Barriers to Citizenship and Trades in Early Modern Europe

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Barriers to Citizenship and Trades in Early Modern Europe

Patrick Wallis, Bert De Munck, Clare Crowston, Raoul De Kerf, Marcel Hoogenboom, Christopher Kissane, Chris Minns, Maarten Prak

ABSTRACT

Barriers to economic rights that limited access to markets and strongly privileged ‘insiders’ are often identified as constraining pre-modern economies. This paper provides the first systematic comparative analysis of the nature, size and distribution of barriers to entry to guilds and citizenship for a sample of towns and cities in France, the Low Countries, England, and German Europe. Barriers varied widely across Europe. Barriers based on personal traits (gender, religion, place of origin) were the most exclusionary element. For those able to qualify for entry, entry costs (qualifications, fees, wealth) for cities and guilds were also generally biased to favor insiders. For outsiders, minimum apprenticeship terms were potentially the largest cost, but their real impact was limited in most locations. Entry fees rarely exceeded six months unskilled wages. Guild and city barriers provided a considerable obstacle, but not one impermeable to men with skills, resources or persistence.

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1 Acknowledgements: this research was funded in part by the European Union as part of the “All Rights Reserved? Barriers towards EUropean CITIZENship project” (Grant 320294). The authors are grateful to the London Metropolitan Archive & Ancestry.com for supplying the City of London Freedoms dataset; to Cliff Webb, origins.net and the Records of London Livery Companies Online project for allowing access to London guild datasets.
Introduction
Matthijs van der Haag was born in 1721 and grew up in Nijmegen, close to the eastern border of the Dutch Republic. At the age of ten he became an apprentice with a local barber-surgeon, with whom he stayed for the requisite two years, and who taught him to shave off beards and how to powder wigs. Matthijs then decided to try his luck as a journeyman in various places. In Rotterdam he learned the art of bloodletting, and discovered books that might help him develop his medical skills. In Tournai, in the Southern Netherlands, he served as a barber with the local Dutch garrison, before returning to Nijmegen to work as journeyman for a local surgeon’s widow. Ambitious for greater opportunities, he decided to relocate to Amsterdam in 1742, where he first went to a meeting of the surgeons’ journeymen to find out about the local masters and the money they charged young men like him who wanted to become fully trained. He chose a master who asked 70 guilders a year, made him work very hard and taught him very little. As a surgeon’s apprentice, however, he was allowed to participate twice a week in the public lectures and demonstrations by the town surgeon in the anatomical theatre. After changing jobs several times, young Matthijs in 1746 found himself a master whose daughter was willing to marry him. As a result of the marriage, he automatically became a citizen of Amsterdam, saving 50 guilders in the process. It was well understood that he would also inherit the business from his father-in-law, who died in the same year. Unfortunately, Matthijs did not pass the exams imposed by the surgeons’ guild and could therefore only work as a barber. After lots more study he managed to pass two years later, in August 1750, at the age of 28. At last he could join the guild and work freely as a master surgeon.\textsuperscript{2}

For van der Haag, his ability to practice independently as a surgeon in Amsterdam was tied to his successful acquisition of citizenship and guild membership. Beyond this, he also had to overcome a range of other financial, educational and social obstacles: he needed to learn his trade, find a way to establish a business, and build a household. Navigating entry to urban institutions was commonly one part of the challenge of establishing a life in an early modern city in Europe. There were few urban centres that did not restrict full participation in a substantial swathe of economic activity in some way to those who achieved the status of

\textsuperscript{2} Van Eeghen 1974, 79-80.
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citizen and/or guild member (the combination depended on location). Yet while this characteristic has long been well known, there has been little systematic study of how the formal conditions of access to the citizenry or guilds varied across countries, regions and cities, or how much they added to the other informal challenges faced in establishing a business as an artisan or tradesman. Answers to both these questions are essential if we are to understand the economic and social impact of these institutions.

Recent research has provided new evidence on the varieties of formal barriers to entry, and estimates of stocks and flows of citizens and guild members. This paper analyses and compares the form, scale and extent of the barriers people met on the path into citizenship or guild mastership in a range of cities across northern Europe. Our analysis focuses on the status or set of statuses individuals needed if they were to acquire the capacity to be economically active inside the city as a producer and employer in incorporated trades. Full political participation, it is important to note, might not be acquired at the same time. For example, in Paris and some Italian cities, political office was restricted to a more limited group.

