

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Journeyman Migration and Settlement in Eighteenth-century Holland

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Abstract

Many crafts in premodern Europe depended on migratory journeymen. Little is known about these workers, or how craft guilds and urban authorities affected their movement. By employing novel data on thousands of journeymen from different crafts and cities in Holland, we provide the first systematic overview of journeyman migration and settlement patterns in The Dutch Republic. We find that migration and settlement patterns differed significantly by occupational sector, marital status, and skill level. The stance of urban authorities towards migrants significantly affected settlement patterns as well. This interrelation of group-level characteristics, craft guilds, and urban regulation demonstrates the significance of examining these elements in tandem.

1. Introduction

On the eighth of June 1761, Johan Borchard from Basel arrived in the Dutch city of The Hague to work as a journeyman printer. After being granted access, he worked there for over a year, after which he left for an unknown destination in France. Jan Klompf, a single journeyman tailor from the small German town of Darmstadt, had quite a different experience. Between leaving Darmstadt and arriving in The Hague in October 1764, he had already worked in London. He was allowed to stay in The Hague for two years but was fortunate enough to acquire citizenship rights already in 1765, suggesting he became master tailor here and settled in The Hague. Wessel Elzers followed yet another trajectory. Having learned watchmaking in his birth town of Deventer in the east of The Dutch Republic, he left for The Hague in 1759, where he stayed for one year as a journeyman watchmaker. Afterwards he re-migrated back to Deventer, possibly to settle in his hometown.

Like Johan, Jan, and Wessel, many youth in premodern Europe spent time away from home before marriage and setting up their own households.¹ Among young people up to 60 per cent would find employment as a servant of some kind.² These young servants also often migrated to find a suitable employer, albeit not often too far from their home town.³ In Cambridge between 1619 and 1632, for example, 72 to 79 per cent of servants were born outside the city, while for Toulouse,

Bordeaux, and Paris in the eighteenth century the number of servants originating from out of town even exceeded 90 per cent.⁴ Outside of Western Europe, in Northern Italy for example, servanthood has also been found to coincide with migration.⁵ For many young people, it appears, migrating to a different household after reaching a certain age – often located in another nearby town or city – was a crucial aspect of their lives.

This paper focuses on a particular group of servants: journeymen. Having completed their apprenticeship, often under the auspices of a craft guild, they formed a group of semi-independent skilled labourers who contracted themselves to master craftsmen. These journeymen were numerous. Since barriers to masterhood were often substantial, probably most who completed an apprenticeship remained journeymen throughout their working lives.⁶ The vast majority of premodern craftsmen, when organised in a guild, thus consisted of journeymen.

Since journeymen were generally not allowed to own shops – this privilege was reserved for master craftsmen – they were free to move from place to place to earn money and experience. This is assuming that craft guilds and town councils did not try to limit such movement and settlement, but in reality, there are many signals that they attempted to do this. Here, two lines of literature meet: one on craft guilds and one on premodern cities, both arguing that barriers existed to limit or control migration and access to skilled work. Crucially, these attempts, when successful, may have affected the allocation of labour in premodern societies. This makes understanding the movement of these skilled craftsmen between different cities and regions all the more important.

Our contribution to the literature consists of several parts. First, we introduce rich micro-level data of individual journeymen to the debate about guilds and journeymen tramping (see [Table 1](#)). With few exceptions, journeymen have been by and large absent from this literature, even though they were likely the largest group of craftsmen. Second, we focus on a relatively ‘liberal’ region with innovative craft industries, whereas the few studies on journeymen tramping so far have mainly focused on Central Europe. Although craft guilds in Holland did not mandate journeymen tramping, they could have set entry requirements for outsiders, begging the question how these affected journeymen tramping and settlement. Third, within this region, we can compare between different cities as well as different crafts. Together, this allows us to isolate local conditions, such as rules and regulations by guilds and urban authorities, from group-level characteristics, such as being married, their origin, or the specific craft, consequently enhancing our understanding of why journeymen may have tramped, and why some groups may have tramped more than others. As Ogilvie recently stated, many journeymen were not required to travel at all, but many apparently still did so.⁷ As we will demonstrate, even within the relatively small province of Holland and even within a single city or craft, the experiences of journeymen varied enormously, thus signifying the importance of concentrating on the local level instead of trying to generalise about the effects of guilds as a whole.

Since most craft guilds did not keep records on journeymen, it has, thus far, been difficult to investigate their movement. To remedy this, we employ novel data for several cities in eighteenth-century Holland, encompassing almost 2,000 journeymen. We compare journeymen from several crafts, associated with different

Table 1. Overview of source characteristics

	The Hague	Haarlem	Amsterdam
Source type	Settlement register	Guild list	Guild list
Full name	Yes	Yes	Yes
Occupation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Place of birth	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marital status	Yes	No	No
Religion	Yes	No	No
Next destination	Yes	No	No
Length of stay	Yes	No	No
Son of master	No	No	Yes
Contract length	No	No	Yes
Master experience	No	No	Yes
Master age	No	No	Yes
Master shop size	No	No	Yes
Entry fee	No	No	Yes

amounts of skill, working in different towns in the Northern Netherlands, together with their migration patterns.

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the migration and settlement patterns of migrant journeymen from different crafts in eighteenth-century Holland. The focus is primarily on what the migration patterns of these different groups looked like: what occupations they had; where they came from; where they travelled to; and how long they stayed, rather than on why they displayed such behaviour. With the data at hand, the best we can do is to make an informed guess about their actual motives. We nonetheless explore some potential explanations for patterns we find, derived from the literature on craft guilds and journeymen, and from studies on cities' attempts to regulate migration and poor relief. These will be discussed in the next section first.

In the third and fourth parts of the paper we present our empirical findings on journeymen migration behaviour to and from the city of The Hague, using novel data from settlement registers. Occupations associated with different skill levels coincided with different journeyman migration patterns: one more locally oriented for the lower skilled occupations, and one more internationally oriented for the higher skilled occupations. The 'locals' stayed, on average, for a shorter duration in The Hague than the 'internationals' and were less likely to acquire citizenship. We explore whether this pattern might be explained by local poor relief rules imposed by The Hague. In section five these findings will be contrasted with journeymen migration to the nearby city of Haarlem.

In the final part of the article, we contrast The Hague with our case of the metropolis of Amsterdam. This time we zoom in to the highly skilled occupational group of journeyman surgeons, using guild enrolment data. Amsterdam attracted

many journeyman surgeons from outside the city, but not, as expected, from the group of ‘internationals’. Our analysis reveals that although it was easy for migrant journeymen to get into the Amsterdam surgeons’ guild, becoming a master surgeon here proved more difficult. Section seven concludes.

2. On journeymen migration patterns

To understand the position of journeymen in the early modern labour markets, we first elaborate on craft guilds and their formal training system involving apprentices, journeymen, and masters. During this period, many occupations were governed by craft guilds, which were present in most moderately sized towns and larger cities. Their members were independent shop owners – master craftsmen – whose distinguishing trait was that they all shared a similar occupation, e.g., pastry baker.⁸ Crucially, craft guilds oversaw the education and certification of new members. If someone wanted to become, say, a pastry baker, he would have first needed to register himself (craft guilds rarely accepted women) as an apprentice at the pastry baker’s guild. Then, after a few years (varying between two to five years, with a notable exception for England) of working and learning as an apprentice, he would earn the title of journeyman.⁹ Although not all occupations were governed by guilds, the apprenticeship system served as a template that was widely implemented – inside and outside craft guilds – and recognised by citizens and authorities. Prak and Wallis summarise the position of apprentices as follows: “Their agreement with their master distinguished them from other servants and employees. Completing training meant acquiring some form of rights in the labour market [...]”¹⁰

Most important of the rights that journeymen acquired after completing their apprenticeship training was the right to contract oneself as a wage labourer. Journeymen drew up contracts – usually with a master craftsman as the employer – in which the specific kind of labour for which they were hired was stated.¹¹ While working as a wage labourer allowed journeymen to earn the money that was necessary to sustain themselves, it can also be considered as a career stage. The Amsterdam surgeons’ guild, for example, required locally employed journeymen to attend lectures on surgery, anatomy, and botany before allowing them to attempt the exam for master surgeon; and while journeymen coming from outside Amsterdam were exempt from these studies, they were required to show proof of having at least five years of experience.¹² Although not all guilds imposed the same requirements as the Amsterdam surgeons, there were often formal and informal hurdles to be taken before becoming a master craftsman. Journeymen could therefore – in theory at least – use the period of working as a wage labourer to acquire the skills and money that were necessary to enroll as a master craftsman and set up shop.

What is known from studies of craft guilds, however, shows that this career path was not trodden by most journeymen. In England, for example, only about 40 per cent of journeymen would later become a master. Also, the selection procedure to become journeyman in this country was exceptionally tough (and as a result, many individuals dropped out already during the apprenticeship phase, which lasted seven years). In countries where it was easier to become journeyman, it has been found that an even smaller portion of only about one fifth (France) to one third (Dutch Republic) of journeymen eventually became master.¹³

The observation that only a proportion of journeymen became masters raises the question why so many did not. Were they content, perhaps, with their position of wage labourer – or, conversely, were they being held back by guild rules and customs, or city poor relief laws? Two intertwined literatures attempt to provide an answer to that question. The first focuses on the role of craft guilds and their attempts to regulate the influx of members into the organisation. The second literature focuses on cities, and deals with a similar question: how did city councils deal with immigrants and their inclusion in the city's social and welfare systems?

