housing (Bock et al., 2015; Murphy and Scott, 2013). While some literature has, of course, looked at mobilities and primarily counterurbanisation within the contexts of poverty and unemployment (Hugo and Bell, 1998; Foulkes and Newbold, 2008), the global financial crisis requires further international and comparative research to discuss rural mobilities.

## **2. Mobility: Greek research**

Several types of co-existing mobilities are usually discussed in the Greek non-metropolitan context (see a review by Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 2013). The first refers to the out-migration of rural people towards more urban environments. Secondly, is the inflow of international migrant workers to the Greek countryside, and the research that has been developed has pointed towards positive implications for the rural economy, notwithstanding tensions and xenophobia (see Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 2005; Kasimis et al., 2003, 2010). Another type refers to counterurbanisation trends (Koutsou and Anthopoulou, 2008) referring either to the return to agriculture (Kasimis and Zografakis,

2013) or not, debates that are escalating in the context of the ongoing financial crisis<sup>2</sup>. For example, Kasimis and Papadopoulos (2013) report that between 2008 and 2011, 17,000 people moved to rural areas to work in the primary sector, acknowledging the, sometimes unexpected, challenges of running viable farming businesses and living in the countryside. Similar trends have been reproduced by policy documents and popular media (see a review in Anthopoulou et al., 2017), although the magnitude of such phenomena is questioned, given the lack of fine-grained, georeferenced census data on internal mobility trends.

Drawing on qualitative interviews, Gkartzios (2013) observed counterurban mobilities pointing to lower costs of living in these areas, and facilitated by high homeownership rates along with supportive family networks. Such trends are confirmed by Giannakis and Bruggeman (2015) who report that during the economic crisis period (2008-2013) “the population of urban and intermediate regions decreased by 2.6 per cent and 1.4 per cent, respectively, while the population of rural regions increased by 0.6 per cent” (p. 7). Similar conclusions are drawn by Anastasiou and Duquenne (2015), whose analysis of regional population changes indicates “a possible exodus from the two main urban areas to other regions”, although the authors are more sceptical on whether this is actually a ‘return’ (i.e. that these residents moved back to a place of origin) as this information is not captured in the census. Their analysis suggests that internal migration has a particular regional geography, with movements either to neighboring municipalities or to rural

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<sup>2</sup> Estimates point to an unemployment rate of 23.0 % in November 2016 (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2016). According to OECD (2016), in 2015 the country’s GDP was 26% lower than the 2007 peak, pointing to a deep recession. For literature on the economic crisis and regional development see Psycharis et al. (2014); Ragkos et al. (2016).

municipalities of the same local administration unit. The authors also highlight the role of regional towns, which is of particular importance for our study:

... the overall picture of “return” tendencies – when evaluated in relative terms - is more diversified with an increased role of regional urban centers (regional capitals as well as small-medium cities) (p. 15)

This point matches earlier observations on the role of regional towns in satisfying counterurbanisation trends in Greece (Koutsou and Anthopoulou, 2008) and in providing significant economic and social melting pots constituting of urbanites, farmers, return migrants and international migrants at the heart of the Greek countryside (Gousios, 1999). It also highlights the danger in dismissing such settlements from the ‘counterurbanisation story’ particularly in the context of Greece where urban-rural identities coexist, and perhaps even more so in such settlements.

A point made by many Greek researchers is the limitations of census data regarding for example any indication of the reasons behind such movements or, in fact, their connection with the crisis. However, the emerging research relates these trends with the resistance that the countryside has demonstrated, despite the fact that the agricultural sector was already in crisis, before the 2009 financial crisis (Anthopoulou et al., 2017). For example, Kasimis and Papadopoulos (2013) argue:

Both quantitative and qualitative evidence, however, suggest that agriculture and rural areas ‘resist’ better than other sectors of the economy and are increasingly turned into a ‘refuge and laboratory’ of ideas and initiatives for a large part of

urban dwellers directed towards the countryside and agriculture by either necessity or choice (p. 281)

Using a composite resilience indicator, Psycharis et al. (2014) find that the region of Attiki, which includes the city of Athens, is the most affected region by the economic crisis due to the nature of the economic activities it relies on, and the least resilient in Greece. The social construction of a more resilient countryside of course does not mean that the countryside is not going through significant stress. Anthopoulou et al. (2017) for example point (p.9)

It should not be forgotten that the Greek countryside too is affected by the general socioeconomic crisis (e.g. contraction of educational and health services in rural areas, unemployment, poverty) as well as by the crisis of productive structures in farming.