The lack of attention to this issue reflects the fact that, to date, urban citizenship and economic rights have often been addressed in separate strands of research. Citizenship has often been examined from a juridical perspective. Studies of particular regions or cities commonly identify the specific conditions of entry and benefits that citizens obtained, or at least mention this in passing when discussing the number of citizens. By contrast, economic rights have usually been addressed in work on guilds and other corporative organizations. These studies frequently focus on inclusion and exclusion, and on barriers such as apprenticeship terms, masterpiece requirements and fees. Again, the majority of work examines single towns or limited regions. Although similar issues around access surface in

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3 Cf. Minns et.al 2014.
4 Cf. e.g., Boone et al. 1996; Dilcher 1996, 2002; Boone and Stabel 2002; Isenmann 2002.
5 Recent perspectives in, among others, Farr 2000; Prak et al. 2006; Epstein and Prak 2008.
Discussion about inclusive versus exclusive effects of guilds in Ogilvie 2004b, 2007; Epstein 2008; Davids and De Munck 2014.
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both areas of research, they have only rarely been connected – with the exception of England, where the importance of apprenticeship as a route to citizenship rights stands out.\(^6\) Finally, citizenship surfaces in the history of migration, albeit often tangentially due to the focus on conspicuous groups of migrants, the identification of push and pull factors, and types of immigrants that dominate this literature.\(^7\)

Exclusionary mechanisms governing access to citizenship and guilds have been emphasised in all three of these strands. Citizenship discouraged migration and divided ‘insiders’ from ‘outsiders’, while guild membership rules restricted access to the markets for labour and skills.\(^8\) Many have argued that such restrictive practices hampered economic development, particularly in areas characterized as having ‘strong’ guilds.\(^9\) Others, however, have portrayed citizenship as an important stakeholder institution, and focused on guilds’ role in sustaining labour markets and promoting technical change.\(^10\) Although some communities were largely closed to outsiders, evidence on the makeup and size of citizen populations and guild masters indicates that barriers to admission were often permeable. Migrants and sons of non-members or non-citizens made up large proportions of the populations of many cities and guilds.\(^11\) How high were these barriers?

To address this question about the nature of guild and city rules on entry, we need to identify and examine barriers to entry comparatively. To achieve this, we have converted the financial charges that formed one element of them into their equivalent time in employment.

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\(^7\) References and recent perspective in De Munck and Winter 2012. For a recent connection between migration and citizenship in the 19th and 20th centuries, see Lucassen 2013.

\(^8\) Musgrave 1999, 71; see also Mokyr 2002, 31; Ogilvie 2011; Ogilvie 2014; De Vries 1976, 94-95, 238; Cipolla 1980, 95-96, 256; Musgrave 1999, 71; see also Mokyr 2002, 31; Ogilvie 2011; De Vries 1976, 94-95, 238; Cipolla 1980, 95-96, 256.

\(^9\) A position best summarised in: Ogilvie 2011; Ogilvie 2014.

\(^10\) Epstein 1998; Epstein and Prak 2008

\(^11\) Prak et al. 2014, 21; also Minns et al. 2014.
at local unskilled day wages.\(^\text{12}\) This gives us a simple method to overcome the different currency and wage levels across Europe. Moreover, because citizenship and economic rights obtainable via corporative organizations were often connected, we have attempted to include in our analysis all formal stages in accessing both citizenship and guild membership that were relevant in a specific city.\(^\text{13}\) This is important because the role that state institutions, cities, and guilds respectively played in delimiting economic activity varied substantially across Europe. In most French cities in the 17\(^{th}\) and 18\(^{th}\) centuries, citizenship rights were extremely attenuated; guild membership alone was sufficient to provide economic rights for incorporated sectors of the economy.\(^\text{14}\) In England, the Low Countries and in German Europe, both admission to the citizenship, controlled by cities, and membership of an independent guild or civic craft corporation were generally required to exercise full economic activity. In England and France, the central state might at times regulate the overall size and shape of barriers, or determine their parameters. In the diffuse Holy Roman Empire, cities and territories had considerably more freedom.

In the first section of this paper we discuss in detail which sections of the population were excluded on the basis of who they were. The second part then examines the relative size of barriers and costs faced by those who were, at least in principle, permitted to enter. For the sake of analytical clarity, we take this as a distinction between ‘background barriers’ and ‘practical barriers’. Background barriers are those tied to the individual’s gender, religion, and personal characteristics which could effectively preclude certain groups from applying for membership in citizenry or trades altogether. Practical barriers, on the other hand, were additional barriers beyond those inherent to the trade that people whose background was not prohibitive needed to deal with if they were to join the citizenry and/or a guild.


