

International Migration Expectations Among Icelandic Youth

Thoroddur Bjarnason
(University of Akureyri, Iceland)

Abstract

Migration intentions are moderate to strong predictors of actual migration and collective migration intentions of adolescents predict community-level migration trends. Beyond such direct predictions, attitudes among youth provide a sensitive indicator of global cultural, social and economic influences. Perceived affinity with the people of other countries and the choice of future residence is part of the process of identity formation in a world characterized by constant flux. Among Icelandic adolescents, emigration expectations increased substantially between 1992 and 2007. They feel the strongest affinity with neighbouring Faroe Islands and Denmark, but the United States is their dominant destination of choice. A lack of national identity, low national pride, and being raised abroad are the strongest predictors of emigration expectations. Parental educational attainment, non-traditional family structure, and urban residence are also associated with such expectations. Perceived affinity with other North Atlantic countries is associated with less emigration expectations, while perceived affinities with continental Nordic and European core countries are associated with greater expectations. Compared to the European core countries, adolescents who would prefer moving to North Atlantic or continental Nordic countries are more likely to expect emigration, while those who prefer North American destinations are more likely to harbour such expectations.

Key words: International Migration, Youth, Iceland, Expectations

Introduction

Processes of immigration and emigration have continued to blur the already vague image of the European nation state as a simultaneously ethnic and political entity. Scholars have argued that a European identity is an abstraction and a fiction (Strath, 2002), that European integration does not supersede the national identities upon which it builds (Jones and Smith, 2001), and that the European Union itself may at best be a frail recognition order (Fossum, 2005). Nevertheless, the elimination of border control and the freedom of residence and employment within much of Europe have contributed substantially to an multicultural European population that increasingly transcends national boundaries and challenges both 'ethnic-genealogical' and 'civic-territorial' (Jones and Smith, 2001; Smith, 1991) notions of nationality and the nation state.

In the period 2000–2004, the proportion of foreign citizens within the European Union ranged from less than 1% in Slovakia to 39% in Luxemburg, with a proportion between 2–8% percent in most member states (Eurostat, 2006). While political debates over immigration have tended to focus on long-range immigration (de Laforcade, 2006; Small and Solomos, 2006), migration within Western Europe in fact accounted for 57% of the total immigration in the region in the period 2000–2003 (World Bank, 2006). The expansion of the European Union, further European integration, and forces of globalization in general can be expected to further amplify migration within Europe in the future.

Individual migration expectations have in general been found to be a moderate to strong predictor of actual migration in various societies around the world (Card, 1982; DeJong, 2000; Gardner *et al.*, 1986; Glendinning *et al.* 2003; Myklebust, 1993; Sandu and DeJong, 1996; Simmons, 1986). On the collective level, the aggregate migration expectations of adolescents in different communities have also been shown to predict demographic

changes in those communities later years, irrespective of the actual migration outcomes of the individuals that expected to leave (Bjarnason, 2004). More generally, prevalent migration expectations may signal a whole host of societal problems in addition to the prospect of future population decline. Migration expectations can therefore be regarded as a sensitive indicator of the general robustness of local communities and countries alike.

Migration expectations emerge in a complex interaction of individuals with their families and friends, communities, social structure, and cultural processes. The human, social and cultural capital of the family (Bourdieu, 1979, 1997; Coleman, 1988) may in particular both hinder and facilitate the formation of migration expectations. The children of educated and wealthy parents are more likely to have aspirations that can only be fulfilled by migration, and their parents have better resources to support such aspirations (Bjarnason and Thorlindsson, 2006). However, the decision to migrate also threatens to disrupt social support networks of family and friends, as well as emotional and instrumental bonds with the community as a whole (Elder et al., 1996; Pretty et al., 1996). Strong parental relations can therefore be seen as a type of social capital that can make it more difficult for children to leave their home community. Beyond the individual family, a close-knit parental society can also be expected to integrate adolescents into the community and regulate their aspirations (Bjarnason et al., 2005; Coleman, 1988). Research has indeed shown that migration expectations are lower among adolescents who have strong ties with friends and family or with their home community as a whole (Bjarnason and Thorlindsson, 2006; Elder et al., 1996; Glendinning et al., 2003; Pretty et al., 1996; Rudkin et al., 1994).

Adolescents may however also experience tight-knit communities as ‘oppressive, repressive, suppressive, and obsessive’ (Stockdale, 2002). In rural societies in particular, limited freedom to explore social and individual identities has been found to be a major reason for adolescents wanting to leave many rural

communities (Gabriel, 2002; Glendinning et al., 2003; Jamieson, 2000; King and Shuttleworth, 1995; Matthews *et al.*, 2000; Valentine, 1997). More generally, a pervasive 'urban ethos' and negative attitudes among adolescents toward the quality of rural life contribute to rural depopulation (Baeck, 2004; Tuhkunen, 2002). Metropolitan areas offer more diverse opportunities for education, employment, and leisure than rural municipalities, and they tend to draw female and younger migrants in particular (Olafsson, 1997; Stockdale, 2002).

While most research in this area has focused on the effects of local communities on adolescent migration expectations, similar processes can be expected to operate at higher levels of abstraction. The nation and the nation state can in particular be seen as important higher-order communities that influence individual decision-making processes in various ways. National identity fundamentally involves a personal identification with the imagined community of a particular nation and should decrease the potential for migration beyond the borders of the nation state. Indeed, national pride as the evaluative aspect of national identity has been shown to be associated with less migration potential (Datler et al., 2005; Jones and Smith, 2001). Conversely, the potential for migration should be higher among adolescents who do not feel they belong to the nation that defines a particular nation state. Adolescents that have lived in more than one country for an extended period of time should likewise be less likely to identify exclusively with a single nation state. This can be seen as a reciprocal process where an experience with migration decreases the salience of national identity and a decline in national identity in turn makes it easier to migrate (Datler et al., 2005; Dogan, 1994; Hafthorsson and Bjarnason, 2007; Jones and Smith, 2001).