Since many journeymen had vocations that were monopolised by guilds it makes sense to look at the inclusion practices of guilds for a plausible explanation of journeyman migration. Many authors have indeed done so for apprentices and masters, giving rise to opposing views on the motives behind craft guild admission policy. The 'rent-seeking' view maintains that craft guilds raised entry barriers mainly so that its members could profit from their privileged position as insiders, at the expense of outsiders. Authors defending this view have brought forward that apprenticeship training was often unnecessarily long and not more efficient than other forms of training; social activities such as shared meals were devised to incur extra costs on would-be members, entry fees were high, and specific groups such as Jews and women were even completely excluded.¹⁴

Others have provided a more positive picture of craft guilds. They claim that craft guilds' inclusion practices often fulfilled needs for financial safety, consistent product quality, and community.¹⁵ They also question the effectiveness of craft guilds' attempts to maintain their privileged position. Lis and Soly, for example, suggest that journeymen during the eighteenth century managed to organise so well – organizing "strikes" in and around London – that they could force higher wages and shorter working days from their masters.¹⁶ Prak and colleagues, furthermore, have argued that despite the existence of entry barriers, craft guilds held a remarkably high proportion of migrants under their ranks, averaging 42 to 62 per cent depending on the region.¹⁷

Craft guilds, though no doubt influential, were still but one of the many actors shaping premodern (journeyman) migration. Cities harboured labourers, entrepreneurs, merchants, artisans, relief recipients, church communities, and magistrates, among others, and these often had opposing interests with regard to migration and incorporation. The overlap between social groups embodying these different interests, and the power relationships between them, interacted with the social and economic context to shape the practice of urban migration.¹⁸ During a period of economic expansion, such as in Antwerp during the early to mid-sixteenth century, city magistrates may have been enticed to lower immigration barriers in spite of protests from craft guilds.¹⁹ But the opposite was also possible, such as for most Dutch cities during the economically challenging eighteenth century. Leiden, a Dutch town once rich from its cloth industry but now struggling with high unemployment rates, imposed strict conditions on newcomers to prevent its already stretched poor relief system from collapsing. One of those conditions was that newcomers had to carry an *act of indemnity*, containing evidence of their legal settlement outside of Leiden, or had to become full citizens of Leiden if they wanted to settle there permanently. Probably one of the few Dutch cities that did not impose strict entry conditions on newcomers was Amsterdam,

which not coincidentally had a poor relief system that was more bare-boned than Leiden's.²⁰ In summary, it was not just craft guilds that potentially influenced journeymen migration, but general urban policy – which itself was a result of a negotiation between different groups under ever-changing circumstances.

Although studies looking at the actual migration patterns of journeymen are scarce, the ones that have been conducted reveal – perhaps not surprisingly, given the multitude of potential push and pull factors – a multi-faceted picture: different patterns of migration, settlement, and career could be observed between journeymen, depending on their craft and place of birth. Sonenscher, for example, used entry registers from labour bureaus in eighteenth-century France to track journeymen as they moved from town to town. He concluded that “The apparent continuities of corporate life were [...] the product of a complex combination of inheritance, migration, apprenticeship, further migration as a journeyman, marriage, and the acquisition of [guild mastership]. There were many possible variations within this range of alternatives. [...] Not all journeymen became masters in the towns in which they had been born; neither were all masters immigrants from other localities”.²¹

The plurality of migration patterns of French journeymen is confirmed by Reith for journeymen in early modern Germany. Reith discerns five “types” of journeyman migration patterns, each corresponding more or less to a unique set of crafts.²² The building trades, for example, relied on a core of sedentary, often married, journeymen, supplemented by a large number of tramping journeymen coming from distant rural regions. Placement was not mediated by a guild, and consequently there were some tensions between the local and tramping journeymen. Trades in the food services, by contrast, such as bakers, brewers, millers, and so on, drew most of their workforce from the surrounding region; journeymen lived in the households of masters, and their placement was mediated by the guild. Another, radically different, pattern appeared for journeymen operating in specialized crafts such as bookbinders, belt makers, gold beaters, and ribbon weavers. Shops dealing in those trades could only be found in larger cities, were quite sparse, and their demand for labour fluctuated. Consequently, journeymen in these trades were forced to travel long distances in search of employment; hence, a tramping culture emerged. These examples, corresponding to three of the five types of journeyman migration patterns identified by Reith, illustrate that factors such as the availability and the nature of work, as well as the presence or absence of a craft guild in a sector, influenced journeyman migration patterns.²³

In the eighteenth century the Dutch economy was in decline. All major cities – with the notable exception of Amsterdam – took a conservative approach towards migrants.²⁴ Settling therefore might have been difficult. At the same time, it has been argued that, despite the economic downturn, the Northern Netherlands still held an exceptional position within Europe, with relatively open guilds.²⁵ This would make it easier for journeymen to travel between towns. But did that also mean that journeymen were able to find a master to work for or even settle there?

3. Journeymen migrants in The Hague

To begin our examination, we employ a unique source that holds a wealth of information on migrant journeymen. As explained, from the beginning of the eighteenth

century many Holland cities demanded an *act of indemnity* ('*acte van cautie*') from immigrants.²⁶ Authorities did so to check that immigrants would not call upon provisions for local poor relief, and that their hometown or church diaconate would provide, or refund, this relief in case a migrant should fall to poverty. Migrants who could not provide this *acte van cautie* within a couple of months needed to leave the city. City messengers oversaw migrants within the city walls, in cooperation with neighbourhood representatives, and reported back to the urban clerks keeping the registers. Once the *acte van cautie* had been accepted, a deed of settlement ('*acte van admissie*') was provided which allowed the migrant to stay.

Some cities meticulously kept track of each step of this procedure: from the moment a migrant arrived up to the point s/he left or settled in the city. A few Holland cities additionally listed individual characteristics of migrants, such as their marital status, their place of birth, and their occupation. The city of The Hague was one of these. With about 38,000 inhabitants in 1750 The Hague was a relatively modestly sized Dutch city. However, it did house the Estates General and the court of the Stadtholder, which may have attracted migrants who provided services to the elite next to those from more common crafts. Whether local authorities relaxed settlement for those serving the elite will be explored by contrasting the careers of different journeymen arriving in The Hague.

For The Hague, settlement registers were kept from 1750 to 1804. The benefit of the registers is that they were kept by urban authorities, whereas usually they are scattered, and often partially lost, among church diaconates.²⁷ This means that in theory all migrants entering the city were recorded, regardless of their religion, and that we do not miss migrants due to patchy sources. The registers give full names, marital status, occupation, religion, place of birth, place of origin (more rare), and if applicable, also their destination after leaving The Hague. Because the registers use the adjective '*knecht*' or '*gezel*' when recording occupations, which translates to journeymen, we can classify journeymen with certainty. The outcome of the settlement procedure – stay (either with or without citizenship) or leave – was also recorded and dated. This not only allows us to examine which groups of journeymen were particularly mobile, but also to compute how long re-migrants actually stayed in the city before leaving again and see which occupational groups were most likely to settle and even become citizens of The Hague.²⁸

For the period 1751-1761 all migrants were collected from the register. Halfway through the 1761-1769 register we switched to taking a random sample using half of all pages.²⁹ The registers are first ordered by neighbourhood and then alphabetically, so the sample should be representative. This leaves us with 3,228 migrants arriving at The Hague between 1751 and 1778, of which 1,255 can be identified as journeymen. Comparing the sampled journeymen ($n = 434$) with the full collection of journeymen ($n = 821$) shows that distributions of sex, religion, occupation (coded in HISCO), length of stay, and obtained citizenship, are not significantly different between the two sets.³⁰

Places of birth and if available places of origin (i.e., most recent stop before The Hague), and place of destination were manually linked to modern place names and georeferenced. To infer if city size mattered for migration trajectories, historical urban population figures were retrieved from an expanded version of the Baghdad to London dataset, selecting 1750 as benchmark year.³¹

To compare the distribution of journeymen across occupations with the overall composition of the labour market, the occupations of all grooms marrying in The Hague during 1811-1815 are used ($n=1,385$). These indexed marriage certificates were retrieved from Openarch.³² Like the occupations of journeymen, the occupational titles of grooms were automatically coded into HISCO.³³ Since Dutch industrialisation only set in around 1850 and guilds were not formally abolished until 1820, the interval between the marriage certificates and the settlement registers should not be an issue.

Table 2 gives an overview of the distribution of migrant journeymen for the top-15 occupational groups in terms of journeymen migrants entering The Hague using their HISCO code. The table captures the main characteristics of each group. It also compares the occupational distribution of migrant journeymen with the overall composition of the labour market, going by the marriage certificates (last two columns). The column 'Description' gives the most frequently observed occupational title within each HISCO group.

From the last two columns it appears that the distribution of journeymen over the labour market was generally in line with the overall composition of the labour market: occupational groups that were the largest in The Hague also received most migrant journeymen.³⁴ There are some differences. It is perhaps not a surprise that crafts in high demand, such as carpentering and tailoring, attracted a relatively large number of, possibly seasonal, journeymen. Vice versa, it is also apparent that a number of relatively specialised crafts, most notably stone masons, sculptors, and wigmakers, relied on migrant journeymen in particular, as indicated by a high share of journeymen compared to the distribution of grooms' occupations. The dominance of wigmakers and jewellers can possibly be explained by the presence of the court and the Estates General, which attracted a large elite. Perhaps not surprisingly, capitals like Paris and London figured prominently among their place of birth, suggesting that the presence of a sizeable elite was required to sustain occupations like these.

Table 2 further displays some pronounced differences between crafts. For example, stone masons and sculptors consisted of a large group of migrant journeymen, which can likely be attributed to the cyclical or condensed demand for their skills during construction work. Whereas carpenters and masons were required throughout the process, these two groups were only needed for a relatively short period when the decorative pieces of the building were needed.³⁵ This also shows in the share of stone masons and sculptors who left again, which was relatively high at 81 and 69 per cent respectively.