\(^\text{14}\) Bonin, 2005; Zeller (manuscript, kindly shared by the author); Kaplan 2001
To produce an extensive European portrait, we have drawn evidence from a sample of cities and guilds that covers large parts of northwestern and central Europe between 1500 and 1800. This sample includes cities in different regions and nation states with significantly different urban characteristics, from medium-sized cities in highly urbanised regions of the Northern and Southern Netherlands to the free imperial cities of German Europe, to the growing capital cities of London and Paris.

**Background barriers**

Many groups of people were excluded from citizenship and guild membership (either generally or locally) on the basis of who they were. Gender, religion, place of origin, legitimate birth, physical condition, and personal history and behaviour could all lead to varying levels of barriers or outright exclusion. A migrant’s honourable behaviour might need to be certified in writing by officials from their previous residence, or testified by witnesses at their admission, as in Antwerp. Such barriers were often strict, and where formal barriers were not applied, informal barriers could exist due to cultural or social norms. But barriers could also be flexibly applied due to local or temporal contexts, and not all background barriers existed, or were emphasized, in all areas.

**Gender**

Gender was the most important of all barriers. Women were generally excluded from political rights, and their economic rights were generally limited either by explicit barriers, an emphasis on the male-headed household, or cultural factors. This is not to say that women did not perform a large amount of economic work, including in the incorporated trades.

Citizenship was an overwhelmingly male institution, but not always technically so. In principle, women could become citizens in all the regions discussed here. In France, where the status of ‘bourgeois’ was much more narrowly defined and also less generally necessary,

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15 De Kerf, XXX.
formal citizenship was incompatible with commercial or craft activities, but widows and spinsters could be ‘bourgeois’. In London, women could qualify for independent citizenship by apprenticeship, inheritance, or purchase, while marriage to a citizen gave them rights via their husband. In the Low Countries and most German cities daughters of citizens technically inherited citizenship just as their brothers did and female citizens could often transmit their status to their husbands on marriage. Women’s citizenship was often tied to their marital status, and cities used marriage to control citizenship admissions. In most German cities, migrant women often had to qualify as citizens before marrying into the citizenry. In some German cities, such as Frankfurt, marriage to a citizen daughter or widow qualified prospective husbands for a discount on fees. In Augsburg, Munich, Frankfurt, Strasbourg, and many other German cities, citizen women who married foreigners who did not first qualify for citizenship could be stripped of their citizenship and banished. In London, widows of citizens lost their residual economic rights if they married a non-citizen.

Even as citizens, women were excluded from political rights. The economic rights women attained as citizens might also be quite different to those of men, though they often faced the same financial obligations – citizenship fees, taxation, military contributions. In early modern German towns and cities, women’s ‘citizenship’ was effectively tied to their place in a citizen household headed by their father or husband: women could not own private property within marriage, and were legally subservient to their fathers or husbands. In the Low Countries and England, the formal rights of married female citizens were generally similar to those in German cities, although mechanisms often existed to allow married women to operate as an independent trader, as the statutes for saleswomen in Amsterdam, Antwerp, and London and other towns stipulated. While women in citizen families had

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16 Corcia 1978.
17 Municipal Commissioners 1837: 61.
20 Jacob 1732: 162-3.
21 This did not rule out other forms of political action: Withington 2005: 195-213.
22 See Wiesner 1987.
advantages over non-citizens, to a large extent, both married and unmarried citizen women were citizens in name only. It was only as widows that women were able to exercise some of the economic – but not the political – privileges possessed by male citizens.

Independent female citizenship was rare. In London from 1550-1799, just 1% of new citizens were women. In Amsterdam from 1636-1651 only 3% of registered new citizens (mostly migrants) were female. Even in German cities where female migrants generally had to formally acquire citizenship if they were marrying a local citizen, the citizenry was male-dominated. In Nördlingen 16% of citizens were female from 1579-1724. In Frankfurt, the figure was 18% from 1600-1735. Local women from citizen families appear very infrequently. In Nuremberg, 10-15% of new citizens in the late 15th century were women, but by the later 16th century, they were entered in the citizenship registers only exceptionally. Citizenship was held by the household and its male head. Indeed, in many German cities, citizenship for men was intimately tied to their marriage and establishment of a household.