It does, however, represent an emerging set of values and expectations, whether imagined or real, associated with smaller sized settlements, as it is also reflected in the residential preferences of Athenian residents in a quantitative research by Remoundou et al. (2016). The research showed that 61 per cent of a random sample of 300 residents in Athens had considered moving out of the city. The vast majority of those willing to relocate (86 per cent) aspired to move to non-metropolitan settlements, inclusive of both villages and towns. Statistical testing demonstrated that the sample willing to relocate consisted of significantly younger individuals who were more likely to be unemployed. As regards the factors informing the choice of destination, in line with observations made by Anastasiou

and Duquenne (2015), a choice experiment demonstrated that localities within 60 km of cities were the most preferred areas for relocation.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Selection of survey locations**

Drawing on emerging evidence on increased counter-urban mobility triggered by the economic crisis, the current research aims to quantitatively investigate the evidence of counterurbanisation, along with other mobilities, in two regional towns in non-metropolitan Greece. The study further aims to examine the causes of such mobilities as well as the factors that influence the choice of destination. Consequently, a household survey was administered to a sample of 300 residents who had experienced mobility over the last 6 years in the towns of: Eretria (Euboea) and Agios Konstantinos (Fthiotis). A screening question was first asked to examine the respondent's eligibility to participate in the study. The screening question used was whether or not the respondent had moved (either within the locality or from outside the locality) during the previous six years, i.e. the period 2009-2014. This allowed us to draw what we termed a '*mobility sample*', with all 300 respondents having some experience of mobility (local or not) during the period of the recession. The rationale for this sample was to capture and explore all mobility types within a settlement pattern (Milbourne, 2007), as commonly done in similar studies (Stockdale, 2016).

The selection of the two locations drew on previous research looking at potential relocation of urban residents (Remoundou et al., 2016), which demonstrated that Athenian residents would prefer small towns in close proximity to cities (ideally within

60 km) than remote rural areas. The role of regional towns in capturing counter-urban trends has been evidenced both recently, in the context of crisis (e.g. Anastasiou and Duquenne, 2015), and in the past as part of Greece's 'counterurbanisation story' (e.g. Koutsou and Anthopoulou, 2008). Given funding limitations with regards to where we could actually conduct a household survey, we opted for two localities, the towns of Eretria and Agios Konstantinos, which met the following conditions: (a) are in close proximity to big cities (>100,000 population); and, (b) have a population of around 10,000 people (these settlements are regarded by the Greek census as semi-rural).

According to the Greek Census of 2011, the municipality of Eretria has a population of 13,053 residents and the municipality of Agios Konstantinos<sup>3</sup> a population of 12,090. Both towns are in the region of Central Greece, which borders Attica, the region which comprises the city of Athens. Both towns are coastal and boast a vibrant tourist sector as well as locations for second holiday homes. They are both, approximately, within a 90 minute drive from the cities of Athens (Eretria) and Volos (Agios Konstantinos)<sup>4</sup>. They would not be regarded as 'rural' in the Greek context, as the term is usually associated with agriculture-based settlements or very small-sized clustered villages of less than 2,000 people. In both towns, the majority is employed in the service sector. Specifically, according to the 2011 census data, 29 per cent of the employed people is working in the primary sector in Agios Konstantinos, with 55.8 per cent being employed in the service sector. Similarly, in Eretria, 9.4% of the employed people work in the primary sector with

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<sup>3</sup> Agios Konstantinos is part of the recently formed (2011) municipality of Molos-Agios Kontantinos. The census data reported in this study refer to the municipality.

<sup>4</sup> Agios Konstantinos also has good transport links with Athens and is within two hours reach.

the services sector employing 62.8 per cent. The unemployment rates, as recorded in the 2011 census, are also high (18.4% in Agios Konstantinos and 23% in Eretria).

### **3.2 Survey design and implementation**

The survey first included a series of questions regarding past and current residential characteristics followed by the choice experiment. The survey was pre-tested through face-to-face interviews over a week in December 2014. Data collection took place in January 2015, and was conducted by a professional marketing company, which had administered choice experiments before. The survey administration resulted in the collection of 300 questionnaires through a process of snowball sampling. The interviews took place at the respondents' homes. The interviewers defined two starting points (Church, Town Hall) and then randomly selected one household in order to recruit the first respondent based on the screening question. The respondent was then asked to point to another individual from his/her social network who had relocated to the area within the past six years. If the first respondent was unable to suggest others to be contacted, the interviewer would approach the third next household.

Non-random samples are frequently used in social science research in an attempt to guarantee that ensuring information is available about a particular subset of a population and are very common in rural mobility research (e.g. Mitchell and Madden, 2014). They are particularly useful in cases where no sampling frame exists for the population of interest (e.g. a sub-population which exhibits features that are uncommon in the larger population). Non-random samples have also been used in choice experiments, in cases

where information is sought on the preferences held by a specific group (e.g. Alfnes et al., 2006; Carlsson and Martinsson, 2001; Lyu, 2017; Steven et al., 2016).

It should, however, be noted that the use of a non-random sample limits the generalizability of our results. As our population of interest is unknown, due to the lack of census data recording all types of mobility, we cannot comment on the representativeness of our sample. Quota sampling ensuring that different socio-economic groups are proportionally represented was also not possible due to the lack of a sampling frame – a common concern in rural social science research. As movers may not have necessarily established networks amongst them, it is further not possible to account for selection biases. Furthermore, our conclusions are based on a relatively small sample size selected with pragmatic considerations in mind. The results therefore cannot be extrapolated to the wider population of movers in the localities, and cannot be generalised to regional towns in Greece. Nevertheless, our results provide empirical quantitative evidence on diverse mobility patterns about a target group with specific characteristics in a period of crisis.