The elimination of active border control decreases the physical barrier between countries as geographical entities. Similarly, the erosion of perceived differences decreases the mental barrier between nations as cultural entities. Adolescents who feel

close to the people of other countries should therefore more easily contemplate emigration. Such perceptions of affinity may be country-specific or reflect a more general cosmopolitan attitude towards different countries in an increasingly global world. Affinity with a particular country does however not necessarily make that country the most attractive destination for migration. On the contrary, the pursuit of adventure and excitement in unfamiliar territories may be an important objective of emigration, in particular among youth. Distant, unfamiliar or glamorous destinations may thus be associated with increased expectations of migration, while proximate destinations of choice may in fact reflect regional loyalties that inhibit migration expectations. In other words, a geographically close, culturally similar country may be the most desirable destination for those who would most prefer to stay, while those who would like to emigrate are more likely to have a more exotic destination of choice in mind.

These considerations suggest that social ties at different levels of abstraction may influence migration expectations. Family circumstances, community characteristics, national identities, and the mental world maps of adolescents may each inhibit or facilitate the formation of such expectations. Some of these effects can be assumed to be invariant across a diversity of countries, while other effects may be geographically, historically and culturally specific. The process of European integration can for instance be assumed to have differential effects in the large countries and cities that form the core of the European Union, in marginalized countries and areas within the European Economic Area, and in European countries that have remained largely outside the integration process. In this paper, such factors will be examined in the context of emigration expectations among adolescents in Iceland.

The case of Iceland

With just over three hundred thousand inhabitants, Iceland is one of the smallest independent nations in the international community. Factors such as trust in the national army, the willingness to fight and die for the country, and distrust of neighbours (Dogan, 1994) are predictably not particularly salient in the identity of a nation that has never had an army and has no neighbours for hundreds of kilometres in any direction. The national identity of Icelanders has traditionally been more introspective, with a strong emphasis on the interconnected themes of Icelandic history, Icelandic language, and Icelandic literature (Hafthorsson and Bjarnason, 2007).

Iceland was settled by Norse vikings and their Celtic slaves in the late ninth and early tenth century. It came under Norwegian rule in 1262 and later Danish rule through the Kalmar Union of 1397–1524 (Karlsson, 2000). The Icelandic Sagas written in the 13th and 14th century can be considered a body of historical fiction dealing with the origin and fate of prominent settlers and their descendents. Thorarinsdottir (2004) has argued that the medieval Christian authors of the Sagas were in part motivated by a desire to counter the popular image of their pagan ancestors as rapists and murderers and to project a more positive Icelandic national identity on the European intellectual scene. The Icelandic independence movement of the 19th century in turn romanticized the settlement period described in the Icelandic Sagas as a golden age of independence that had ended in brutal foreign subjugation. In the struggle against Danish rule, this proud heritage of independence, courage and honour was expected to provide the foundations for a progressive, independent Icelandic nation state (Egilsson, 1999).

Iceland's geographical position in the North Atlantic has to a considerable extent allowed Icelanders to choose their own neighbours (Bjarnason, 1999). Britain, Denmark, France,

Germany, and the United States have for example to a differing degree been in the vicinity of Iceland in different domains and historical periods. The independent Icelandic microstate entered the world of international relations during the Second World War. The country achieved full independence from Denmark in 1944, following the German occupation of Denmark and the British occupation of Iceland in 1940. The United States subsequently maintained a military presence in Iceland in the period 1941–2006.

Iceland formally entered the Cold War when the Icelandic parliament voted to join NATO on March 30th 1949, as left-wing and nationalist protesters clashed with police and right-wing activists outside the parliament building. The Cod Wars with Britain however represent the only direct Icelandic conflict with the military forces of another country. The dispute over Iceland's claims to exclusive fishing rights around the island led to a series of increasingly violent clashes between Icelandic coastguard patrol boats and British battleships in 1958, 1972–3, and 1975–6, but ultimately resulted in the international recognition of a 200-mile national fishing zone (Kurlansky, 1998). This hard-fought victory over the British became an important source of national pride, and the prospect of fishing vessels from Britain and other European countries returning to Icelandic waters has been one of the major barriers to Iceland joining the European Union.

Historical and cultural ties to the other Nordic countries (Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Norway and Sweden) have been very important to the international relations of Iceland over the past century. The joint Nordic labour market and passport union established in 1954 allowed the free movement of labour between these countries and further solidified Nordic cooperation in matters of economy, politics, and culture (Norden, 2007). This regional alliance of countries with a total of about 25 million inhabitants was in many ways eclipsed when Denmark and later Finland and Sweden joined the European Union. Iceland and Norway have remained outside of the EU, but the long-standing

Nordic cooperation contributed considerably to their inclusion in the Schengen agreement on joint European border control in 2001 (European Union, 2007) and the establishment of the European Economic Area in 2004 (EFTA 2007; European Commission, 2007).

The opening of the borders and the free movement of labour between Iceland and the European Union did not affect the long-standing Icelandic tradition of emigration and return migration for purposes of education and employment. Close to 1% of Icelandic citizens left the country annually in the period 1987–2006, and close to 1% returned to Iceland from abroad each year. The net emigration of Icelandic citizens was only 0.1% over this twenty-year period with annual fluctuations between -0.3% and +0.6%. Almost three out of four Icelandic emigrants in 2006 moved within the Nordic labour market (Statistics Iceland, 2007b). However, ease of employment only partially explains Icelandic patterns of migration. Although Iceland also became part of the joint European labour market in 2004, only 15% of Icelandic emigration in 2006 went to non-Nordic countries in the European Union. Conversely, despite the notoriously restrictive immigration policies of the United States, about 7% of all emigration of Icelandic citizens in 2006 to the United States and an additional 1% to Canada. The remaining 4% of the emigrants went to about 30 other countries around the globe.