Female labour was a vital element of the urban economy, but women faced significant barriers to economic rights. Married and unmarried women were integral to their husbands’ and families’ workshops. The work of such women, however, generally remained tied to

McIntosh, 2005, 416-417 and 417-431 (II Femme sole issues in the courts).

24 Their citizenship has been described as ‘latent’ (Soliday 1974, 41) or ‘passive’ (Friedrichs 1979, 39 n.8).


27 Calculated from data in Friedrichs 1979, Appendix 3.

28 Calculated from data in Soliday 1974, Tables III-IV.

29 Soliday 1974, Tables III-IV.

30 Wiesner 1998, 118.

31 In Munich, see Strasser 2004, 52-3.

their gendered position within the male-headed household, due to their lack of individual legal rights.\textsuperscript{33} Across Europe, women were rarely able to attain an independent position as masters, wage labourers, or apprentices in guilds. German and Southern Netherland’s guilds and journeymen’s organisations were often explicit in their exclusion of women: the Augsburg goldsmiths saw it as a point of pride, while the Frankfurt hatmakers refused to do business with their counterparts in Fulda due to the latter’s use of female labour.\textsuperscript{34} The position of women may, moreover, have deteriorated as craft guilds grew increasingly ‘masculine’, and hostile to independent female work.\textsuperscript{35} In Paris and London, guilds only allowed masters to hire journeymen qualified by apprenticeship, or, in London, guild membership, which in most instances created a \textit{de facto} bar to female waged labour, even though that often broke down in practice.\textsuperscript{36} In London, the Northern Netherlands, and some guilds in France women could, at least in principle, become masters or apprentices in their own right, though the numbers who did were small.\textsuperscript{37} It was a unique shock to this system when, in 1776, all Paris’s guilds were opened to women.\textsuperscript{38}

Most independent craftswomen within guilds were the widows of masters, who were generally allowed to carry on their husband’s business - at least for a period. Widows generally lost this right on remarriage, although in some guilds in Paris their new husbands – if qualified journeymen - might then have the chance of guild mastership.\textsuperscript{39} Widows acting as masters were numerous: in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, 13\% of masters in Frankfurt and 11\% in Rouen were widows, as were 20\% of Antwerp’s coopers.\textsuperscript{40} Widows’ economic rights as well, however, were often curtailed. They rarely had a political voice in their guild. German widows faced frequent attempts by guilds to restrict their privileges: Frankfurt restricted

\textsuperscript{33} Wiesner 1986a; Roper 1989; Ogilvie 2003, 2013.

\textsuperscript{34} Roper 1989: 46; Wiesner 1986a: 167.


\textsuperscript{36} des Bruslons 1723; Kaplan 1979; Municipal Commissioners 1837: 119-122.

\textsuperscript{37} Rappaport 1989: 36-39.

\textsuperscript{38} Crowston 2001, 208-13


\textsuperscript{40} Lerner 1929, Table 4; Database De Kerf, 2014.
their ability to hire new journeymen or take apprentices, while many trades and cities enforced strict time limits on widows’ rights to continue trading (as little as four weeks). In most Parisian guilds, widows were not allowed to take apprentices. In London, female masters – almost all widows - took just three percent of apprentices.

While most guilds had few independent female members even where technically allowed, there were exceptions. Some shopkeepers’ guilds in the Low Countries had substantial female memberships, reaching ten to fifteen percent in 18th-century Maastricht, Zwolle and ’s-Hertogenbosch, and 48% in Haarlem, where the guild took married women as members. In Antwerp, 25% of the mercers were female in 1700 (widows included). Textiles was an area of considerable female activity and economic rights. In late 18th-century Gouda, 84% of the tailors’ guild (the city’s largest guild), 61% of the weavers, and 45% of silk, wool, and cloth shopkeepers were women. Most other Gouda guilds, however, included few if any women. In a few cases, guilds licensed female non-members: the ’s-Hertogenbosch tailors licensed seamstresses for example. Women still might face restrictions on hiring male employees: 15% of Augsburg’s master weavers were women, but they employed only 5% of journeymen and assistants.