### **3.3 The choice experiment**

Choice experiments are a stated preference technique where individual preferences are elicited through surveys (Louviere et al., 2000). In a choice experiment respondents are asked to choose between different alternatives (here, destination profiles) which are described in terms of certain attributes. Experimental designs are used to construct the alternatives in the choice sets. A baseline alternative is usually included in the choice sets. Stated choices, are used to infer the contribution of each attribute to respondents'

utility and to explore the trade-offs that respondents are willing to make between the attributes (Hoyos, 2010).

In this application, respondents were asked to think about potential future mobility. They were then presented with six choice cards, each asking them to state their preference between two hypothetical destinations and the continuation of their current living. Five attributes were used to describe the potential destination: settlement types, existence of family networks; having previously lived in the area; cultural opportunities at the destination; and opportunities for change in employment type. Our attributes selection was based on literature review, previous exploratory research (Gkartzios, 2013) and choice experiment applications examining characteristics influencing residential mobility (e.g. Bullock et al., 2011; Remoundou et al., 2016). The attributes used and their levels are explained in Table 1.

*(Insert here Table 1)*

The *settlement type* attribute aimed to distinguish between different settlements that residents may migrate to in an effort to differentiate between potential movements in relational terms. Drawing on Mitchell (2004), we distinguish between those residents who are willing to move to larger settlements, similar-sized settlements (lateral migration) and smaller settlements. We follow Mitchell (2004) who viewed these movements in relational terms regarding the size of the original and destination settlements, usefully avoiding the words urban and rural in the research design, as these terms could be interpreted in many different ways by respondents. This attribute is given three levels to achieve consistency with how these settlements are defined in Greek

census reports: ‘Big city’, referring to settlements with a population above 100,000 (in Greek: ‘μεγάλη πόλη’); ‘Regional town’, referring to settlements of 10,000 people (in Greek: ‘κωμόπολη’), and ‘village’, referring to rural settlements of less than 2,000 people (χωριό).

The second attribute explores whether or not residents *had lived in the area before*, an issue that is currently questioned due to the lack of quantitative data (Anastasiou and Duquenne, 2015). Anthopoulou et al. (2017) found both people who returned to family farming and newcomers without any family origin in rural areas (although they could have returned to their partner’s place of origin). This attribute is informed by research suggesting that in many cases rural in-migrants relocate to areas they are familiar with, for example areas where they grew up or areas with which they have certain emotional connections (Wall and Von Reichert, 2013; Lundholm, 2012). Bijker et al.’s study (2012) on migrants to rural areas in the Netherlands demonstrated that familiarity with the area of relocation was very important. Other research projects (e.g. Cooke and Lane, 2015) have, however, demonstrated migration to new and unfamiliar places. In our study, this attribute could take the following two levels: ‘I have lived in this area for a short or long period of my life’ and ‘I have never lived in this area before’.

The *family networks* attribute aims to explore the importance of family for mobility choices. The significance of extended family networks in Southern Europe is well-documented in the literature (Papadopoulos and Roumpakis, 2013; Dalla Zuanna 2001). This might have significant implications for living arrangements as many households might be living in family owned property rent-free. The family attribute (referring here to an extended family network, rather than the nuclear family) could take three levels:

‘existence of family networks within an area of less than 20 km’; ‘existence of family within a distance of 20-40 km’; and ‘no family networks within a distance of 40 km’. We decided to include a distance element to this attribute as in rural settings such distances can be longer, compared to urban areas.

The attribute referring to *cultural opportunities* at destination is informed by the literature about the potential of cities to attract a mobile class of culture consumers as part of their regeneration and economic development strategies (e.g. Landry, 2000; Florida, 2002). In the Greek context, Gkartzios and Scott (2015) report cultural mobilities in non-metropolitan areas consisting of emerging grass root cultural activities associated sometimes with newcomers and not necessarily with a cultural elite moving outside the metropolis. In the choice experiment, this attribute could take the following levels: high, medium and low. ‘High cultural opportunities’ would represent an area where the local community is very active in cultural events and therefore there are frequent events and festivals organised by private and public institutions (i.e. both endogenous and exogenous cultural activities). Medium cultural opportunities imply that cultural events are less frequent and are mainly organised by the private sector, for example summer tours of theatrical productions (i.e. primarily exogenous cultural activities). Finally, low cultural opportunities would imply that cultural events are relatively rare and that there is very limited choice.