Several other characteristics deserve highlighting as well. Touching upon the previous distinction in construction work is the pronounced regional origin of journeymen carpenters and house painters. Reith showed that tramping construction workers in Germany came from distant rural regions.³⁶ Those arriving in The Hague, conversely, came from a median distance of only about 60 kilometres. Since their skills were probably less cyclically oriented and in high demand in the dense urban network of Holland, there was little need for them to travel far for their next job. Moreover, journeymen carpenters with a recorded destination stayed within a range of 40 kilometres on average, even if they did not return to their place of birth.

Table 2. Occupational groups of journeymen migrants arriving at The Hague, 1751-1776

HISCO 2-digit	Description	N	Distance PoB Median (km)	Left again %	Foreign %	Married %	Citizenship of stayers %	Journeymen distr. %	Marriage distr. %
79	Tailors	276	192	58	67	36	35	21.99	7.32
95	Carpenters	257	63	55	24	27	28	20.48	10.42
80	Shoemakers	120	283	51	63	29	31	9.56	4.98
83	Blacksmiths	83	208	49	68	36	17	6.61	1.36
88	Jewellers	81	342	47	70	21	39	6.45	1.36
81	Cabinet Workers	69	167	57	55	21	25	5.50	2.42
75	Fabric Dyers	49	162	47	46	61	16	3.90	2.57
77	Grain Millers	34	107	29	27	52	0	2.71	5.66
82	Stone Masons	32	183	81	75	13	67	2.55	0.15
57	Wigmakers	27	376	54	73	48	45	2.15	0.23
98	Coachmen	23	104	13	41	91	11	1.83	3.92
92	Bookbinders	21	166	45	38	40	18	1.67	1.66
72	Metal Pourers	19	97	41	41	47	0	1.51	0.38
16	Sculptors	17	56	69	41	18	50	1.35	0.08
93	House Painters	17	56	50	24	18	38	1.35	0.98

Sources: Migrant journeymen from Gemeentearchief Den Haag, Archief Oud-stadsbestuur, inv. nos. 1121-1 through 1122-8. Marriage certificates from <https://www.openarch.nl/exports/csv/files/hga-20220726.bsh.csv.gz> [last accessed 29 August 2022].

The low share of foreign journeymen (immigrants from outside The Dutch Republic) in construction work stands out as well. This could have been related to guild regulations. In Amsterdam, foreign journeymen carpenters were only allowed to be hired if no locals were available.³⁷ For The Hague, guild ordinances are not available, but the relatively low share of foreigners, also in comparison with other local crafts, suggests comparable rules may have been in effect here as well. A similar reasoning could apply to the low share of foreign journeymen among grain millers – which is in line with findings by Reith. Milling was a strictly regulated craft in Holland because authorities wanted to prevent food shortages.³⁸ This may have affected the share of migrant miller journeymen in general compared to the share of local millers at the labour market of The Hague (2.71 vs. 5.66 per cent). Nevertheless, of the six journeymen bakers arriving at The Hague – also a strictly regulated craft – three were foreign, and all three settled in The Hague.

Figure 1 plots the places of birth of migrant journeymen for the top-12 most common occupational groups as a density map. The outer line denotes the boundary of the catchment area, and the dark area in each core indicates the dominant region of origin (measured by place of birth). The figure shows that most journeymen came from within the Dutch Republic and even Holland, but that, as discussed, catchment areas differed significantly per craft. The local recruitment of construction workers shows clearly. The dominant recruitment area for stonemasons was the Southern Netherlands, and jewellers in particular came from large cities (such as London, Paris, Frankfurt, Berlin).

Many crafts attracted journeymen from far and wide, as can be seen for shoemakers and tailors especially, who both came mostly from Germany and the Rhine region. The dominance of migrants among tailors and shoemakers has been established for early modern Amsterdam as well and is likely explained by a combination of patterns of chain-migration, specialisation in their home region, and the relatively low status of the occupation in urban Holland.³⁹ Foreign tailor and shoemaking journeymen in The Hague indeed originated from inland Germany and not coastal areas. According to Knotter and Van Zanden the economic structure of these inland regions was characterised by a combination of agrarian labour and craftwork, where occupations such as tailoring and shoemaking could easily be combined with seasonal agricultural work.⁴⁰ Many of them probably moved to Holland in the footsteps of friends and kin. For example, at least eight tailor journeymen came from the relatively small German town of Dillenburg and four came from Nordrhein-Westfalen.

Migration and settlement patterns may have been related to the level of specialisation required. Most journeymen jewellers were foreign, single, and born in large cities far away (with a mean population of 138,000), whereas journeymen coachmen were often married, and born in small towns closer to The Hague (with a mean population of twelve thousand). Jewellers were unlikely to stay, but coachmen rarely left again. Moreover, jewellers that did stay acquired citizenship in relatively large numbers, but coachmen, even though they often stayed, rarely acquired citizenship. Possibly the few jewellers that settled did so because they were talented enough to vie for a position as master artisan, for which citizenship was a prerequisite. Coachmen were not organised in guilds in The Hague so citizenship was not necessary for them. We observe similar differences between other

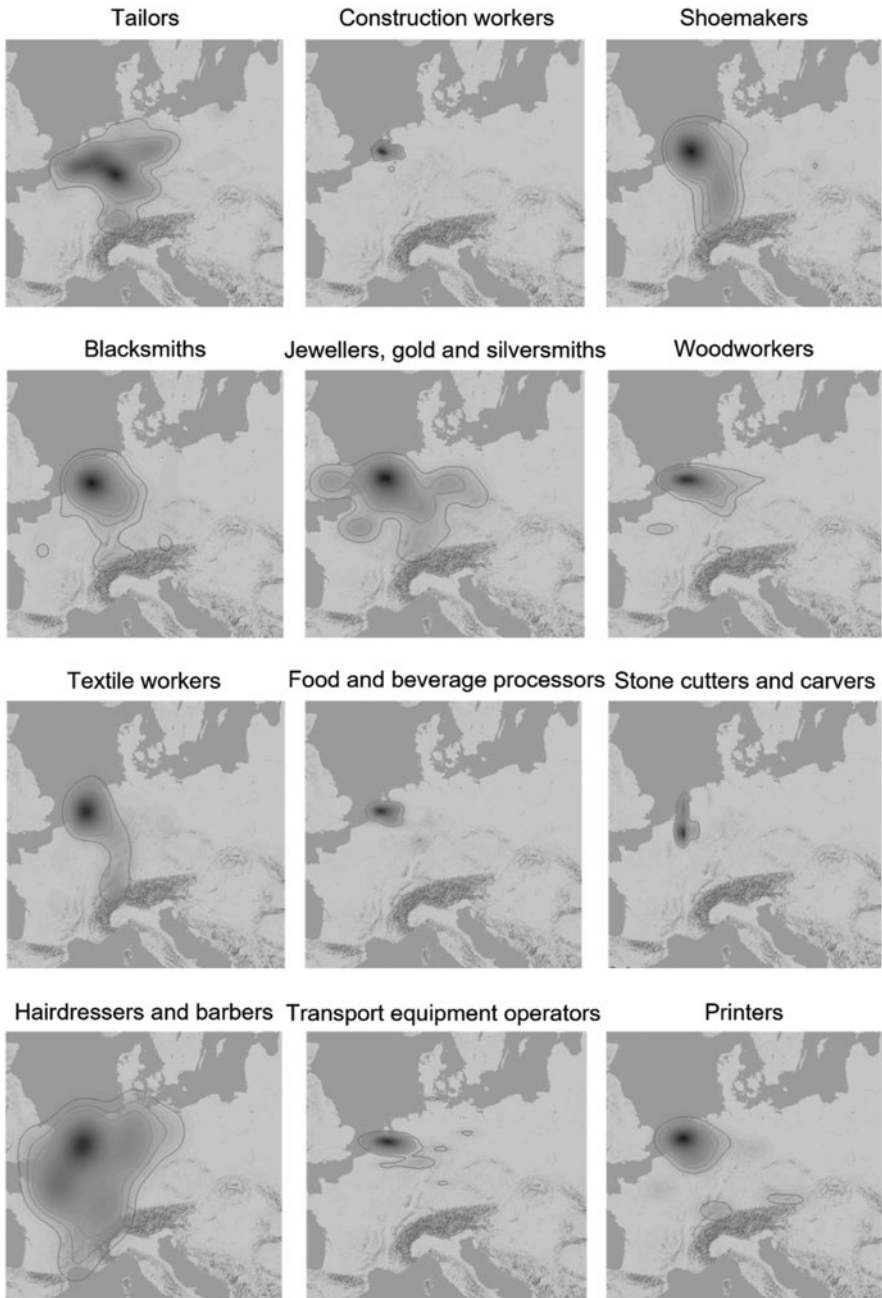


Figure 1. Places of birth of migrant journeymen in The Hague (1751-1776) per occupational group.

Source: See Table 2.

Note: Maps ordered in descending order of observations from left to right, top to bottom.

occupations. For example, most fabric dyers were married, stayed, and those leaving left for medium-sized cities. Sculptors, on the other hand, were generally single, often left again, and moved on to large cities. Also, they acquired citizenship in relatively large numbers when staying in The Hague, as did the stone masons.

4. Mobility and settlement of migrant journeymen in The Hague

To further examine these different patterns, we turn to three of the key characteristics of journeymen in our dataset: skill level, marital status, and whether they came from outside the Dutch Republic. Note that even though our data allow us to examine differences in mobility and settlement, providing an *explanation* for these patterns would be outside our scope. For instance, a relation between being single and the level of skill required for a craft can be explained in two ways: it can signal that these journeymen made use of open labour markets and moved around to hone their skills before settling down. Conversely, specialisation may as well have been related to smaller labour markets and rent-seeking guilds, preventing outsiders from settling, and marrying, in a particular locality.