A small number of guilds were exclusively female. Paris had four: the Linen-Drapers and the Hemp Merchants’ Guilds, joined in 1675 by the Seamstresses’ and the Fresh Flower-Sellers’ Guilds. They had equal privileges to the male guilds, and were run entirely by their female

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41 Wiesner 1986a, 151-8; Wiesner 1991b, 195-6.
42 Lanza 2013: 97-103
43 London apprentice dataset, based on data generously supplied by Cliff Webb, origins.net, and the Records of London Livery Companies Online project (www.londonroll.org).
44 Schmidt 2009; Erickson 2011.
46 Van Aert & van Damme, 149.
47 See Crowston 2001; Wiesner 1986b.
48 Schmidt 2009, Table 2.
50 Clasen 1981, 23
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members. An all-female Seamstresses’ Guild was established in Amsterdam in 1579. Female guilds were also found in Cologne, Rouen, and possibly Zierikzee; others may have existed elsewhere. In Paris, women were also full members and officers in the Grain and Seed Dealers’ Guild, and subordinate members in three other guilds. Although channelled into this handful of guilds, women supplied 15% of new masters and apprentices in mid-18th-century Paris, with most being seamstresses. Strikingly, in Rouen in 1758 almost 60 percent of new apprentices were girls and 38 percent of new guild members were women.

Gender was not a uniform and simple barrier to citizenship and economic rights: there were variations and exceptions across places, times, and trades. Many women worked within a ‘working couple’, or in a family business. In a number of notable exceptions, some women possessed independent economic rights. These remained, however, exceptions: citizenship and guilds remained overwhelmingly male institutions that generally excluded women. This was the result of deliberate policies, but their effect needs to be considered in light of the fact that the marginalization of women was a feature of early modern societies even without guilds. In the Dutch town of Leiden, the textile industry employed about of the local workforce in the mid-18th century. The industry had no guilds, but the number of female masters was as low as anywhere else. The village of Tilburg, in Dutch Brabant, became a centre of textile proto-industry in the 18th century. Tilburg had no guilds, but is has so far proved impossible to detect an impact on the gender balance in the industry, where men remained in charge.

Religion

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52 Wensky 1980; Gonzalez Athenas 2014; Panhuysen 2000, 205; in Haarlem and ’s-Hertogenbosch, seamstresses could take female apprentices: Panhuysen 2000, 215, 220-21; in York, female merchant-tailors could do the same: Smith 2005, 100 (tab. 1)
53 Calculated for 1766-1775 from Archives nationales de France Y 9328.
54 Calculated from Archives départementales de la Seine Maritime 4 BPL 59.
Religious barriers to citizenship, economic rights, and even basic residency, were common across early modern Europe. By contrast with gender, religious barriers did not generally affect large minorities within urban communities, mainly because they were effective at keeping religious minorities out. Religious barriers reflected and reinforced Europe’s post-Reformation Christian division, as well as its general exclusion of non-Christians (especially Jews) from most types of formal rights.  

In many areas of Europe, the dominant local Christian denomination excluded other denominations from political and economic rights. In England, Catholics were excluded from office holding, voting, and many social rights, and subject to many legal disadvantages; from 1661 laws attempted to bar protestants outside the Anglican church from municipal office. Similarly in France, guilds excluded non-Catholics from the late 16th century. Even during the ‘toleration’ of the Edict of Nantes (1598-1685), many guilds tried to exclude Protestants from membership; and after the revocation of the Edict in 1685 deprived Huguenots of rights; up to 100,000 emigrated from France.  

German and Central Europe was characterised by a fractured patchwork of religious division that was tied closely to citizenship and economic rights. After the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, the vast majority of German cities and territories settled on one official religion (Catholicism or Lutheranism). Only a few, such as Augsburg, remained bi-confessional. This ‘confessionalisation’ has often been seen as central to the institutional development of early modern Germany. Mono-confessional cities and territories excluded other Christian denominations from citizenship and guilds, and often curtailed their residency and migration.

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56 On European religious division and limited toleration, see: B. Kaplan 2007; Dixon, Freist & Greengrass 2009.
58 see Lespinasse 1897, vi-III.
60 On biconfessional cities, see: Roeck 1989, 2008; Dixon 2007; Warmbrunn 1983.
In the Low Countries, there was a more mixed situation. In the Southern Netherlands, non-Catholics were theoretically barred from citizenship and guilds, but those who practiced their religion privately were generally not excluded. In the Northern Netherlands, while citizenship was at times restricted to Calvinists, many cities – such as Rotterdam, Haarlem, and Utrecht – did accept Catholics. Guilds were sometimes more restrictive, but Catholic guild masters continued to trade in all provinces of the Dutch Republic, even if some immigrant Catholics faced formal obstacles.