The final attribute, *change in employment type* aimed to explore the importance of the opportunity for a career change on the decision to migrate and the choice of destination. Much literature on counterurbanisation sees a link between these two (residents moving because of employment opportunities and starting new career ventures; e.g. Bosworth

and Atterton, 2012). Furthermore, previous qualitative research demonstrated that some urban residents who had relocated after the start of the economic crisis were also seeking new employment opportunities (Gkartzios, 2013) or a new start (Anthopoulou et al., 2017). Irrespective of the preferred settlement type, this attribute could take two different levels: ‘there are opportunities for employment in a different sector’ and ‘no opportunities for employment in a different sector’.

Ngene 1.1.2 was used to develop an efficient experimental design with 12 choice sets which were blocked in two versions. Respondents were reminded of the significance of truthfully revealing their preferences. Table 2 presents an example of a choice card.

*(Insert Table 2 here)*

## **4. Results**

### **4.1 The ‘mobility sample’**

Since all of the respondents in our sample had had a mobility experience during the last six years, the questionnaire first investigated where they had relocated from. Results in Table 3 suggest that the majority of moves took place either from larger settlements or from within the same localities. In particular, 49 per cent of respondents moved from urban settlements (‘counterurbanisers’=147) and 36.3 per cent of our sample moved within the same areas (‘local movers’=109). As regards the counterurbanisers, 27.3 per cent of respondents had moved from the city of Athens, and another 21.7 per cent from other cities with a population of more than 100,000 people. Results further point to a series of other mobilities: 3.7 per cent of the sample moved in the survey areas either from villages or the open countryside (i.e. housing outside any settlements); 8 per cent

had moved from other towns of similar size to the survey locations (lateral migration); and, 3 per cent had moved there from abroad. However, the low percentages of those observed mobilities make it difficult to analyse them further in a quantitative fashion.

*(Insert Table 3 here)*

The remainder of the paper will consider the socioeconomic profile and the relocation preferences of counterurbanisers and local movers who form the two main groups in our mobility sample. Relocation was in many cases associated with changes in tenure (see Table 4). Results suggest that the proportion of counterurbanisers who rent their houses dramatically decreased from 68 per cent to 26 per cent following relocation. This is less evident for the local movers with the percentage of respondents renting a house dropping slightly from 79 per cent to 72 per cent. Conversely, homeownership without a mortgage increased from 15 per cent to 35 per cent for the counterurbanisers, and from 6 per cent to 13 per cent for the local movers. A significant increase in the percentage of those living in a family house was also noted for the counterurbanisers. The reverse trend was observed for the local movers, the majority of whom seem to have moved out of family houses to their own properties.

*(Insert Table 4 here)*

Respondents were further asked about the type of house they lived in at the time of the survey. Results, in Table 5, suggest that the majority of counterurbanisers lived in a house with land. This is consistent with previous findings that highlight the importance of land for potential counterurbanisers, who may intend to use it for subsistence or hobby

farming (Remoundou et al., 2016). The majority of local movers, on the other hand, live in apartments.

*(Insert Table 5 here)*

Given the quantitative character of our study, to investigate the role of the crisis context, respondents were asked directly whether or not their relocation was triggered by the economic crisis. Obviously, the migration decision is a complex one, consisting of diverse rationalities, constructions and personal circumstances, but it also reflects a response to wider changes in economy and society (Champion, 1998; Boyle et al., 1998) and it is common in counterurbanisation studies, to seek for a primary explanation, particularly in quantitative research (i.e. Šimon. 2014; Halliday and Coombes, 1995). The results reveal that 42.2 per cent of the counterurbanisers stated that the economic crisis had been the reason for their move, corroborating previous evidence regarding a different type of counterurbanisation, i.e. not lifestyle-led, whereby urban households move in smaller towns and villages in non-metropolitan settings (Remoundou et al., 2016). This was more prominent among local movers with 61.5 per cent associating their move with the economic crisis.

We further explore whether the two samples differ in their socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds (Table 6). T-testing suggests that counterurbanisers are different to local movers with respect to unemployment and income, with counterurbanisers being relatively wealthier, more likely to have retired and experiencing lower unemployment. However, differences are not statistically significant with respect to age. In line with research on the role of the extended family in the Greek context, our responses suggest

that the majority of local movers and a significant number of counterurbanisers had family networks in the area. Furthermore, we explored where the respondents lived until the age of 18, as significant European literature points to ‘back to the roots’ mobilities (e.g. Bijker et al., 2012). Our data demonstrate that the majority of the counterurbanisers were born in Athens or another big city. On the contrary, the majority of the local movers had spent their childhood in the area. The evidence therefore suggests that counterurbanisers are not necessarily returning to the place of their childhood, although their family network contacts suggest that these are areas that they have been familiar with.

*(Insert Table 6 here)*

We were also interested in examining how temporary these mobilities are. Towards this aim, respondents were asked how likely they feel it is that they will relocate again in the next 6 years. Results in Table 7 suggest that 51 per cent of counterurbanisers considered this unlikely or very unlikely, although one third of them (33 per cent) stated that it was likely that they would relocate again. With a much closer difference, 40.3 per cent of the local movers thought it is unlikely that they would relocate in the near future, while 37 per cent stating that they will probably relocate. Despite some expression for relocation, high levels of satisfaction with their current residences was observed across both groups, as shown in Table 8.