To categorise journeymen according to skill levels, we employ a method developed by Feldman and Van der Beek, who used Robert Campbell's manual for prospective apprentices, *The London Tradesman* (1747) to evaluate the skill required for different crafts.⁴¹ For each craft in eighteenth-century London, Campbell listed the average wages that could be earned, and provided a qualitative assessment of the skills required. On a wig maker, Campbell writes: "His Business is governed but by a few Rules, and it requires Experience to be Master of them; the continual Flux and Reflux of Fashions, obliges him to learn something new almost every Day. There is a good deal of Ingenuity in his Business as a Wigg-Maker, and a considerable Profit attends it".⁴² Feldman and Van der Beek distinguish three binary categories for each occupational group (classified using HISCO): whether a craft consisted of non-routine work, if ingenuity and solid judgement was required, and whether it involved mechanical tasks.

Although Campbell's manual was intended for England, we think it is the best measure available to distinguish between levels of skill required for a craft. More detailed information, such as the length of apprenticeships or apprenticeship premiums are not available. It is likely that the tasks performed by, say, a carpenter in eighteenth-century London did not differ much from his contemporary in The Hague. What is more, the publication of the manual falls right within our period of observation.

Every occupation has been assigned a skill based on the sum of the categories 'non-routine' and 'ingenious'. The category 'mechanical' was omitted because, unlike Feldman and Van Beek, we are not interested in observing the onset of industrialisation. Since industrialisation only occurred a century later in Holland, this category likely does not capture additional skill – milling in the eighteenth century was much alike a century before. Additionally, since it is difficult to argue that 'non-routine' captures more skill than 'ingeniousness' or vice versa, we consider them to be equal. This means that our skill classification consists of three groups: low skilled when both categories are zero; medium skilled when one of the two categories takes a value of one, and high skilled if both take a value of one.

The classification of occupations can be found in appendix [Table A1](#). The three groups consist of 378, 446, and 431 migrant journeymen respectively.

[Table 3](#) groups the migrant journeymen according to skill and marital status. The latter seems a good predictor of journeymen mobility. Married migrant journeymen re-migrated much less often in all skill groups, confirming the classical image of the single tramping journeyman. Although married journeymen did travel to The Hague in large numbers as well, they seem to have aimed for settlement in much larger numbers than singles. Re-migration of singles was related to skill: medium and high skilled journeymen were significantly more likely to leave The Hague again than low skilled journeymen.⁴³ When staying, high skilled single journeymen acquired citizenship much more often than medium and low skilled single journeymen. Married journeymen in general opted for citizenship less often. We can only guess why, but perhaps they did not aim at setting up shop as a master – at least not in the short run. Also standing out is the low share of migrants from outside the Dutch Republic among medium skilled journeymen, and the relatively long stay of medium skilled Dutch journeymen. The share of foreigners displays a clear u-shape: medium skilled journeymen often came from relatively nearby and tramped between the cities of Holland and their place of birth, whereas more foreigners were present among both low skilled and high skilled migrant journeymen.

To further differentiate migration patterns by skill we take city size and travelled distances into account. Regrettably, destinations of migrant journeymen upon leaving The Hague are underrecorded, probably because urban clerks did not really care where migrants went to once they had left the city. Also their last place of origin, if other than their place of birth, was often not recorded. This notwithstanding, travelled distances and the size of cities frequented by journeymen, even with relatively poor documentation, were markedly different. This can be seen in [Figure 2](#). Panel A shows per skill level the distribution of population sizes in 1750 of frequented places. The same ordering applies to panel B, but instead gives the distribution of distances travelled between journeymen's place of birth to The Hague, and from The Hague to their next destination. When significant, the p-values of the skill group comparisons are given above the boxplots.⁴⁴ Those returning to their place of birth have been omitted in panel A because this would bias the results in favour of high skilled journeymen, who were generally born in larger cities.

Higher skilled journeymen were generally born in larger cities and, when leaving The Hague, left for larger cities as well – even if not returning to their hometowns. These were markedly larger cities, such as London or Paris. Amsterdam was a popular destination especially for the high skilled. The preference for large cities among higher skilled journeymen is not surprising. Large cities provided a customer base large enough to sustain these specialised crafts. Somewhat surprisingly, more migration is associated with increasing city size, for all skill groups. Those that left The Hague on average moved to significantly larger cities than The Hague or than where they had been born. This effect was most pronounced for the higher skilled who moved from places of birth with about 78,000 inhabitants to destinations with well over 250,000 inhabitants. For low and medium skilled these figures were 35,000 to 121,000, and 45,000 to 94,000 respectively.

Table 3. Migrant journeymen trajectories by skill level and marital status, 1751–1776

Marital status – skill level	Total migrants		Left again %		Mean length of stay if leaving (months)		Citizenship of stayers %	
	Dutch	Foreign	Dutch	Foreign	Dutch	Foreign	Dutch	Foreign
Single – high	84	187	65	70	23.5	34	54	53
Single – medium	204	119	67	66	44.5	27.5	35	44
Single – low	87	102	62	55	27	26	30	38
Married – high	52	84	23	28	20	37	16	26
Married – medium	64	42	33	39	52	28	15	4
Married – low	60	102	25	31	34	24	18	16

Source: See [Table 2](#).

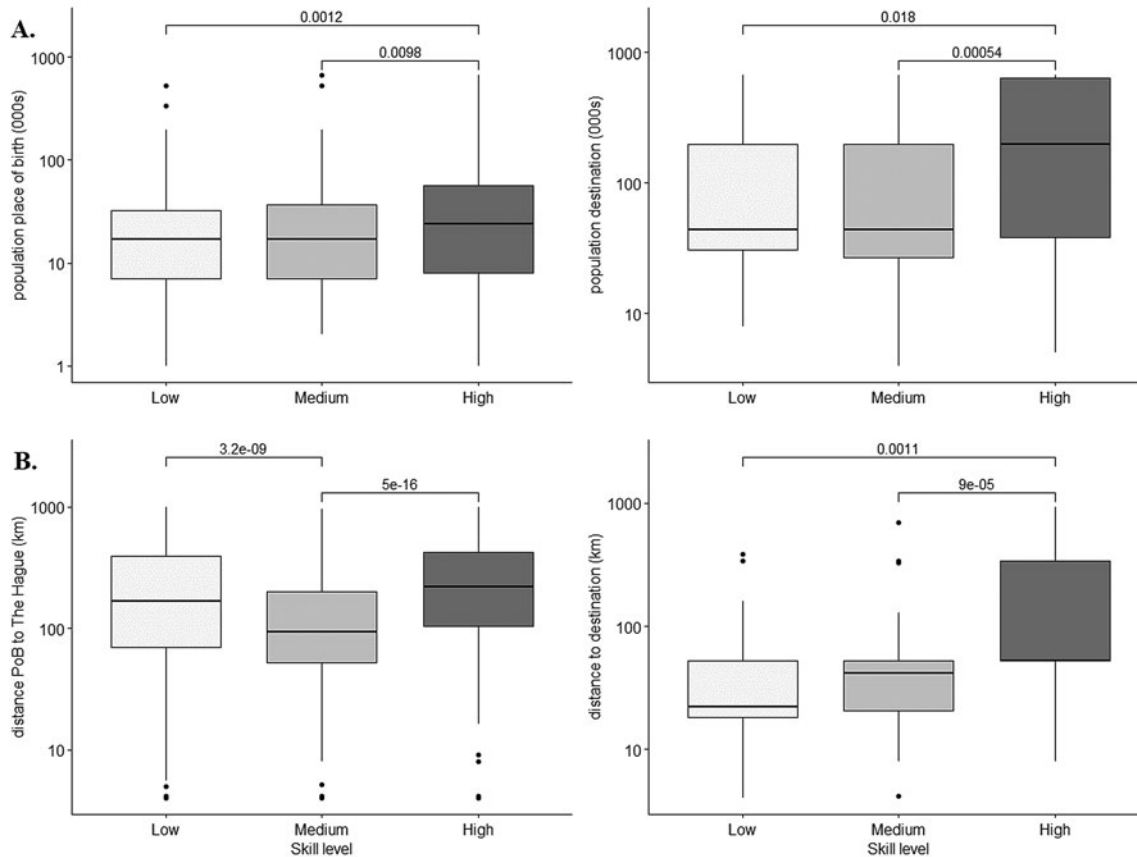


Figure 2. City size and travelled distances of journeymen by skill, 1751-1778.

Sources: See Table 2. Population figures from expanded version of the dataset presented in Bosker et al., ‘Baghdad to London’, courtesy of Eltjo Buringh. Dataset DOI: 10.24416/UU01-Y3FHKZ.

Next to the somewhat smaller cities they frequented, medium skilled migrant journeymen were most regionally oriented. As panel B demonstrates, these journeymen came from quite nearby and often left for cities nearby as well, such as Leiden or Delft. Higher skilled journeymen travelled much farther to their next place of work. Although both lower skilled and higher skilled journeymen on average had travelled significantly longer distances to The Hague, only the higher skilled would continue this 'long-distance, big cities' trajectory when leaving The Hague.

This suggests that once migrant journeymen had moved to Holland, they took advantage of its dense urban network in search of work. The median travelled distances for lower and medium skilled journeymen, when not returning to their place of birth, were no more than 50 kilometres. Only higher skilled journeymen escaped this pattern and more often moved to large cities far away. Whether the higher skilled moved to ever larger cities to become more specialised is difficult to say, but their distinct mobility pattern at least suggests that their reasons for tramping may have been different from their lower skilled peers.

