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### **Deskilled immigrants. Higher educated people at the periphery of the French and German upper occupations**

Against the theoretical scheme of a global market for “*talents*” that would turn towards the most “*attractive*” countries, this doctoral dissertation puts under scrutiny the social factors that determine geographical and occupational trajectories of higher educated migrants arrived in France or Germany at the adult age. It is grounded on empirical data that combines statistical surveys (French and German *Labour Force Surveys* between 2005 and 2010 ; *Trajectoires et Origines* survey, 2008) and interviews with immigrant doctors and engineers. Contrary to OECD experts who support the idea of a unified system, the first part highlights the existence of two main systems of circulation that are widely separated: North Africa and sub-Saharan countries towards France on the one hand, Central and Eastern Europe towards Germany on the other. It shows the way linguistic, educative and economic influence of the countries of arrival on the countries of origin explains the migratory patterns. The second part is focused on the material and symbolic dimensions of the often downward social mobility triggered by migration. In the country of arrival, the power relationships based on nationality, language, country of education and race interact with gender and explain why immigrants, particularly women, remain at the margins of French and German upper occupations in spite of their degrees. Hence, the study aims to update and specify the opposition between central and peripheral countries through the analysis of two contrasted contemporary systems of migration.