*(Insert here Tables 7 and 8)*

## **4.2 Choice experiment results**

The decision to relocate and the choice of destination require individuals to compare discrete alternatives and choose the one that yields the higher utility. A choice experiment can therefore be used to simulate this choice environment. Choice experiments have been used before to examine residential preferences (examples include Bullock et al., 2011 and Zanni et al., 2008 and among others).

A Random Parameters Logit (RPL) model was estimated to analyse the choice data. In the RPL model, the coefficients in the utility model for each attribute can vary randomly across respondents capturing heterogeneous preferences (Hensher and Greene, 2003). Such preference heterogeneity is to be expected in a sample where respondents are known to have very different motives for moving to their new locations.

Under an RPL specification, the utility a respondent  $i$  derives from a destination alternative  $j$  in a choice set  $t$  is:

$$U_{ijt} = \beta_i X_{jt} + e_{ijt}$$

where  $\beta_i X_{jt}$  is the deterministic component of utility, with  $X$  being the vector of destination characteristics and  $e_{ijt}$  the random component. The probability that an individual  $i$  chooses alternative  $j$  in a choice set  $t$  is:

$$\Pr_{ijt} = \int \left( \frac{\exp \beta_i X_{jt}}{\sum_k \exp \beta_i X_{kt}} \right) f(\beta) d\beta$$

with  $f(b)$  being the mixing distribution (Hensher and Greene, 2003). Utility coefficient estimates were generated using 100 Halton draws, while all attribute coefficients were assumed to follow a normal distribution in the population.

The analysis of the choice data confirms earlier evidence from the attitudinal questions suggesting that most residents are not considering to relocate again in the future. In particular, 119 respondents in our sample consistently selected the status quo alternative in all six choice sets. Those individuals (*'stayers'*) have not traded-off the attributes in any of the choice tasks, and therefore were excluded from the subsequent analysis. A well-documented bias in the choice experiment literature is the tendency of respondents to select the status quo option more often. This is known as a 'status quo bias' and is often linked to the complexity of the task which leads respondents to apply simplifying strategies when making their choices (Meyerhoff and Liebe, 2009). However, a follow-up question asking respondents how complex they found the choice experiment exercise, indicated that stayers did not find the task complex<sup>5</sup>. We, therefore, did not treat stayers as 'protestors', a term used to denote individuals who do not engage in the choice experiment as a means of protesting against the hypothetical scenario or some other element of the exercise, but rather as individuals who genuinely are not willing to relocate again.

Table 9 summarises the socioeconomic profile of stayers. Of the 119 individuals, 51 (43%) are counterurbanisers and 56 (47%) are local movers. Their mean age is 42 years. One third (34%) of them had grown up in the area, whereas another third (34%) had spent their childhood in Athens or another city. The majority (57%) also had extended

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<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the complexity scores for stayers were not statistically different from the rest of the sample.

family in the area. As expected, those not willing to relocate again, report high satisfaction with their current living circumstances: 88% declare that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their current living arrangements.

*(Insert Table 9 here)*

Excluding stayers, we are left with 96 individuals in the counterurbanisers' sample and 53 in the local movers' sample. Table 10 presents the results of the RPL model estimation. The coefficients correspond to the marginal utility of each attribute level. A positive and statistically significant coefficient indicates that respondents hold positive values for the corresponding attribute. The second column reports the results from the choice data estimation for the counterurbanisers whereas column 3 reports the same information for the local movers. It should be noted that given the relatively small sample size for the local movers caution should be given in interpreting the results.

*(Insert Table 10 here)*

Results suggest that the settlement type significantly influences the choice of relocation areas for both samples. The coefficients for 'city' and 'village' are negative and statistically significant for counterurbanisers, implying that respondents prefer regional towns to bigger cities or villages. This finding highlights the potential role of regional towns (particularly in close proximity to large cities, see also Remoundou et al., 2016; Anastasiou and Duquenne, 2015) in satisfying a counterurbanisation demand. This finding also suggests that the hypothesis of a 'counter counterurbanisation' is not likely, as these residents, were they to move again, they would not seek to relocate back to Athens or to other bigger city. 'Village' has a negative and significant coefficient for

local movers too, suggesting that they too attach negative utility to moving to such a small setting. The coefficient for big cities is not statistically significant.

Results suggest that respondents are not influenced in their choice of destination by whether or not they had lived in the area before. This is in agreement with evidence from the attitudinal question asking respondents where they had lived until the age of 18. The majority of counterurbanisers had lived in Athens or other big cities until adulthood, yet they had relocated to the regional towns under examination. Similarly, local movers tended not to consider whether they had lived in the area before as important when deciding on their preferred relocation destinations unlike evidence for the contrary, reported in European studies (Bijker et al., 2012).