An additional method to examine differences in mobility between groups of journeymen is to look at seasonality in hiring patterns. Were single tramping journeymen, as Reith suggested, primarily a source for short-term labour supply in times of high demand, only to be let go afterwards? We can use month of arrival and departure, and length of stay to examine this. First, there was no discernable difference in arrival and departure patterns between foreigners and Dutch journeymen. [Figure 3](#) plots the share of single journeymen arriving and departing by month, grouped per skill level. Beginning with month of arrival, we see that journeymen, apart from some months, arrived relatively evenly throughout the year. The high skilled journeymen seem to display the most even arrival pattern across the year: from July through October more or less the same share arrived every month.⁴⁵ For low and medium skilled journeymen there were somewhat more pronounced peaks of arrival in June and July respectively, yet their pattern of arrival was not significantly different from the high skilled.⁴⁶

It is clear that most journeymen left in October. The decrees of the urban authorities provide an answer as to why. After implementing the settlement procedure in 1750, the authorities of The Hague enforced these rules in 1761 when enforcement became more strict due to the large numbers of poor migrants within the city walls. From then on, representatives of neighbourhoods had to visit all houses every three months to check their occupancy. Earlier this check had been every four months. Moreover, they had to keep track of inhabitants in a register, and present these to the local magistrates after every round. They were also specifically prevented from allowing the housing of migrants without a settlement deed. The last round of annual neighbourhood checks was to take place in November. Unlike before, uncooperative representatives faced a fine when misreporting the housing of strangers in their neighborhood or when failing to present their register.⁴⁷ As before, migrants who could provide proof of employment in The Hague, or had proven rights to poor relief in their home town, were still given a deed of settlement.

While enforcement remained lenient migrants could prolong their stay in the city, which explains why before 1761 no specific spike in departure can be observed for a certain month. Quite likely, the enforcement of 1761 revealed migrant

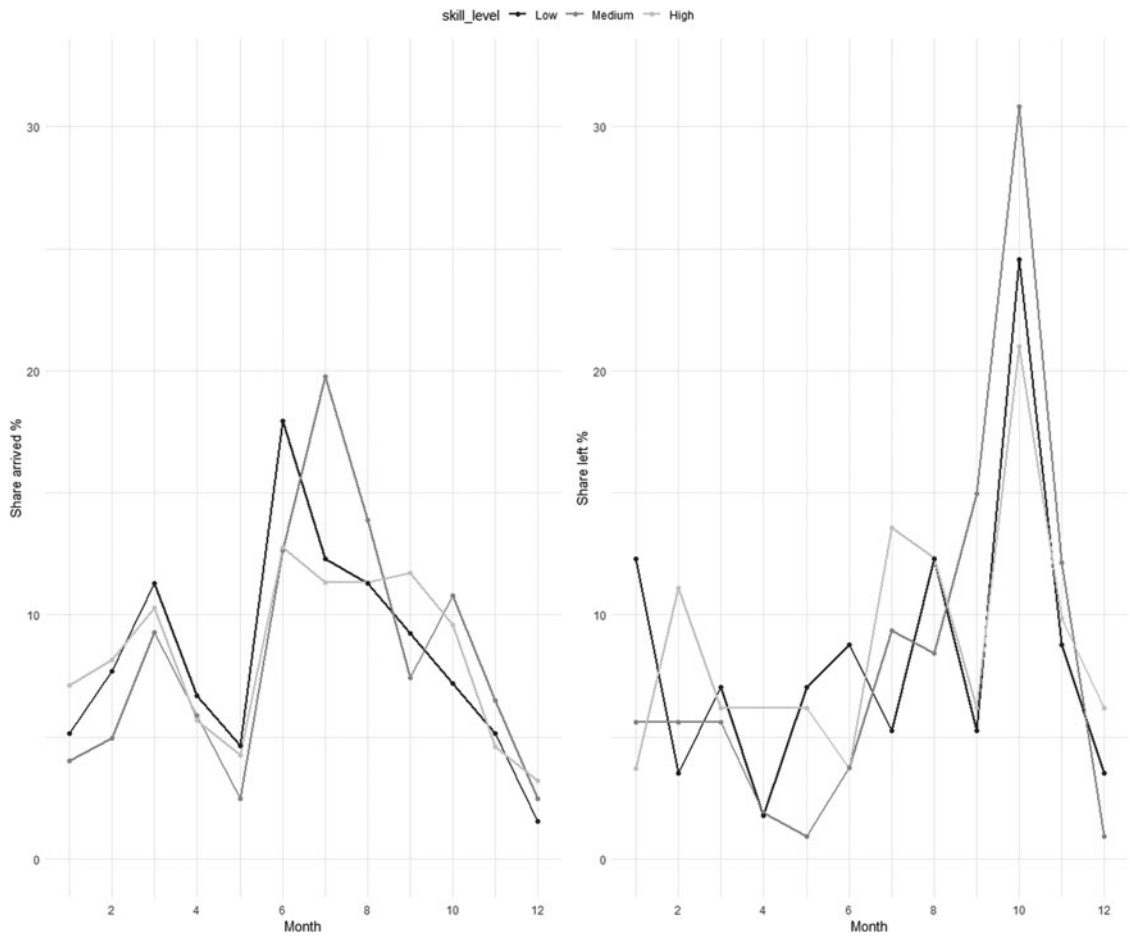


Figure 3. Month of arrival and departure of single migrant journeymen in The Hague (1751-1776).
Source: See Table 2.

journeymen without employment and those without jobs were forced to leave the city. For many this was likely not surprisingly around October: when the summer peak of work had ended.⁴⁸ The absence of an earlier departure peak suggests these journeymen left at this time because they had no work, and not because leaving around this time was common practice for migrants. The October peak indicates that, at least for many journeymen, their labour had a distinct seasonal character.

Since enforcement of settlement rights became more stringent from 1761 onwards, we can use this 'natural break' to assess if some migrant journeymen faced more difficulties in the local labour market than others. The focus here is on unmarried journeymen because they were the most mobile. Stricter enforcement possibly affected journeymen with a precarious position relatively hard. Journeymen with low-skilled work may have had more difficulties in obtaining a certificate of indemnity from their hometowns. Those from far away may have had fewer local ties to local masters and hence more trouble to secure employment – and thus settlement rights.

Nevertheless, for medium and high skilled single journeymen, there was no significant relation between travelled distances and how long they were able, or willing, to stay in The Hague from 1761 onwards. For low skilled migrant journeymen this relation was even positive and significant: the longer their journey to The Hague, the longer their stay.⁴⁹ Within each skill group, distances travelled to The Hague, or being from abroad, did not affect chances of i) staying in The Hague or ii) becoming citizen of The Hague from 1761. Also *between* skill groups few differences can be found: length of stay before obtaining settlement or citizenship was alike for all journeymen; their initial allowed stay (before providing a certificate) was also comparable; and the share that left was alike between skill levels. After removing outliers, the average length of stay was also not different between skill groups, for single journeymen.

All this suggests that there is very little evidence that certain groups of migrant journeymen outperformed others in the local labour market, once local magistrates clamped down on who was allowed to stay. Every, for example, single migrant carpenter seems to have been treated alike, no matter where he came from. Everyone, either from nearby or far away, from low or high skilled crafts, had to adhere to the same rules, and when they did, were allowed to stay in The Hague.

The only other thing standing out is the very low share of foreigners (33 per cent) amongst the group of medium skilled single migrant journeymen – already noticeable before 1761. Yet the foreigners that were present in this group did not face more adverse conditions than their peers from nearby The Hague. All key variables were alike between foreign and journeymen from within the Dutch Republic: comparable lengths of stay; the same share left; same share became citizens, etc. This indicates that the low share of foreign journeymen in these crafts was likely not caused by active labour market discrimination. Instead, these crafts appear to simply have been regionally oriented (see also [Figure 1](#)) instead of one in which hiring of journeymen from more distant regions was actively discouraged.

To a large extent this can be explained by the presence of many construction workers in this group: masons and carpenters figure here prominently. As observed by Knotter and Van Zanden, also in seventeenth-century Amsterdam these workers were primarily recruited from the region. They explain this by the relatively high

concentration of masons in the coastal regions of Holland. These were also more familiar with building stone houses than those from the (eastern) countryside, where houses were mainly built using timber and clay. Moreover, because these regions were relatively developed, the share of construction workers in the labour force was also high there.⁵⁰

The absence of a preference for particular migrant journeymen is mirrored by the relatively relaxed citizenship rules of The Hague. At least from 1770, but likely earlier, anyone could buy citizenship, although foreigners did pay more than those from the Dutch Republic (fl. 30 vs. fl. 15). The latter fee represented about the monthly earnings of a journeymen in Holland.⁵¹ With some saving, then, settlement in The Hague was a real possibility for migrant journeymen. Single high skilled journeymen may have opted for citizenship more often because of the opportunities The Hague, with its court and Estates General, provided for them in particular, enticing them to try and become master – for which citizenship was a prerequisite. Nevertheless, in eighteenth-century The Hague the chances of acquiring citizenship or settlement, as well as the chances of leaving again, were not affected by where migrant journeymen had come from. The most notable variable explaining journeymen's settlement in The Hague was not given by labour markets, it seems, but by marital status.

5. Journeymen in Haarlem

A striking contrast is provided by Haarlem a city just some 60 kilometres to the north. Records for the pastry bakers' guild survive (1693–1752) that are detailed enough to directly or indirectly infer where its journeymen had come from. This is of interest since guilds in Holland rarely registered journeymen. When they did, often only full names were recorded, without information on their origin, their length of stay, or subsequent careers in the guild. Because the Haarlem pastry baker's guild differentiated journeymen by origin, it is possible to observe whether locals were more successful than outsiders, both in terms of access to the guild and in their chances to become master. Full names of journeymen registered at this guild were matched against the list of masters' tests.

Table 4 compares the careers of Haarlem pastry baking journeymen by origin, ordered by closeness to the local guild. It shows that more than half of all journeymen came from outside Haarlem. Locals, and especially sons of masters, had highest chances of becoming master, and were also employed for longer periods on average. Sons of masters very likely had to wait until they inherited the bakeries of their fathers, which explains their higher master share as well as their longer contracts. This certainly applied to Jan Mensinck, who was employed by his father and then by his widowed mother for no less than 30 years before becoming a master pastry baker himself. The Haarlem-born also had an advantage over outsiders. Next to lower chances to become master, outsiders had shorter contracts and were employed by fewer masters.