Iceland has experienced a considerable immigration of foreign citizens in recent years (Statistics Iceland, 2007b). In 1996, the proportion of foreign citizens in Iceland was 1.9% of the total population, the same as in 1950. After three years of the European Economic Area in December 2006, the proportion of foreign citizens had reached 6%, the average percentage in Europe as a whole in 2000 (International Organization for Migration, 2005). As the result of these changes, Icelandic adolescents have an increasingly multicultural background. According to official statistics, 7% of 15–16 year old residents of Iceland were born abroad and 2% were citizens of another country (Statistics Iceland,

2007a). In 2007, about 15% of 15–16 year old students in Iceland reported that at least one of their parents was not Icelandic, 3% reported that neither of their parents were Icelandic, and 2% did not consider themselves Icelanders (Hafthorsson and Bjarnason, 2007). About 17% had lived abroad for a period of at least one year and 13% reported speaking a foreign language at home. Consequently, a large proportion of Icelandic adolescents have direct ties with other countries and the majority can be expected have friends or acquaintances that have such ties.

Modelling adolescent emigration expectations in Iceland

In the following analysis, a structural model of emigration expectations among adolescents in Iceland will be developed and tested. In line with previous research, individual parental resources are viewed as facilitators of migration expectations, while closer parental relations are expected to inhibit such expectations. As non-traditional families tend to be characterized by both adverse economic conditions and structural deficiencies in parental relations (McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994), adolescents growing up in such families should be more likely to expect to emigrate. Drawing upon Coleman's (1988) discussion of intergenerational closure, a close-knit parental society is conceptualized as a form of social capital that should inhibit emigration expectations.

Almost two-thirds of the Icelandic population lives in the capital region surrounding Reykjavik, while the remaining one-third lives in towns, fishing villages, and rural areas along the 5,000 km coastline (Statistics Iceland, 2007c). The rapidly growing capital area surrounding Reykjavik offers a diversity of professional, service, government, and business opportunities that cannot be matched in other areas of the country (Edvardsson, 2004). Adolescents living outside the capital region should therefore be more likely to expect to emigrate.

A weak national identity is assumed to facilitate emigration expectations. Adolescents who are not proud to be Icelandic, do not identify themselves as Icelanders or have lived abroad for an extended period of time should be more likely to expect to emigrate. The emigration expectations of Icelandic adolescents can also be affected by the strategic position of Iceland in the middle of the North Atlantic that separates Europe from North America. Affinities with the neighbouring North Atlantic countries, continental Nordic countries, core countries in the European Union, or North American countries should each increase emigration expectations. Controlling for such affinities, more distant destinations of choice should be more strongly associated with emigration expectations. In contrast, the choice of the Faroe Islands, Greenland, the Shetland Islands or Scotland, can be seen as reflection of a strong national and regional identity and as such it can be expected to decrease emigration expectations.

Data and Methods

The current study is based on three national population surveys among Icelandic adolescents. The three surveys employed a common school survey methodology with questionnaires administered anonymously with a blank envelope procedure to all students present in class on the day of the surveys (Hibell, 2003). The first survey was conducted among 9th (14–15 years old) and 10th grade (15–16 years old) students in March 1992 and yielded responses from 86.8% of all Icelandic students born in 1976 and 1977 (Bjarnason and Thorlindsson, 1993). The second survey was conducted in March 2003 among all 9th and 10th grade students in the country and yielded responses from 80.3% of all Icelandic students born 1987 and 1988 (Hibell et al., 2004). The third survey was conducted in March 2007 among all 10th grade students and yielded responses from 81.8% of all Icelandic students born in 1991 (Hibell et al., 2008).

The multivariate analysis is exclusive based on the data collected in 2003. The dependent variable of emigration expectations was recoded from the question “Where do you think you will most likely live in the future?” As shown in Table 1, 15% of Icelandic adolescent males and 20% of adolescent females in 2003 expected to live in another country in the future.

The perceived *Family Economic Status* is measured by asking respondents how well off their families are compared to other families (1: much worse off; 7: much better off). The education of father and mother is measured on a five-point scale (1: primary school or less; 5: university degree). For the purposes of this analysis, *Parental Education* is defined by the education of the parent with the higher level of education. The proportion of adolescents that did not live with both biological parents (non-traditional family structure) was reported to be 29% among males and 30% among females in 2003.

The current study employs three measures of parental relations. *Parental support* is a two item summary scale ($r = .76$) of the measures “I can easily get warmth and caring from my mother and/or father” and “I can easily get emotional support from my mother and/or father”. *Parental control* is measured by two item summary scale ($r = .74$) including “My parents know where I am in the evenings” and “My parents know with whom I am in the evenings”. Finally, *intergenerational closure* is measured by two items ($r = .55$), “My parents are familiar with the parents of most my friends” and “My parents are friends with the parents of my best friends”.

Icelandic communities form a continuum from being almost exclusively dependent on fisheries or farming to being for most parts independent of the primary industries. There is thus no natural cut-off point to distinguish between types of communities.

Table 1 :Descriptive statistics for logistic regression analysis of emigration expectations among 14–16 years old students in Iceland, 2003

	Range	Males	Females		
		Mean	Mean	St. dev	s.e.
Dependent variable					
Emigration expectations	0–1	.15	.20	.40	.007
Family context					
Family economic status	1–7	4.46	4.29	1.03	.018
Parental education	1–5	3.61	3.56	1.23	.021
Non-traditional family structure	0–1	.29	.30	.46	.008
Parental support	2–10	8.07	8.71	1.83	.031
Parental control	2–10	8.56	8.74	1.92	.033
Intergenerational closure	2–10	6.83	7.09	2.09	.036
Community context					
<i>Type of community</i>					
- capital region	0–1	.52	.55	.50	.008
- fishing village	0–1	.16	.15	.36	.006
- other town	0–1	.18	.20	.40	.007
- farming community	0–1	.09	.07	.26	.004
National identity					
National pride	1–4	3.55	3.53	.67	.011
Raised abroad	0–1	.04	.05	.21	.004
<i>Not an Icelandic</i>	0–1	.01	.02	.12	.002
<i>Perceived affinity</i>					
Northern Atlantic affinity	1–4	2.57	2.70	.95	.016
Continental Nordic affinity	1–4	2.76	3.05	.84	.014
European core affinity	1–4	2.73	2.77	.79	.014
North American affinity	1–4	2.68	2.70	.82	.014
<i>Destination of choice</i>					
- Northern Atlantic destination	0–1	.05	.04	.19	.003
- Continental Nordic destination	0–1	.19	.28	.45	.008
- European core destination	0–1	.30	.27	.44	.008
- North American destination	0–1	.42	.39	.49	.008
Sample size		3,409	3,311		

For the purposes of the current study, the home community of each student is defined by his or her own designation. The responses were recoded into binary variables of *Fishing Village*, *Other Town*, and *Rural Community*, with the *Capital Region* serving as the omitted contrast variable.