In the Southern Netherlands, Protestantism was no longer a barrier for becoming a master in the 18th century. In one case brought before the Antwerp magistracy, it was explicitly stated that such barrier was not to be taken into account.

Jews were almost uniformly excluded from citizenship and guild membership. In German towns and cities, their economic rights were often tightly restricted and subject to punitive fees, their residency rights restricted to certain areas including ghettos, and their rights to marry or migrate heavily controlled. Jews were excluded from England entirely until 1655, and were excluded from citizenship and political rights in London, where most settled, until the 19th century. Cities and guilds in the Southern Netherlands may have been more pragmatic. In 17th-century Amsterdam Jews could acquire citizenship, but were nonetheless banned from joining the guilds.

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62 De Meester 2011, 39. The Antwerp city council is known to have adopted a pragmatic attitude towards protestants who were economically useful and religiously ‘low profile’. Marinus 1993, 327-343; Marnef 1996, 82-87.
63 Prak 2002; Tump 2012, 63-66.
64 Schlugleit 1969, 210-215.
66 The ban on baptised Jews was not rescinded until 1827: Corporation of London Record Office, Rep. 232, f. 312 (1827).
67 E.g., De Meester 2011, 92.
68 Prak 1995, 337.
Mostly excluded from citizenship, religious minorities could generally only gain access to urban economic rights through exceptional privileges, mainly extended if the minority group had wealth or skills. For example, Lutheran Hamburg offered privileged trading contracts to Jewish and Calvinist merchants; Lutheran Prussia welcomed many Huguenot Calvinist traders and craftsmen to Berlin with exemptions from the usual barriers to residency and work; Lutheran Frankfurt was home to many Italian merchants; English cities tolerated French and Dutch protestant minorities. Nijmegen, technically a Calvinist town, but with a significant number of Catholic inhabitants, accepted some Catholic and Jewish citizens in 1721 on the payment of the very large sum of 350 guilders, 14 times the fee for a Calvinist. Such groups were often still excluded from formal and political rights, however: Hamburg’s Sephardic, Calvinist, and Mennonite traders were still ‘foreigners’, as were London’s ‘aliens’. Frankfurt’s Italians complained repeatedly to the Emperor about their exclusion from citizenship; and there were disputes in Berlin and Brandenburg over Huguenots’ admission to the craft guilds.

**Place of Origin**

As with religion, cities adopted different positions regarding how place of origin affected access to citizenship. In London an early 16th-century law limited citizenship to those born in the King’s domain. Apprentices had to be either English or be naturalised by Act of Parliament, which was very rare and expensive. In France, until the early 15th century, foreigners could acquire naturalization by purchasing a *lettre de bourgeoisie* from a city government. Subsequently, these two forms of inclusion followed separate paths: the crown sold letters of naturalization to foreigners, according them economic privileges akin to a native-born subjects, while cities required migrants – French or otherwise – to establish residence for a year and a day in order to join the city’s bourgeois, a requirement confirmed

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70 Schimmel 1966, 68-69.  
72 Luu 2005, 143-5.
by a royal ordinance of 1617. The status of bourgeois endowed local privileges and responsibilities, but did not entail naturalization.73

Citizenship lists in the Low Countries are full of foreigners buying citizenship, especially in fast growing cities, without a distinction being made in the fees between aliens and those coming from the city’s hinterland. In some cases, as when they had some special knowledge to offer, or were acquainted with some high ranked officials, citizenship could be obtained without charge. This was the case with Majolica glass and new textile manufacturers, and with many other patentees.74 Foreign merchants were notoriously exempt from citizenship altogether.75

Citizenship in German and Central Europe was generally open to those from within the Empire. Barriers of origin could often be subsumed within those for religion (for example Catholics and Calvinists from France and the Netherlands facing barriers in the Lutheran Rhineland and North). Cities could be hostile towards ‘foreigners’ however, such as in Frankfurt’s exclusion of long-resident Italian merchants from citizenship, or towns in the east requiring proof of German rather than Slavic parentage.76