On the other hand, the existence of family networks in close proximity is valued positively by counterurbanisers. The prospect of living within 20 km of other family members, positively contributes to counterurbanisers' utilities. This result corroborates previous evidence highlighting the importance of family networks in Greece (Papadopoulos and Roumpakis, 2013) and particularly in the country's own counterurbanisation story (Gkartzios, 2013). However, this attribute is not statistically significant for local movers.

Cultural opportunities are also an important consideration for counterurbanisers in our sample. Individuals are more likely to select alternatives offering medium or high cultural opportunities, pointing to the importance of cultural activities in the choice of destination. This was also evident in a previous survey examining the potential for

counterurbanisation among urban residents in Athens (Remoundou et al., 2016). Again, the coefficient is not significant for local movers.

Finally, our results point to the importance of opportunities for changing employment in informing the choice of destination. Respondents attach positive and significant utility to the opportunity of a career change and are more likely to choose relocation alternatives that offer such opportunities. The coefficient is the highest among all of the binary attributes in both models.

It should also be noted that the results suggest a positive and statistically significant Alternative Specific Constant (ASC) for the counterurbanisers. The ASC has been defined as the utility associated with remaining in the current location (option 3). A positive ASC therefore implies that respondents attach a positive utility to their current living arrangements. This can also be explained, for example, by the fact that 73% of the residents who had moved from urban centres declared that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their living conditions in the specific regional towns.

## **5. Conclusions**

This paper presents the results of a household survey, including a choice experiment, administered to a ‘mobility sample’ of 300 residents in two regional towns. Our research is situated in a context that is neither rural nor urban. Both regional towns would not be described as rural or agricultural in Greek, and both would not be seen as metropolitan either, although they have good accessibility to big cities in Greece (i.e. Athens and Volos). The choice of these locations was informed by previous research which

highlights the role of such settlements in Greece's 'counterurbanisation story' (Remoundou et al., 2016; Anastasiou and Duquenne, 2015; Gkartzios, 2013).

Caution, should be applied in the generalisability of our results. The hypothetical nature of our experimental design along with the small and not representative sample sizes do not allow us to make any claims as to how representative these results are of the wider mobilities in Greece. We further acknowledge that the quantitative methodology we have used cannot reveal the lived experience of mobility in a context of crisis. Nevertheless, our research provides useful insights on the importance of socioeconomic considerations in understanding mobility patterns, and it does respond to a stated call for more engagement with quantitative and experimental research in rural mobility research (Smith, 2007).

Our results demonstrate a series of mobilities dominated by counterurbanisation and local movements, but inclusive also of lateral and international migration. While the literature on rural mobilities usually focuses on longer distance, permanent urban-to-rural relocations (Milbourne and Kitchen, 2014), and more recently to lateral migration too (Stockdale, 2016), we point to the importance of local movements as well as other relocations that could be explored through different to this paper research designs.

We identified two dominant mobility groups, counterurbanisers and local movers. In particular, almost 50% of our sample moved from larger urban settlements (i.e. Athens or other big cities). Both groups provided some evidence that that their relocation was linked to the crisis. In particular 42 per cent of counterurbanisers attributed their relocation directly to the economic crisis, while the equivalent figure for local movers

was 62 per cent. This provides support to the literature on counterurban mobility in times of crisis (Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 2013) drawing on either census data (Anastasiou and Duquenne, 2015) or exploratory research (Gkartzios, 2013; Anthopoulou et al. 2017). Obviously, the magnitude of these movements across the Greek territory in an issue under examination. In this paper, we highlight the role of local movements beyond counterurbanisation in the context of economic crisis, aspects of mobility that can be underexplored due to the short distance relocations they involve (Milbourne, 2007).

Compared to each other, the two mobility groups demonstrate some characteristic differences. For example, counterurban relocations were associated with significant increases in homeownership rates, while such increases were modest for local movers. Similarly, while some counterurbanisers availed themselves of family housing opportunities in the survey areas, local movers tended to move out of family housing. The two groups were also significantly different from each other, in that counterurbanisers were relatively wealthier, more likely to be retired, experiencing lower unemployment rates, and more likely to move to houses instead of apartments. As expected, high unemployment levels were found in both groups, but were higher for the local movers.

While for most residents their recent relocation appears to be rather permanent, a significant number of respondents (particularly within the counterurbanisation sample) expressed willingness to relocate again in future. Results from the analysis of the choice data allow us to examine the significance of different factors in the choice of future areas. Acknowledging a difficulty to compare the two groups because of small sampling sizes in the choice experiment, further heterogeneity was observed particularly in relation to the role of family networks and cultural opportunities in future relocations, as these were

only important for counterurbanisers, but not for local movers. Similarities, however, were observed across both groups in relation to mobilities driven by employment changes and the role of particular settlement types, specifically regional towns in non-metropolitan Greece.