Three measures of national identity were included in the survey in 2003. First, *National Pride* is measured by the question “How proud are you of being an Icelander?” (1: not proud at all; 4: very proud). Second, the self-ascribed nationality of the respondent was introduced as the binary variable *Not an Icelander* (1: not an Icelander; 0: Icelander). Third, responses to a question about where the respondent was mostly raised were coded into the binary variable *Raised Abroad* (1: raised abroad 0: raised in Iceland).

Perceived affinity with other countries is measured by responses to the question “How much do you feel you have in common with the people of the following countries?” The response list of countries was not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to exemplify important categories of countries. Responses were collapsed into *North Atlantic Affinity* (Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Scotland or Shetland Islands), *Continental Nordic Affinity* (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden), *European Core Affinity* (England, France, and Germany) and *North American Affinity* (Canada and the United States). The variables were assigned the highest score each student gave to any country within the group. Since affinities with different countries are not mutually exclusive, all four variables are included in the multivariate analysis.

Destination of choice is measured by responses to the question “Imagine you had to leave Iceland. To which of the following countries would you move if you had to pick one of them?” Responses were collapsed into four binary variables *North Atlantic Destination* (Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Scotland or Shetland Islands), *Continental Nordic Destination* (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden), and *North American Destination* (Canada and the United States). *European Core Destination* (England, France, and

Germany) serve as the omitted reference category in the multivariate analysis.

Results: Changes in emigration attitudes among Icelandic adolescents

Table 2 shows changes in the emigration wishes and expectations among Icelandic 10th grade (15–16 years old) students from 1992 to 2007. The proportion of students wanting to emigrate is substantially higher than the proportion expecting to emigrate in all three periods. In 1992, about 11% of all Icelandic 10th grade students expected to live abroad in the future and 26% wanted to do so. By 2007, the proportion expecting to live abroad had increased to about 20% and the proportion wanting to live abroad had increased to 33%. Emigration expectations increased significantly from 1992 to 2003 and from 2003 and 2007. The increase in wanting to move abroad was significant from 1992 to 2003, but not from 2003 to 2007.

Table 2: Percentage of 15–16 year old students that wanted and expected to emigrate in the future, results from population surveys in 1992, 2003, and 2007

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>All</u>	<i>Significance of gender differences</i>
<u>Expect to emigrate</u>				
1992 survey	10,9	11,2	11,0	<i>ns</i>
2003 survey	14,4	21,2	17,7	<i>***</i>
2007 survey	16,7	24,3	20,4	<i>***</i>
<i>Significance of change, 1992–2003</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>***</i>	<i>***</i>	
<i>Significance of change, 2003–2007</i>	<i>ns</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>**</i>	
<u>Want to emigrate</u>				
1992 survey	22,6	28,6	25,6	<i>***</i>
2003 survey	26,7	37,8	32,1	<i>***</i>
2007 survey	28,0	38,2	33,0	<i>***</i>
<i>Significance of change, 1992–2003</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>***</i>	<i>***</i>	
<i>Significance of change, 2003–2007</i>	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>	

ns: non-significant * p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001

Sources: *The 2003 Icelandic Youth Survey* (1992), and the 2003 and 2007 *Icelandic ESPAD Surveys*.

In 1992 the gender difference in emigration expectations was not statistically significant, but in both 2003 and 2007 a significantly higher proportion of females than males expected to emigrate. In all three periods, a significantly higher proportion of females than males wanted to leave the country.

Table 3 shows the affinity Icelandic adolescents reported with the people of other countries in 2003. The continental Nordic countries received the highest score of perceived closeness with 27% responding that they felt very close to the people of at least one of these four countries. About 21% of the respondents felt very close to at least one of the countries in the North Atlantic region and about 18% felt very close to either one of the European core countries or one of the North American countries.

Iceland and the Faroe Islands are culturally and geographically quite close, and both countries were under Danish rule for centuries. Accordingly, Denmark and the Faroe Islands received the highest scores of any single country, with 18–19% of the respondents feeling very close to each country. Other countries receiving double-digit nominations were Norway, Sweden and the United States with 15–16% and England with 12%.

Table 3 also reveals an interesting gender difference in perceived closeness to different countries. Girls clearly feel a stronger affinity with the continental Nordic countries than boys, while boys feel a closer affinity with the large European and North American countries. A closer inspection reveals that this gender difference is due to 23% of girls feel close to the people of Denmark compared to 15% of the boys, while boys are more likely than girls to feel close to Germany and the United States.

The second part of Table 3 shows where Icelandic adolescents would hypothetically move if they had to leave the country. The destination of choice does not follow the same pattern as perceived affinity. North America reaches the highest score of 43% with the United States receiving the lion's share of 37%. England and Denmark were the only other countries to receive double-digit nominations with 18% and 14%, respectively.