Whether outside journeymen came from far away or from within Holland did not really matter for their chances within the guild. The opposite may have been true as journeymen from parts of the Dutch Republic outside Holland were somewhat more successful in becoming master in Haarlem than those from within

Table 4. Origin and careers of journeymen in the Haarlem pastry bakers' guild, 1693–1752

Origin	<i>N</i>	Mean years employed (SD)	Mean number of masters	Becomes master in Haarlem (%)	Mean population size origin (000s)
Sons of masters	15	9.47 (8.3)	1.6	40	37
Haarlem	73	4.53 (3.1)	1.5	24	37
Holland	44	2.43 (2.0)	1.1	4.50	29
Dutch Republic	77	2.78 (3.0)	1.3	9.10	9
Foreign	19	3.47 (2.7)	1.1	5.30	5

Sources: Noord-Hollands Archief Haarlem (NHA), Archief Gilden, inv. 82. Population figures see Figure 3. Note: Origin groups are mutually exclusive.

Holland. The ten journeymen from outside Haarlem that made it to master came from significantly smaller places than their co-workers who did not, perhaps indicating that the size of their hometowns affected their decisions to stay in Haarlem. Becoming a master pastry baker was probably difficult for journeymen in general. Setting up a bakery involved quite some capital which likely was more easily secured by local journeymen, and especially sons of masters. Achieving masterhood was not straightforward for locals either, with only one in four succeeding.

Haarlem settlement rules seem to have been stacked against outsiders more than in The Hague. The 1749 ordinance of the pastry bakers' guild states that locals had to serve at least three years at a Haarlem master, and that this was set at five years for outsiders. Outsiders also needed to have been Haarlem citizen for at least three years to be allowed to take the masters' test.⁵² Although also in The Hague journeymen from outside the city, and sometimes those from outside Holland, had to pay more for taking a masters' test, no single surviving guild ordinance required a minimum stay as citizen before being allowed to take the test.⁵³

The same restrictions probably applied earlier in Haarlem, as revealed by the request from Jan Wagenaar van Gijzen, a pastry baker from Frankfurt – who also appears in the journeymen records of this guild. In 1734 he requested to be granted access to the masters' test directly, on account of his marriage to the master pastry bakers' widow Rachel Blommert.⁵⁴ The Haarlem magistrates denied his request and Van Gijzen was required to take the formal route, eventually passing his masters' test only four years later. The same source demonstrates that many other comparable requests coming from outsiders in different crafts were either denied by the Haarlem magistrates or redirected to the corresponding guild.⁵⁵ Unlike The Hague, it seems that masterhood and citizenship was noticeably more difficult to obtain for outsiders.

Perhaps as a result, the settlement registers of Haarlem demonstrate that few tramping journeymen opted for this city. The Haarlem settlement registers are comparable to those of The Hague, although here clerks only registered arrivals. For the period 1714–1776 all migrants have been collected ($n = 1,011$ of which 793 males).⁵⁶ Not only did fewer migrants register here annually (13 versus 70 in

The Hague), the share of journeymen among them was also much lower (16 per cent versus 68 per cent in The Hague). In the 1750s, for which both sources overlap and The Hague is not sampled, more than 450 journeymen arrived in The Hague and only 46 in Haarlem. The majority of migrant journeymen arriving in Haarlem were also low skilled, compared to less than 30 per cent in The Hague. This could suggest that Haarlem may have been more attractive to unskilled migrants, such as textile workers, for which citizenship rules and minimum stay requirements were likely less of an issue. They were rarely aiming to become master craftsmen anyway. More skilled journeymen probably had relatively bleak prospects in securing a future career in Haarlem.

The Hague was a relatively small city for the services it provided, most notably its housing of the court of the Stadtholder and the Estates General. Perhaps this caused magistrates and guilds to be relatively welcoming towards migrant craftsmen, knowing that local craftsmen alone would not suffice to provide services to its relatively sizeable elite presence. In that regard its labour market may have been more comparable to large metropolises like Amsterdam or Paris than to Haarlem.

6. Journeymen and the Amsterdam surgeons' guild

Being a metropolis with more than five times the inhabitants of Haarlem, Amsterdam had a stronger and further-reaching pull on migrants.⁵⁷ Whether the resulting inflow of migrants encouraged the relatively elite Amsterdam surgeons' guild to be open to outsiders is the question we turn to last. We utilise a unique aspect of our source that allows us to determine the effect of locally acquired experience on the journeyman's chances to become a master surgeon – and thus settle in Amsterdam permanently.

Like the Hague, Amsterdam maintained a relaxed policy towards migrants throughout the eighteenth century, and even more radically so: the permission to work (though not formally citizenship) could be acquired for a mere 28 *stuyvers* (2.4 florins), and no settlement deeds were required from immigrants.⁵⁸ Amsterdam was unique in this respect, which may explain why this city continued to attract migrants throughout the economically challenging eighteenth century – in contrast to once flourishing cities like Haarlem and Leiden. This open policy was, however, coupled with a markedly weaker system of social benefits compared to those cities that were stricter on immigration.⁵⁹ The result, at least in the seventeenth century, was that many migrants ended up in poverty.⁶⁰ What opportunities, then, awaited skilled journeymen in Amsterdam during the eighteenth century? Did the open migration policy also allow for career building and settlement?

Whether Amsterdam offered highly skilled journeymen an attractive place to settle and build their careers, can be examined by looking at the well-preserved enrollment lists of the Amsterdam surgeons' guild.⁶¹ Not only did this guild register apprentices and masters, but also journeymen for the period 1761–1775, which partially overlaps with the enrollment lists for apprentices and masters. Within this period, we examined the first 619 entries, which yielded 555 unique journeymen enrolling between September 1761 and August 1766.⁶² For these journeymen, name, birthplace, and contract length were recorded, as well as the full name of

Table 5. Geographical breakdown of journeymen in the Amsterdam surgeons guild, 1761–1766

Place of Birth	N (%)	Mean population origin city in (SD)	Mean distance in km (SD)	First time enrolment %
Amsterdam	151 (27)	198 (0)	–	8
Netherlands	239 (43)	15 (19)	71 (39)	62
Germany	130 (23)	9 (17)	223 (111)	77
Other	20 (4)	24 (27)	310 (270)	85
Unknown	15 (3)	–	–	93
Total	555 (100)	97 (93)	95 (119)	51

Sources: Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Archief Gilden, inv. 252, inv. 246. Population see [Figure 2](#).

Notes: Population figures in 000s.

the master for whom the journeyman would be working. These rich data allow us to look for patterns among journeymen surgeons: not just in where they came from, but also whom they worked for. The birthplaces of the masters who employed them were also known. Furthermore, by linking the two files, we could track which journeymen would later be promoted to master by the guild.⁶³

A first look at the geographical breakdown of journeymen surgeons shows the dominant migratory character of this group: Only 27 per cent of these journeymen originated from within the city of Amsterdam, the rest were migrants ([Table 5](#)). This figure is even more pronounced if we compare this to a large sample of recently indexed pre-marriage contracts of Amsterdam for 1760–1800: in this period, about 48 per cent of married men were native to the city, suggesting that men native to Amsterdam were underrepresented among journeymen surgeons.⁶⁴ These numbers do not exclude the possibility that some of the migrant journeymen were already living in Amsterdam prior to becoming a journeyman surgeon there. Previous research on this matter has shown that this was indeed the case, as some non-native journeymen surgeons had previously been registered as apprentice surgeons.⁶⁵ However, there was also a sizeable group of new journeymen who came to Amsterdam after completing their apprenticeship elsewhere.

As with the Haarlem pastry baker journeymen, Amsterdam journeyman surgeons originating from out of town served, on average, shorter contracts than journeyman surgeons born in Amsterdam: 2.2 years per contract vs. 2.4.⁶⁶ This may have to do with the fact that a subset of Amsterdam-born journeymen had the possibility to work in their father's shop, whereas for immigrating journeymen this option was mostly unavailable.⁶⁷

When looking at other variables, though, there was little difference between journeymen born in Amsterdam, the Dutch Republic, Germany, and other regions. Migrant journeymen did not work for different types of masters when considering the ages of master surgeons (39.4 vs. 39.2 years old), experience (12.0 vs. 11.3 years), origin (1.93 vs. 1.91 on a scale where 1 = Amsterdam, 2 = Dutch Republic, 3 = Germany 4 = Other), or shop size (3.5 vs. 3.7 employees). From this we can conclude that migrant journeymen were apparently not at a disadvantage when it came to finding masters that were experienced or had larger shops; nor did

migrant journeymen work exclusively for migrant masters. Differently put, migrant journeymen do not appear to have been discriminated against (based on their origin) by local, experienced, or large-shop masters. This open stance, by the surgeons' guild and its members, towards migrant journeymen might explain why so many journeymen surgeons came to Amsterdam.

To check whether journeymen surgeons going to Amsterdam also fit the pattern that we previously uncovered for skilled journeymen going to The Hague, we georeferenced the birthplaces of journeymen surgeons to obtain population figures.⁶⁸ The journeymen surgeons show a unique pattern that does not fit well with the hypothesis. First, journeymen surgeons came mostly from smaller towns and villages: averages lie between 9,000 and 24,000 inhabitants (which is likely to be an overestimation, given that towns whose population size was unknown – usually the smaller ones – are not included in this average). Remarkably few came from nearby towns in the province of Holland, while there are two major hubs to the east: one to the north-east around the former Hanseatic town of Kampen, and one on the border region near Nijmegen. Smaller hubs appear around Utrecht, Lingen and Münster (Figure 4).