As regards employment opportunities at destination, both counterurbanisers and local movers attach significant utility to the opportunity for an employment change. This result should be interpreted in the context of the financial crisis and high unemployment levels, which dominate the concerns of movers. Opportunities for a career change were also reported as being an important factor in previous research projects, and in many cases relocations were associated with a new professional venture (Gkartzios, 2013). It should be however also noted that in many cases research projects have revealed disappointment and frustration associated with such expectations, particularly when moving to rural areas (Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 2013; Anthopoulou et al., 2017). Employment-led explanations of mobility are not unknown in the international literature. Early work on counterurbanisation for example focused on employment needs (Moseley, 1984), while Mitchell conceptualises such relocations as ‘displaced-urbanisation’, driven by economic considerations rather than quality of life expectations attached to the rural.

Finally, the finding regarding the preference of regional towns as places to live is important because, particularly for counterurbanisers, it suggests that if they were to move again (as one third of the sample suggested as a likely possibility), they wouldn’t seek to relocate to a bigger city, providing evidence against the hypothesis of ‘counter counterurbanisation’. Local movers also attach a negative utility to moving to a smaller settlement compared to their current location. Therefore, our data point that the most

desired settlements to relocate, in the context of the crisis at least, are not associated with remote, dispersed and isolated settings, but with small-sized towns in non-metropolitan Greece, evidenced also by the high numbers of stayers in our choice experiment and ongoing research (i.e. Anastasiou and Duquenne, 2015). The preferences for regional towns in non-metropolitan areas as evidenced in our survey, confirm resilient perceptions of the countryside, whether imagined, experienced or expected (Kasimis and Papadopoulos, 2013; Kasimis and Zografakis, 2012; Anthopoulou et al., 2017). Given the limited evidence of a dominant idyllic construction of rurality in Greece discussed earlier, we must consider the emergence of a ‘reversed construct’ as well (drawing on Kasimis and Papadopoulos’ (2013) point on ‘reversed mobilities’ in the context of crisis) for non-metropolitan residential environments, and its uses and misuses by various social agents. This ‘reversed construct’ resembles the characteristics of a rural idyll perhaps, but is inherently different, because it is not rooted in pastoralism and a pre-industrial view of a Greek rurality; instead, it is positioned in the current context of economic crisis.

### **Acknowledgements**

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**Table 1: Attributes and their levels**

Characteristic of destination	Levels
Settlement type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big city (&gt; 100,000 population)</li> <li>• Regional town (approximately 10,000 population)</li> <li>• Village (&lt; 2,000 population)</li> </ul>
Lived in the area before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘I have lived in this area for a short or long period of my life’</li> <li>• ‘I have never lived in this area before’</li> </ul>
Family networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of family networks within an area of less than 20 km</li> <li>• Existence of family within a distance of 20-40 km</li> <li>• No family networks within a distance of 40 km</li> </ul>
Cultural opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High: the local community is very active in cultural activities (frequent and diverse activities organised by both local authorities and the private sector)</li> <li>• Medium: Cultural activities are limited and are usually organised by private actors, (limited frequency and not great diversity of festivals and other activities)</li> <li>• Low: Cultural activities are very rare in the area</li> </ul>
Change in employment type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are opportunities for employment in a different sector</li> <li>• No opportunities for employment in a different sector</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Example of a choice card**

	<b>Destination A</b>	<b>Destination B</b>	<b>Status Quo</b>
<b>Settlement Type</b>	Village	Regional Town	Current living
<b>Lived in the area before</b>	No	Yes	
<b>Family networks</b>	In close proximity (<20 km)	No	
<b>Cultural opportunities</b>	Medium	High	
<b>Change in employment type</b>	Yes	No	

**Table 3: Previous location (N = 300)**

<b>Origin</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Same area (N=109)	36.3
Villages or the open countryside (N=11)	3.7
Other towns (N=24)	8
Other cities (above 100,000) (N=65)	21.7
Athens (N=82)	27.3
Abroad (N=9)	3

**Table 4: Tenure before and after relocation**

<b>Tenure type</b>	<b>Counterurbanisers</b>		<b>Local Movers</b>	
	<b>Before (%)</b> <b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>After (%)</b> <b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Before (%)</b> <b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>After (%)</b> <b>Mean (SD)</b>
Renting	0.68 (0.47)	0.26 (0.44)	0.79 (0.41)	0.72 (0.45)
Owner without a mortgage	0.15 (0.36)	0.35 (0.48)	0.06 (0.23)	0.13 (0.34)
Owner with a mortgage	0.03 (0.18)	0.13 (0.34)	0	0.10 (0.30)
Family House	0.13 (0.34)	0.24 (0.43)	0.16 (0.36)	0.04 (0.19)
Other	0.01 (0.08)	0.02 (0.14)	0	0.01 (0.10)

**Table 5: Type of housing after relocation**

<b>Type of housing</b>	<b>Counterurbanisers %</b>	<b>Local Movers %</b>
	<b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Mean (SD)</b>
Flat/Apartment	0.24 (0.43)	0.50 (0.50)
House with land	0.52 (0.50)	0.40 (0.49)
House without land	0.24 (0.43)	0.10 (0.30)