Table 3: Perceived affinities and destinations of choice among 14–16 year old students in Iceland, 2003

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>All students</u>
<i>How much do you feel you have in common with the people of the following countries?</i>			
North Atlantic countries	20.4 (± 1.3)	21.4 (± 1.4)	20.9 (± 0.9)
Faroe Islands	17.1 (± 1.2)	19.0 (± 1.3)	18.0 (± 0.9)
Scotland or Shetland Islands	8.1 (± 0.9)	5.1 (± 0.7)	6.7 (± 0.6)
Greenland	6.1 (± 0.8)	4.0 (± 0.7)	5.1 (± 0.5)
Continental Nordic countries	24.0 (± 1.4)	30.2 (± 1.5)	27.1 (± 1.0)
Denmark	14.9 (± 1.2)	23.2 (± 1.4)	19.0 (± 0.9)
Norway	15.3 (± 1.2)	16.6 (± 1.3)	15.9 (± 0.9)
Sweden	14.6 (± 1.1)	16.2 (± 1.2)	15.4 (± 0.8)
Finland	6.2 (± 0.8)	5.9 (± 0.8)	6.1 (± 0.6)
Large European countries	19.3 (± 1.3)	15.4 (± 1.2)	17.5 (± 0.9)
England	13.1 (± 1.1)	10.8 (± 1.0)	12.2 (± 0.8)
Germany	11.1 (± 1.0)	6.8 (± 0.8)	9.1 (± 0.7)
France	6.0 (± 0.8)	4.4 (± 0.7)	5.3 (± 0.5)
North American countries	19.9 (± 1.3)	15.0 (± 1.2)	17.7 (± 0.9)
United States	16.4 (± 1.2)	12.3 (± 1.1)	14.6 (± 0.8)
Canada	9.8 (± 1.0)	7.0 (± 0.9)	8.5 (± 0.6)
<i>Imagine you had to leave Iceland. To which of the following countries would you move if you had to pick one?</i>			
North Atlantic countries	4.8 (± 0.7)	3.6 (± 0.6)	4.3 (± 0.5)
Faroe Islands	2.6 (± 0.5)	2.1 (± 0.5)	2.4 (± 0.4)
Scotland or Shetland Islands	1.7 (± 0.4)	1.3 (± 0.4)	1.5 (± 0.3)
Greenland	0.5 (± 0.2)	0.2 (± 0.1)	0.4 (± 0.1)
Continental Nordic countries	19.7 (± 1.3)	29.4 (± 1.5)	24.3 (± 1.0)
Denmark	8.7 (± 0.9)	19.0 (± 1.3)	13.8 (± 0.8)
Norway	6.1 (± 0.8)	6.1 (± 0.8)	6.1 (± 0.6)
Sweden	4.2 (± 0.7)	3.9 (± 0.6)	4.0 (± 0.5)
Finland	0.4 (± 0.2)	0.4 (± 0.2)	0.4 (± 0.1)
Large European countries	30.9 (± 1.5)	26.9 (± 1.5)	28.9 (± 1.1)
England	20.5 (± 1.3)	16.3 (± 1.2)	18.4 (± 0.9)
Germany	3.9 (± 0.6)	7.5 (± 0.9)	5.7 (± 0.5)
France	6.5 (± 0.8)	3.1 (± 0.6)	4.8 (± 0.5)
North American countries	45.1 (± 1.6)	40.2 (± 1.6)	42.7 (± 1.2)
United States	40.8 (± 1.6)	36.3 (± 1.6)	38.6 (± 1.1)
Canada	4.3 (± 0.7)	7.0 (± 0.9)	4.1 (± 0.5)

Figures are percentage points. Confidence intervals are 95% probability, infinite population.

About 29% of the girls name a continental Nordic country as their destination of choice, compared to 19% of the boys. Again, this difference can be traced to 19% of the girls and only about 9% of the boys naming Denmark, while boys are significantly more likely to name England or the United States. While a much lower percentage nominates France or Germany as their first choice, boys are interestingly significantly more likely to name Germany, while girls are significantly more likely to name France as their destination of choice.

Multivariate analysis

The study employs logistic regression analysis (Hosmer and Lemeshow, 1989) to predict the odds of adolescent emigration expectations. In the first model shown in Table 4, expectations are predicted by background, family and community context. In the second model, national identity is added to the variables in the first equation. The third and final model includes measures of perceived affinity and destination of choice.

On the bivariate level, females are about 1.4 times more likely to expect to emigrate than males. This ratio does not change in the successive multivariate models. The adolescents of parents that are more educated and financially better off are likewise more likely to expect to emigrate. The effect of family socio-economic status becomes non-significant in the multivariate model, but the probability of emigration expectations increases by about 1.2 for each unit increase in parental education in all models. Adolescents who do not live with biological parents are about 1.2 times more likely to expect emigrating. Parental support and intergenerational closure are significantly associated with less emigration expectations but these effects become non-significant once national identity is controlled. Parental control does not have any significant bivariate or multivariate effects.

Table 4: Predictors of international migration intentions among 14–16 years old students in Iceland, 2003

	<u>Bivariate</u>	<u>Model1</u>	<u>Model2</u>	<u>Model3</u>
Background	1.41***	1.45***	1.39***	1.39***
<i>Female</i>				
Family context				
Family economic status	1.07*	1.07*	1.05 ^{ns}	1.02 ^{ns}
Parental education	1.22***	1.21***	1.16***	1.15***
Non-traditional family structure	1.22***	1.25***	1.22***	1.20***
Parental support	.97 ^{ns}	.96*	.99 ^{ns}	.98 ^{ns}
Parental control	1.01 ^{ns}	1.01 ^{ns}	1.03 ^{ns}	1.04 ^{ns}
Intergenerational closure	.96**	.97*	.99 ^{ns}	.99 ^{ns}
Community context ^{b)}				
- <i>fishing village</i>	.70***	.83*	.84*	.86*
- <i>other town</i>	.95 ^{ns}	1.04 ^{ns}	1.07 ^{ns}	1.06 ^{ns}
- <i>farming community</i>	.48***	.58***	.58***	.58***
National identity				
National pride	.63***	.63***	.64***	.64***
Raised abroad	5.05***	3.66***	3.66***	3.74***
<i>Not an Icelander</i>	2.72***	2.72***	2.06**	2.00**
<i>Pervasive affinity</i>				
Northern Atlantic affinity	.97 ^{ns}			.88**
Continental Nordic affinity	1.15***			1.15**
European core affinity	1.33***			1.32***
North American affinity	1.22***			1.02 ^{ns}
<i>Destination of choice^{b)}</i>				
- Northern Atlantic destination	.52***			.63*
- Continental Nordic destination	.93 ^{ns}			.77**
- North American destination	1.26**			1.17*
Explained variance				
<i>Nagelkerke R²</i>		3.2%	8.6%	10.7%
Coefficients are odds ratios				
a) Capital region is contrast				
b) European core destination is contrast				

Compared to adolescents in the capital region, adolescents in Icelandic fishing villages are less likely to expect emigrating by a factor of .70 and adolescents in farming communities are less likely to harbour such expectations by a factor of .48. In other words, fishing village adolescents are 1.4 times as likely to expect staying and farming community adolescents are 2.1 times as likely to expect to stay in Iceland. These effects are diminished somewhat when family context is controlled, but remain statistically significant in the final multivariate model.