All these towns, except Utrecht, had fewer than ten thousand inhabitants at the time. These patterns fit better with the hypothesis that large cities were supplied by workers from the rural surroundings, than with the hypothesis that high skilled artisans travelled from one major city to another. This could also explain why there are no observations of journeymen coming from the south of the Dutch Republic, as those individuals had nearby alternatives (Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp).⁶⁹ Culturally, the inhabitants of Brabant may have felt closer to the Catholic South than to the Protestant North. For journeymen coming from the eastern border region, there simply was no big city nearby at the time other than Amsterdam; besides, they spoke a similar language and were of similar Protestant religion.⁷⁰

This raises the question how suitable Amsterdam was for an ambitious, skilled journeyman to further one's career in, and, by extension, how tempting a place it was to settle down in. To make the step from journeyman to master surgeon, a journeyman first had to invest time in working for the Amsterdam surgeons' guild.⁷¹ Journeymen surgeons migrating to Amsterdam were, in this sense, disadvantaged to those who had already completed an apprenticeship there, even though completing an apprenticeship in Amsterdam was not a formal requirement of the guild, so that migrant journeymen were in theory equally eligible to become master surgeons. It is not a wild suggestion that a migrant journeyman needed time to acquire the human capital needed to become a master surgeon – the entry exam, for example, was both difficult and expensive.⁷²

The relationship between journeymen's experience and their chance to become master surgeons is illustrated in Figure 5. Journeymen who had to pay an entry fee to the guild were coded as having no previous work experience in Amsterdam, while those who did not have to pay such a fee were considered as having previous work experience in Amsterdam. This determination is based on the assumption that the latter must have already paid an entry fee at some earlier point in time: either at the start of their apprenticeship or at the start of a previous journeyman contract. The number of Amsterdam-born journeymen who had to pay an entry

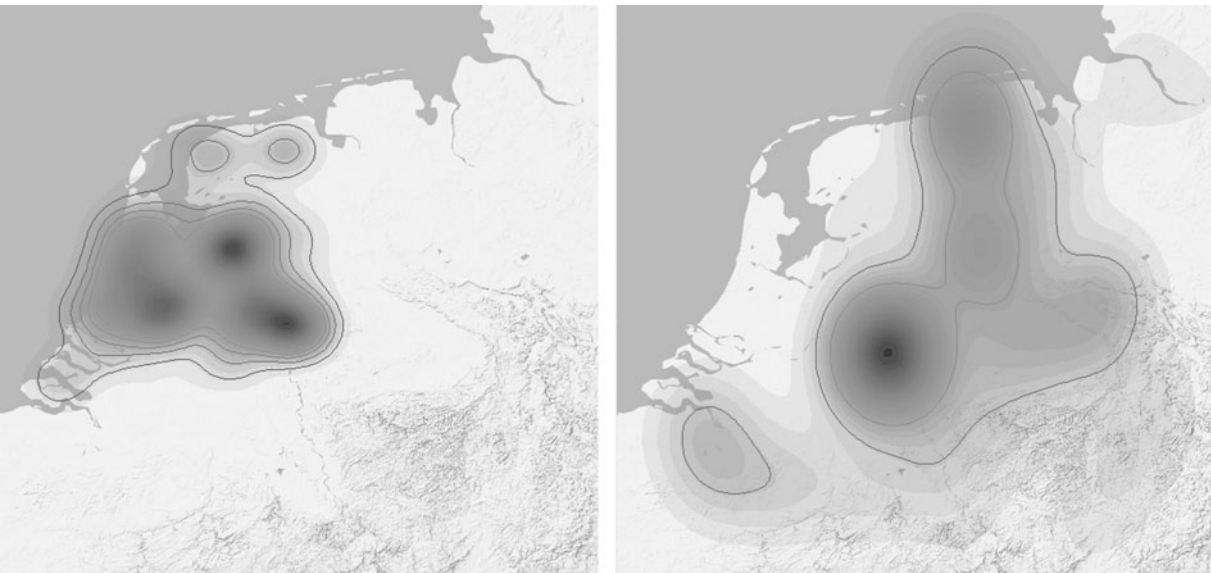


Figure 4. Places of birth of Dutch (left) and foreign (right) migrant surgeon journeymen registered in Amsterdam, 1761–1766.
Source: see [Table 5](#).

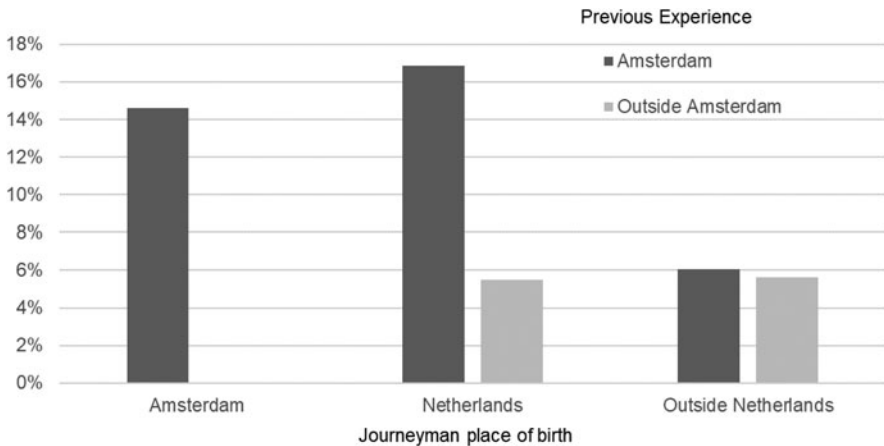


Figure 5. Percentage of surgeon journeymen becoming master in Amsterdam depending on birthplace and experience, 1761-1769.

Source: See [Table 5](#).

fee was very low (8%), which is in line with the expectation that most Amsterdam-born journeymen had previous Amsterdam-based work experience, most likely because they had completed their apprenticeship there. Of these Amsterdam-born journeymen who had also been an apprentice in Amsterdam, approximately 14% later became master, while this was zero per cent for Amsterdam-born journeymen who had completed their apprenticeship outside Amsterdam.

Having previous experience within the Amsterdam surgeons' guild was an important determiner of whether a journeyman could become a master there, for locally born journeymen, but also for immigrants. Of journeymen born outside Amsterdam but within the Dutch Republic, 38 per cent did not have to pay an entry fee to the Amsterdam surgeons' guild, meaning that they had completed an apprenticeship there or had been contracted as a journeyman before. Of these immigrant journeymen with Amsterdam-based experience, almost 17 per cent became master: on par with – even exceeding – the proportion of journeymen who became master but were born and raised in Amsterdam ([Figure 5](#)). That was decidedly *not* the case for immigrant journeymen who had no previous experience with the Amsterdam surgeons' guild: of these, only about 5 per cent became master. This suggests that Amsterdam-gained experience – perhaps from completing one's apprenticeship there – was a prerequisite for journeymen wishing to become master surgeons in Amsterdam. One might expect to find a similar effect for journeymen immigrants from outside of the Dutch Republic, but for this group Amsterdam-based experience does not seem to have made any difference.

When reflecting on the city of Amsterdam as a suitable place to migrate to and settle in, for journeyman surgeons, the following picture emerges. First, many journeymen surgeons came to Amsterdam and found work. Of all the contracts made between masters and journeymen in 1761-1766, 51 per cent went to these migrating newcomers (see [Table 5](#)). This resonates with the relatively open policy of the city

towards migrants. This number rises to 73 per cent if migrants who had located to Amsterdam already during the apprenticeship stage are included. However, not many of them became master surgeons. We reason that this was not likely the result of active discrimination by the surgeons' guild or the city council since we found little evidence for such practices. Instead, locally acquired experience – not a history of migration – is what determined whether journeyman surgeons would become masters. It is fair to assume, then, that those migrating journeymen who wanted to settle in Amsterdam needed to invest time and effort to do so, in spite of the otherwise welcoming stance of this city towards migrants.

Overall, this image fits partially with the hypothesis proposed by Sonenscher, namely that those who were born in a big city had the best chances (and reason) to stay there, while many temporary workers came from out of town.⁷³ However, the Amsterdam case also shows that those who came during an earlier moment of their lives – as apprentices – had as good a chance of settling down as the local-born. This hints at the fact that the group of travelling journeymen surgeons did not perhaps intend to stay in Amsterdam, or they could have made the move earlier. Nevertheless, the more likely explanation is that Amsterdam served as a 'training hub' for migrant journeymen. Those that did not become master surgeons in Amsterdam may have taken the training they received from the guild – in the form of lectures, anatomical lessons, and lessons in botany – back to their hometowns.⁷⁴ That would also explain why most journeymen that frequented Amsterdam came from regions that were culturally and linguistically relatively similar, but not populous enough to organise their own surgical training.

7. Conclusion

In this paper we presented an overview of the migration patterns of journeymen coming from different parts of Europe to three major cities in eighteenth century Holland: The Hague, Haarlem, and Amsterdam. Although these vocational labourers fulfilled an important role in European society of that time – as they provided skilled labour, travelled, gained experience, and ultimately could become master craftsmen – not much is known about the actual behaviour of this group. We aimed to uncover patterns in their migration and settling behaviour: what occupations did they have; where did they come from; where did they travel to; how long did they stay? We tried to explain these patterns by looking at how easy or difficult cities and craft guilds made it for migrating journeymen to arrive and settle down.

From our investigation, a diverse image emerged of journeymen travelling to and living in eighteenth-century Holland. Some, mostly lower skilled, journeymen came from abroad, and after they had arrived, travelled between several cities in the highly urbanized province of Holland. Others, in higher skilled occupations, came from large cities in Europe, stayed for some years in The Hague, and then left again for another large capital somewhere. Yet others came from nearby regions with a specialisation in a certain craft like masonry. This plurality of patterns is akin to the plurality of patterns observed by Sonenscher for journeymen travelling in France and by Reith for journeymen in Germany, which depended on the occupation and birthplace of the journeyman.⁷⁵ Crucially, observing similar patterns in

settings with and without mandatory tramping suggests that tramping regulations by guilds probably had little impact on the actual movements of journeymen.