**Table 6: Socioeconomic and cultural background**

Variables		Counterurbanisers	Local Movers
		Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Socioeconomic Characteristics	Mean age (years)	39.9 (12.41)	37.7 (13.46)
	Full time employment (>30 h) (%)	0.35 (0.50)	0.40 (0.49)
	Part-time employment (16-19 h) (%)	0.054 (0.23)	0.055 (0.23)
	Part-time employment (<15 h) (%)	0.04 (0.20)	0.037 (0.19)
	Unemployed (%)	0.258 (0.44)	0.32 (0.47)
	Retired (%)	0.15 (0.36)	0.07 (0.26)
	Housekeeper/Income earner (%)	0.13 (0.34)	0.11 (0.31)
	Mean income (net monthly income)	2.06 (1.09)	1.61 (0.98)
	Mean income 0-500 €	0.33 (0.47)	0.59 (0.50)
	Mean income 500-1,000 €	0.40 (0.49)	0.30 (0.4)
	Mean income 1,000-1,500 €	0.21 (0.41)	0.08 (0.27)
	Mean income 1,500-2,000 €	0.03 (0.16)	0.01 (0.11)
	Mean income 2,000-2,500 €	0	0.01 (0.11)
	Mean income 2,500-3,000 €	0.018 (0.13)	0
	Mean income >3,000€	0.009 (0.09)	0.01 (0.11)
	Respondent has family in the area	0.44 (0.50)	0.72 (0.45)
	Area of growing up until 18	Rural/open countryside	0.01 (0.12)
Village (1,500)		0.12 (0.33)	0.08 (0.28)
Other settlements in the province (outside main metropolitan areas)		0.08 (0.27)	0.06 (0.23)
Case studies		0.22 (0.41)	0.53 (0.50)
Athens or other city (>100,000)		0.54 (0.50)	0.13 (0.34)
Abroad		0.03 (0.16)	0.20 (0.40)

**Table 7: Likelihood of relocating again in the next 6 years.**

<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Counterurbanisers %</b>	<b>Local movers %</b>
	<b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Mean (SD)</b>
<b>Very Unlikely</b>	0.33 (0.47)	0.28 (0.45)
<b>Unlikely</b>	0.18 (0.38)	0.12 (0.33)
<b>Likely</b>	0.17 (0.38)	0.17 (0.37)
<b>Very Likely</b>	0.16 (0.37)	0.20 (0.40)
<b>Don't know</b>	0.16 (0.36)	0.23 (0.42)

**Table 8: Satisfaction with life**

	<b>Counterurbanisers %</b>	<b>Locals %</b>
	<b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Mean (SD)</b>
Very dissatisfied	0.014 (0.12)	0
Dissatisfied	0.034 (0.18)	0.018 (0.13)
Neither nor	0.21 (0.41)	0.23 (0.42)
Satisfied	0.49 (0.50)	0.44 (0.50)
Very satisfied	0.24 (0.43)	0.31 (0.46)
Don't know	0.007 (0.08)	0

**Table 9: Socioeconomic characteristics and attitudes of stayers**

	<b>Mean (SD)</b>
Counterurbanisers (N=51)	0.43 (0.50)
Locals (N=56)	0.47 (0.50)
Age	42.2 (13.51)
Grown up in case study areas	0.34 (0.47)
Grown up in Athens or other city	0.34 (0.48)
Family network in the area	0.57 (0.50)
Satisfied with current life	0.49 (0.50)
Very satisfied with current life	0.39 (0.49)

**Table 10: RPL Model estimation results**

Attribute	Counterurbanisers	Local movers
	(N= 96)	(N=53)
<b>Coefficient (St. error)</b>		
Big city (> 100,000)	-0.93* (0.56)	-0.6 (0.78)
Village	-1.32*** (0.37)	-0.94** (0.46)
Familiarity with the place	0.07 (0.31)	-0.13 (0.46)
Family within a distance of 20-40 km	0.39 (0.32)	-0.13 (0.40)
Family within an area of less than 20 km	1.25** (0.49)	0.45 (0.80)
Cultural opportunities medium	0.80** (0.34)	0.05 (0.45)
Cultural opportunities high	1.23*** (0.46)	0.11 (0.68)
Opportunity for career shift	3.18*** (0.57)	3.44*** (0.71)
Alternative Specific Constant	1.70** (0.69)	-0.40 (1.02)
<b>Random Parameters' standard deviation</b>		
Big city (> 100,000)	2.60*** (0.50)	2.76*** (0.95)
Village	2.02*** (0.45)	1.36** (0.55)
Familiarity with the place	1.02** (0.40)	0.15 (0.40)
Family within a distance of 20-40 km	0.65 (0.43)	0.51* (0.30)
Family within an area of less than 20 km	0.71 (0.47)	1.62*** (0.48)
Cultural opportunities medium	0.46 (0.41)	0.04 (0.77)
Cultural opportunities high	0.01 (0.51)	0.06 (0.47)
Opportunity for career shift	2.75*** (0.40)	3.41*** (0.72)

Note: \*\*\*, \*\*, \* = Significance at 1%, 5%, 10% level

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