The measures of national identity have substantial effects on emigration expectations. Adolescents who are raised abroad are about five times more likely to expect to emigrate and those who do not consider themselves Icelanders are 2.7 times more likely to have such expectations. In the final multivariate model those raised abroad continue to be about 2.8 times more likely to expect to emigrate and those who are not Icelanders twice as likely. The probability of emigration expectations decreases by .63 for each unit increase in national pride. In other words, such expectations increase by a factor of about 1.6 for each unit decrease in national pride on the four-point scale. The strength of this effect does not diminish in the multivariate model.

In the final model, measures of perceived affinity and destination of choice are added to the equation. Emigration expectations increase by a factor of about 1.32 for each unit increase on the four-point scale of perceived affinity with large European countries. A smaller effect of 1.15 for each unit increase is found for perceived affinity with the people of continental Nordic countries, while an affinity with the people of North-American countries becomes non-significant in the multivariate analysis. Interestingly, perceived affinity with neighbours in the North-Atlantic is associated with a .88 decrease in the probability of emigration expectations for each unit increase in perceived closeness.

Finally, adolescents are less likely to expect to emigrate by a factor of .63 if their destination of choice is a Northern Atlantic country rather than a large European country, and by a factor of .77 if the destination of choice is a continental Nordic country. They are however more likely to expect to emigrate by a factor of 1.2 if they have a North American destination in mind.

Discussion

Adolescent expectations of future migration provide an important insight into the national and international context of identity formation among young Europeans. The proportion of Icelandic adolescents that expected to emigrate nearly doubled over the fifteen year period under study. In 2007, one in three adolescents wanted to emigrate and one in five expected to do so in the future. The increase in emigration expectations as well as the gap between wishes and expectations suggests that the migration potential of Icelandic youth has risen considerably in recent years. While this growing migration potential has not yet resulted in increased emigration of Icelandic citizens, the new opportunities for Icelandic youth within the European Economic Area since 2004 may lead to radical changes in this respect.

The effects of social capital on adolescent emigration expectations were found to be somewhat inconsistent. Parental resources in the form of educational attainment were associated with significantly higher emigration expectations in the theoretically expected fashion, but the economic status of the family was not. Adolescents living in a non-traditional family structure were also significantly more likely to expect to emigrate, but neither parental support nor parental control was associated with such expectations. Intergenerational closure was associated with less emigration expectations, net of other aspects of family and community context. However, this effect of a close-knit parental society was rendered non-significant when national pride,

being raised in a different country, and not considering oneself Icelandic was added to the equation. This raises the possibility that intergenerational closure may in part be a proxy measure for the relative isolation of parents of foreign descent.

The higher prevalence of migration expectations among females is consistent with the bulk of the migration literature dating back to Ravenstein's (1885) seminal study of the 'laws of migration'. Women are however not necessarily more likely to migrate between countries, and women were in fact exactly 50% of Icelandic citizens emigrating in 2006 (Statistics, 2007b). The findings of this study suggest that a higher female emigration potential among youth may be a recent phenomenon. No significant differences in emigration expectations were found in 1992, but in 2003 and 2007 girls were substantially and significantly more likely to expect to emigrate. This may signal a future increase in actual female emigration.

The findings presented in this paper also raise important questions about the gendered images of different countries. Both boys and girls have the strongest affinity with the continental Nordic countries, and the United States are the most popular destination of choice for both genders. However, Icelandic girls appear to have a particular affinity with Denmark that is not shared by Icelandic boys. Icelandic girls are also more likely than boys to want to move to Denmark and France, while boys are more likely than girls to want to move to the United States, England or Germany. Future research should explore to what extent adolescents associate certain countries with 'feminine' traits of e.g. interpersonal relations or welfare and other countries with 'masculine' traits of e.g. industrial relations or warfare, and what effects such gendered associations may have on actual emigration patterns.

Prior research has rather consistently shown a higher migration potential in rural areas, in particular among females (Dahlström, 1996; Hamilton and Otterstad, 1998; King and

Shuttleworth, 1995; Rafnsdottir, 2004; Stockdale 2002; Tukhunen, 2002). This does however not imply that international emigration rates are necessarily higher in rural areas. While Iceland has for instance experienced substantial internal migration to the capital area, the emigration rates in rural and urban regions of the country are quite similar (Statistics Iceland, 2007b, 2007c). This paper finds that adolescents in Icelandic fishing villages and farming communities are in fact substantially less likely to expect to emigrate than their urban counterparts. In the multivariate analysis this difference is found to be in part rooted in less parental resources that may support such expectations.

National pride has been found to be associated with substantially decreased migration expectations among rural youth in Iceland (Bjarnason and Thorlindsson, 2006). Jukarainen (2003) similarly found that rural adolescents in the Finnish-Swedish and Finnish-Russian borderlands actively use national identity to affirm their commitment to the local community. In this study, national pride and other aspects of national identity are also found to be substantially associated with less emigration expectations in the general population of Icelandic adolescents. The lower rate of emigration expectations in rural areas nevertheless remains significant, even after controlling for national identity, affinities with other countries and destination of choice.