Of all these travelling journeymen, a proportion settled in the city they travelled to. We examined whether this could be explained by the openness of cities and guilds towards migrants, thereby tying our observations in with ongoing debates. According to Epstein, many journeymen travelled from workshop to workshop to acquire skills, and only settled afterwards – either as master or journeyman.⁷⁶ Building on this argument, De la Croix et al. argued that the ‘journeymen tramping model’ of moving around Europe was conducive to the spread of technical knowledge and human capital formation since journeymen learned from non-kin and often settled somewhere outside their place of birth.⁷⁷ Conversely, Ogilvie has argued that many guilds did not see the need for human-capital driven journeymen tramping, and that some guilds ‘discriminated against non-local youths who had migrated from elsewhere’.⁷⁸

Although we do observe a ‘long-distance, big cities’ trajectory for highly skilled journeymen in particular, we lack the data to tell if this was conducive to human capital formation or the spread of technical knowledge. Our analysis does reveal that local legislation impacted journeyman migration and settlement. Importantly, this effect could go either way: from stimulating settlement to deterring migrant journeymen from staying. Starting in The Hague, we found pronounced differences with respect to migration and settlement between journeymen of different skill levels, marital status, and foreign status. Single journeymen were much more mobile than married ones. Importantly, though, legislation in The Hague did not discriminate between categories of journeymen. While this legislation was tough on outsiders in general – those without work, settlement rights, or citizenship were ruthlessly evicted – it did not affect outsiders with low skills differently than those with high skills, or foreign migrants differently than domestic migrants. The different migration and settlement patterns we observed in The Hague between journeymen of different crafts were, consequently, more likely the result of variations in regional orientation inherent to those crafts in combination with their marital status, just as was the case for journeymen travelling in France and Germany.⁷⁹

The importance of local legislation is further illustrated by our case studies of Haarlem and Amsterdam. Struck by economic decline, Haarlem maintained strict policies towards migrants. Some of these policies were imposed by local craft guilds and backed by city magistrates. Perhaps as a result, few journeymen travelled to Haarlem compared to The Hague. Those who did, were also less likely to become a master pastry baker than Haarlem-born pastry bakers – especially sons of masters. Contrast this to the liberal city of Amsterdam, which maintained an open policy towards migrants throughout the eighteenth century. This successfully allowed the Amsterdam surgeons’ guild to attract and employ a great number of migrating journeymen, mainly from the rural eastern regions.

A closer examination of the career pattern of Amsterdam-based journeymen surgeons furthermore revealed that although finding employment there as a journeyman was easy – we found little discrimination towards migrants both in theory and in practice – becoming a master surgeon was not, as this required local experience. We think it likely, then, that Amsterdam functioned as a training hub:

migrants coming to the city, intent on settling, could acquire the training that was needed to become an Amsterdam master surgeon, and if they did invest that time, they were as successful as the local-born. Many journeymen, however, likely stayed only temporarily, taking their experience back to their hometowns – although we lack the data to confirm this.

In conclusion, we found that, even in the relatively small region that we studied, there were marked differences between cities and guilds in how open they were to migrants, and that this likely affected the migration behaviour of journeymen. In addition to other relevant push and pull factors, then, historians trying to understand journeymen migration and early modern urban labour markets should expand their scope and take urban settlement policies into account as well, since these may well have been more important than guild regulations.⁸⁰ Moreover, the interconnectedness of group-level characteristics, craft guilds, and urban regulations indicates that we should try to move away from binary interpretations of craft guilds, and instead study these elements in tandem at the local level.

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Notes

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44 Performed as an unpaired student’s T-Test.

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Appendix

Table A1. Coding of skill level per occupation, using 5-digit HISCO code

Hisco Code	Non-Routine	Ingenuity	Skill_Level	Hisco_Label
06110	1	1	2	General Surgeon
16120	1	1	2	Sculptor
39310	0	1	1	Office Clerk, General
42220	1	0	1	Buyer
45130	0	0	0	Retail Trade Salesperson
51020	0	0	0	Working Proprietor (Hotel and Restaurant)
53190	0	0	0	Other Cooks
54010	0	0	0	Domestic servant, general
54020	0	0	0	House servant
55240	0	0	0	Chimney Sweep
57090	1	1	2	Other Barbers, Hairdressers, Beauticians and Related Workers
58320	0	1	1	Officer
58340	0	0	0	Other Military Ranks
59950	1	1	2	Practical Aid (Pharmacy)
62105	0	0	0	Farm Worker, General
62400	0	0	0	Livestock Worker, Specialisation Unknown
62700	0	0	0	Nursery and Garden Workers unspecified
72420	0	1	1	Metal Pourer
75400	0	0	0	Weaver, Specialisation Unknown
75452	1	1	2	Lace Weaver (Hand or Machine)
75622	0	0	0	Yarn, Fabric or Garment Dyer
77120	0	0	0	Grain Miller
77330	0	0	0	Meat Cutter
77610	0	0	0	Baker, General
77660	0	1	1	Confectionery Maker
77810	0	0	0	Brewer, General
77890	0	0	0	Other Brewers, Wine and Beverage Makers
78100	0	0	0	Tobacco Preparers, Specialisation Unknown
79100	1	1	2	Tailor, Specialisation Unknown
79190	1	1	2	Other Tailors and Dressmakers
79310	0	1	1	Hat Maker, General

(Continued)

Table A1. (Continued.)

Hisco Code	Non-Routine	Ingenuity	Skill_Level	Hisco_Label
79565	0	0	0	Embroiderer, Hand or Machine
80110	0	1	1	Shoe-maker, General
80320	0	1	1	Saddler and Harness Maker
81120	0	1	1	Cabinetmaker
81190	0	0	0	Other Cabinetmakers
81230	0	0	0	Wood Turner
81925	0	1	1	Cartwright
81930	0	1	1	Cooper
82000	0	1	1	Stone Cutter or Carver, Specialisation Unknown
83110	0	0	0	Blacksmith, General
83915	0	1	1	Cutler
83920	1	1	2	Gunsmith
83930	1	1	2	Locksmith
84222	1	1	2	Watch and Clock Assembler or Repairer
87105	0	0	0	Plumber, General
87330	0	0	0	Coppersmith
87340	0	0	0	Tinsmith
88010	1	1	2	Jeweller, General
88050	1	1	2	Goldsmith and Silversmith
89100	0	0	0	Glass Former, Potter or Related Worker, Specialisation Unknown
92110	0	1	1	Printer, General
92120	0	1	1	Hand Compositor
92625	0	1	1	Bookbinder (Hand or Machine)
93120	0	0	0	Building Painter
93920	1	1	2	Brush-Painter (except Construction)
94160	1	1	2	Organ Builder
94990	0	0	0	Other Production and Related Workers Not Elsewhere Classified
95120	0	0	0	Bricklayer (Construction)
95160	0	0	0	Paviour
95320	0	0	0	Slate and Tile Roofer
95410	0	1	1	Carpenter, General
95440	1	1	2	Wood Shipwright

(Continued)

Table A1. (Continued.)

Hisco Code	Non-Routine	Ingenuity	Skill_Level	Hisco_Label
95455	0	0	0	Ship's Carpenter
95925	0	0	0	Paperhanger
97125	0	0	0	Loader of ship, truck, wagon or airplane
98190	0	0	0	Other Ships' Deck Ratings, Barge Crews and Boatmen
98620	0	0	0	Animal-Drawn Vehicle Driver (Road)
99900	0	0	0	Worker, No Further Information
99920	0	0	0	Day-Labourer

Source: HISCO codes and labels from the History of Work dataset, available at <https://druid.datalegend.net/HistoryOfWork/historyOfWork-all-latest> [last accessed 8 April 2022].

French Abstract

En Europe moderne, nombre de filières artisanales reposaient sur la présence d'ouvriers migrants. De ces travailleurs, on ignore presque tout. On ne sait pas non plus comment les corporations de métiers d'un côté et les autorités urbaines de l'autre ont affecté leur mobilité. À l'aide de données nouvelles sur des milliers de compagnons de différents métiers ayant travaillé dans des villes de Hollande, nous apportons un tout premier aperçu systématique du modèle migratoire et du mode d'installation de ces travailleurs en République des Sept Provinces-Unies des Pays-Bas. Nous constatons pour eux que le parcours de mobilité et d'établissement diffère sensiblement selon le secteur professionnel, l'état matrimonial et le niveau de compétence. La politique des autorités urbaines à l'égard de ces migrants a également eu une incidence significative sur leurs schémas d'installation. Le fait qu'il existe une interrelation des caractéristiques de ces groupes avec leurs corporations de métiers et les réglementations urbaines démontre l'importance d'examiner ces éléments en tandem.

German Abstract

Viele Handwerke im vormodernen Europa hingen von wandernden Gesellen ab. Trotzdem ist über diese Arbeiter nur wenig bekannt. Wir wissen auch wenig darüber, wie Zünfte und die städtische Obrigkeiten ihre Wanderungen beeinflussten. Unter Verwendung neuer Daten zu Tausenden von Gesellen aus verschiedenen Handwerken und Städten in Holland geben wir einen ersten systematischen Überblick über Gesellenwanderung und Sesshaftigkeit in der Republik der Niederlande. Es zeigt sich, dass sich Wanderungs- und Sesshaftigkeitsmuster je nach Berufssparte, Zivilstand und Qualifikationsniveau stark unterscheiden. Auch die Haltung der städtischen Autoritäten gegenüber Migranten hatte beträchtliche Auswirkungen auf die Sesshaftigkeitsmuster. Diese Wechselbeziehung zwischen gruppenspezifischen Merkmalen, Zünften und städtischer Regulierung zeigt zudem, wie wichtig es ist, diese Elemente im Verbund zu untersuchen.