Ultimately, the findings of this paper demonstrate the importance of studying adolescent emigration expectations in the context of mental world maps. Adolescents are less likely to expect emigrating when they are proud to be Icelandic, feel strong affinities with other small countries in the North Atlantic and would move to one of those countries if they had to leave Iceland. Affinities with continental Nordic countries or European core countries are in contrast associated with greater emigration expectations. Controlling for perceived affinity, Nordic destinations of choice appear to be less of a draw to adolescents than European core destinations. While affinities with North

American countries do not affect emigration expectations, adolescents who would prefer moving to these countries are more likely to expect to emigrate. The hegemony of the United States in popular youth culture may be one of the factors contributing to these findings. Perceptions of the United States as a different, exciting destination may thus outweigh the structural opportunities offered by European integration and perceptions of European affinities in the minds of Icelandic adolescents. Future emigration trends will however reveal the relative importance of similarities and differences in the actual decision making process of young adults.

References

- Bjarnason, Thorodddur. (1999). Icelandic national identity in Nordic and international context. In *European Encounters*, edited by Aake Daun and Soren Jansson. Lund, Sweden: Nordic Academic Press.
- Bjarnason, Thorodddur. (2004). Leiðin að heiman...: Forspárgildi viðhorfa unglinga fyrir búsetuþróun á Íslandi. [The road from home...: The predictive value of adolescent views for urban development in Iceland]. Pp. 303–314 in Ulfar Hauksson (ed.), *Rannsóknir í Félagsvísindum V: Félagsvísindadeild*. Reykjavik, Iceland: University of Iceland Press.
- Bjarnason, Thorodddur and Thorolfur Thorlindsson. (1993). *Tómstundir Íslenskra Ungmenna Vorið 1992*. [The leisure activities of Icelandic youth in Spring 1992]. Reykjavik, Iceland: Icelandic Institute for Educational Research.
- Bjarnason, Thorodddur and Thorolfur Thorlindsson. (2006). Should I stay or should I go? Migration expectations among youth in Icelandic fishing and farming communities. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22, 290-300.
- Bjarnason, Thorodddur, Thorolfur Thorlindsson, Inga D. Sigfusdóttir and Michael R. Welch. (2005). Familial and Religious Influences on Adolescent Alcohol Use: A Multi-Level Study of

- Students and School Communities. *Social Forces*, 84, 375 – 390.
- Baeck, Unn D. (2004). The urban ethos: locality and youth in north Norway. *Young*, 12, 99–115.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. (1979). Les Trois Etats du Capital Culturel. [The Three Stages of Cultural Capital]. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, 39, 3 – 6
- Bourdieu, Pierre. (1997). The forms of capital. Pp. 46-58 in A. H. Halsey, H. Lauder, P. Braun and A. S. Wells (eds.), *Education: Culture, Economy, Society*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Card, Josephine J. (1982). The correspondence between migration intentions and migration behaviour: data from the 1970 cohort of Filipino graduate students in the United States. *Population and Environment*, 5, 3–25.
- Coleman, James S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology* 94, 95-120.
- Dahlström, Margareta. (1996). Young women in a male periphery – experiences from the Scandinavian north. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 12, 259–271.
- Datler, Georg, Claire Wallace and Reingard Spanning. (2005). What leads young people to identify with Europe? *Reihe Soziologie / Sociological Series*, 69. Vienna: Department of Sociology, Institute for Advanced Studies.
- de Laforcade, Geoffroy. (2006). ‘Foreigners’, nationalism and the ‘colonial fracture’: stigmatized subjects of historical memory in France. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 47, 217–233
- DeJong, Gordon F. (2000). Expectations, gender, and norms in migration decision-making. *Population Studies*, 54, 307-319.
- Dogan, Mattei. (1994). The decline of nationalisms within Western-Europe. *Comparative Politics*, 26, 281-305.
- Edvardsson, Ingi R. (2004). Uppruni og þróun íslenskrar atvinnulífsfélagsfræði. [The origins and development of an Icelandic sociology of work]. Pp. 156–182 in T. Bjarnason and H. Gunnlaugsson (eds.), *Íslensk Félagsfræði: Landnám Alþjóðlegrar Fræðigreinar*. Reykjavik: University of Iceland Press.

- EFTA. (2007). *Agreement on the European Economic Area*. <http://secretariat.efta.int/Web/EuropeanEconomicArea/EEAAgreement/EEAAgreement/EEAAgreement.pdf>, retrieved September 19, 2007.
- Egilsson, Sveinn Yngvi. (1999). *Arfur og Umbylting*. [Heritage and revolution]. Reykjavík, Iceland: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag.
- Elder, Glen H., Valerie King and Rand D. Conger. (1996). Attachment to place and migration prospects: A developmental perspective. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 6, 397–425.
- European Commission. (2007). *The European Economic Area*. http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/eea/index.htm, retrieved September 17, 2007.
- European Union. (2007). The Schengen acquis and its integration into the Union. <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l33020.htm>, retrieved September 19, 2007.
- Eurostat. (2006). Non-national populations in the EU Member States. *Statistics in Focus: Population and Social Conditions*. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-NK-06-008/EN/KS-NK-06-008-EN.PDF.
- Fossum, John E. (2005). Conceptualizing the EU's social constituency. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 8, 123–147.
- Gabriel, Michelle. (2002). Australia's regional youth exodus. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 18, 209–212.
- Gardner, Robert W., Gordon F. DeJong, Fred Arnold and Benjamin V. Carino. (1986). The best laid schemes: an analysis of discrepancies between migration intentions and behaviour. *Population and Environment*, 8, 63–77.
- Glendinning, Anthony, Mark Nuttall, Leo Hendry, Marion Kloep and Sheila Wood. (2003). Rural communities and well-being: a good place to grow up? *Sociological Review*, 51, 129-156.
- Hafthorsson, Atli and Thoroddur Bjarnason. (2007). *Stoltir Íslendingar? Tengsl Upprunna, Menningar og Viðhorfa við Þjóðernisstolt Íslenskra Ungmenna*. [Proud Icelanders: the association of origin, culture, and attitudes with national pride among Icelandic adolescents]. Akureyri, Iceland: University of Akureyri.

- Hamilton, Lawrence C. and Oddmund Otterstad. (1998). Sex ratio and community size: notes from the Northern Atlantic. *Population and Environment*, 20, 11–22.
- Hibell, Björn (ed.). (2003). *Conducting School Surveys on Drug Abuse*. Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
- Hibell, Björn, Barbro Andersson, Thoroddur Bjarnason, Salme Ahlstrom, Olga Balakireva, Anna Kokkevi and Mark Morgan. (2004). *The ESPAD Report 2003: Alcohol and Other Drug Use Among Students in 35 European Countries*. Stockholm: Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs.
- Hibell, Björn, Ulf Guttormsson, Salme Ahlstrom, Olga Balakireva, Thoroddur Bjarnason, Anna Kokkevi and Ludwig Kraus. (2008). *The ESPAD Report 2007: Alcohol and Other Drug Use Among Students in 37 European Countries*. Stockholm: Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs, pending publication.
- Hosmer, David W. and Stanley Lemeshow. (1989). *Applied Logistic Regression*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- International Organization for Migration. (2005). *World Migration 2005: Costs and Benefits of International Migration*. http://www.iom.ch/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/share_d/mainsite/published_docs/books/wmr_sec03.pdf
- Jamieson, Lynn. (2000). Migration, place and class: youth in a rural area. *The Sociological Review*, 48, 203–223.
- Jones, F.L. and Philip Smith. (2001). Individual and societal bases of national identity: a comparative multi-level analysis. *European Sociological Review*, 17, 103–118.
- Jukarainen, Pirjo. (2003). Definitely not yet the end of nations: Northern borderlands youth in defence of national identities. *Young*, 11, 217–234.
- Karlsson, Gunnar. (2000). *Iceland's 1100 Years: History of a Marginal Society*. London: Hurst.
- King, Russell and Ian Shuttleworth. (1995). Education, identity and migration: the case of highly-educated Irish emigrants. *Etudes Migrations*, 32, 159–174.

- Kurlansky, Mark. (1998). *Cod: a Biography of the Fish That Changed the World*. New York: Penguin.
- Matthews, Hugh, Mark Taylor, Kenneth Sherwood, Faith Tucker and Melanie Limb. (2000). Growing-up in the countryside: children and the rural idyll. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 141–153.
- McLanahan, Sarah and Gary Sandefur. (1994). *Growing up with a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Myklebust, Jon O. (1993). Det foerste aaretaket bort fra oeya [Pulling from the Island]. Pp. 57–81 in *Ungdom I Lokalmiljøe*, Kaare Heggen, Jon O. Myklebust and Tormod Oia, eds. Oslo: Samlaget.
- Norden. (2007). *Official co-operation in the Nordic region*. <http://www.norden.org/start/start.asp>, retrieved September 17, 2007.
- Olafsson, Stefan. (1997). *Búseta á Íslandi: Rannsókn á orsökum búferlaflutninga*. [Residence in Iceland: a study of the causes of migration]. Reykjavik, Iceland: Byggðastofnun.
- Pretty G, Cooney G, Dugay J, Fowler K and Williams D. (1996). Sense of community and its relevance to adolescents of all ages. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 24, 365-379.
- Rafnsdóttir, Guðbjörg L. (2004). Íslenskur sjávarútvegur við aldhvörf: félagsfræðilegur sjónarhóll. [Icelandic fisheries at the turn of a century: a sociological perspective]. In T. Bjarnason and H. Gunnlaugsson (eds.), *Íslensk Félagsfræði: Landnám Alþjóðlegrar Fræðigreinar*. Reykjavik: Iceland: University of Iceland Press.
- Ravenstein, Ernst G. (1885). The laws of migration. *Journal of the Statistical Society*, 48, 167–227.
- Rudkin, Laura, Glen H. Elder, Jr. and Rand Conger. (1994). Influences on the migration intentions of rural adolescents. *Sociological Studies of Children*, 6, 87–106.
- Sandu, Dumitru and Gordon F. DeJong. (1996). Migration in market and democracy transition: migration intentions and behaviour in Romania. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 15, 437–457.

- Simmons, Alan B. (1986). Recent studies on place utility and intention to migrate: an international comparison. *Population and Environment*, 8, 120–140.
- Small, Stephen and John Solomos. (2006). Race, immigration and politics in Britain: changing policy agendas and conceptual paradigms, 1940s–2000s. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 47, 235–257.
- Smith, Anthony D. (1991). *National Identity*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Statistics Iceland. 2007a. *Citizenship and Country of Birth*. <http://www.statice.is/Statistics/Population/Citizenship-and-country-of-birth>, retrieved September 28, 2007.
- Statistics Iceland. 2007b. *Migration*. <http://www.statice.is/Statistics/Population/Migration>, retrieved September 28, 2007.
- Statistics Iceland. 2007c. *Population*. <http://www.statice.is/Statistics/Population>, retrieved September 28, 2007.
- Stockdale, Aileen. (2002). Out-migration from rural Scotland: the importance of family and social networks. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 42, 41–64.
- Strath, Bo. (2002). A European identity: to the historical limits of a concept. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5, 387–401.
- Thorarinsdottir, Brynhildur. (2004). Sturlaðir víkingar og vígðir Sturlungar: Ímynd víkinga í bókmenntum Sturlungaaldar. [Crazed Vikings and anointed Sturlungar: the image of Vikings in the Sturlunga age literature]. Reykjavík, Iceland: University of Iceland.
- Tuhkunen, Anne. (2002). Ideal life and proud feelings in the north. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 10, 287–303.
- Valentine, Gill. (1997). A safe place to grow up? Parenting, perceptions of children's safety and the rural idyll. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 13, 137–148.
- World Bank. (2006). *Migration and Remittances: Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTECA/Resources/257896-1167856389505/MigrationFullReport.pdf>, retrieved September 21, 2007.

Received: July 17, 2008

Accepted: September 21, 2008