Where rules on background barriers were theoretically strict, however, they might be circumvented. Sometimes this was deliberately managed by guilds or cities. In London, for example, a few guilds (notably the goldsmiths and weavers) had a licensing system through which foreign non-members were allowed to work fully as journeymen or masters in the trade – even without being naturalised.77 Alternatively, individuals unable to meet religious, geographical, moral or gender criteria could sometimes exploit gaps in urban governance. In Paris, many immigrants who could not or preferred not to enter the city’s guilds settled in

the faubourg St. Antoine, which fell outside the control of city and guilds. 78 Similar privileged liberties or tolerated suburbs and satellites existed in many other cities too. 79

Practical Barriers

For those who were not excluded by one or more of these background barriers, there were still barriers – and costs – to accessing economic rights via guild membership and/or citizenship, whether in the form of money, time, or social capital. Different pathways into guilds and citizenries existed, and the route each individual took depended on their connections, origins and capital. The sons of existing masters and citizens were often given treated favourably. For those without the benefit of kin ties, the formal process of qualifying for membership frequently began with entry into an apprenticeship. In this section, we work through the points at which guilds and cities imposed costs on potential entrants by charging fees, setting specific criteria or time limits for periods of work, or directly examining their abilities. We begin with registration fees for apprentices and end with citizenship fees.

In thinking about these practical barriers to entry, it is useful to distinguish between direct and opportunity costs. Up-front entrance fees on the road to citizenship, such as registration fees, could provide a high bar to entry. Guilds might, in theory at least, set prices that would exclude many from access. The time spent training as an apprentice, wandering as a journeyman, or waiting for mastership could also carry significant opportunity costs. In fact, these opportunity costs could easily exceed the costs of the up-front barriers of fees to guilds and masters. But we need to be careful when interpreting apprenticeship and journeywork requirements. First, they overlapped with periods of training and work experience that might occur without guild involvement. Second, unlike up-front fees, these opportunity costs could be overcome by nothing more than persistence, particularly in Europe’s neolocal family system in which youths who had left home were not expected to transfer income back to their parents, and were unlikely (even barred) from acquiring their own dependents.

Up-front costs

Apprenticeship contracts were private bargains made between masters and prospective apprentices and their families. Completion of an apprenticeship commonly provided partial qualification for guild membership across Europe, and citizenship in some English cities. Indeed, the imposition of this requirement was one way in which formal rules favoured insiders: master’s sons were often exempted from the obligation to serve a formal apprenticeship in German cities, as they were in most English, French and Southern Netherlandish centres.\(^8^0\) The importance of apprenticeship to membership meant that guilds, and sometimes cities, across Europe registered and monitored them, in part to ensure that the various background barriers surveyed above were not breached, in part to ensure that guild limits on the numbers of apprentice each master could take were not breached, and in part to ensure that non-qualified artisans, entrepreneurs or merchants could not enter. When they did so, they often extracted a registration fee, which should be distinguished from any money paid by apprentices to their master for training.

<Insert table 1 near here>

Guild’s registration fees were, for the most part, not much of a barrier to entering apprenticeships. They were modest in most areas. In Paris, London and the Northern Netherlands, fees equalled the wages from a few days’ work for an unskilled labourer.\(^8^1\) They were not imposed in the German cities in our sample. The price of registering an apprenticeship was much higher in the Southern Netherlands. In Antwerp, the median fee for local boys who were not sons of masters rose to over ten days’ wages by the mid-17\(^{th}\) century, and was between 23 and 32 days’ wages in the 18\(^{th}\) century. The highest fee was set by the Diamond Cutters’ guild, which charged migrants 100 guilders – over three months of unskilled wages – to register as apprentices in 1690.\(^8^2\) Overall, the price of registration rarely

\(^{8^0}\) E.g., De Munck 2010, 6.

\(^{8^2}\) Schlugleit 1935, 85.
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exceeded a month’s income for an unskilled labourer, even in the ‘high fee’ Southern Netherlands.

Even though master’s sons were frequently exempt from having to serve apprenticeships, many did in practice. Consequently, registration fees provided a point where guilds could favour insiders. In France and England, there was no distinction in fees. In the Low Countries, however, guilds often differentiated at registration between sons of masters, other local candidates, and, to a lesser degree, migrants. In the Northern Netherlands, two thirds of guilds always charged the same fee to locals as they did to master’s sons.83 None charged more than double fees. More guilds charged higher fees to migrants though, but even then a fifth never imposed a surcharge, and only one of fifteen surveyed ever exceeded double fees.84 In Antwerp, the bias against outsiders was much greater. Only one guild, the Shoemakers, consistently charged locals the same fees as sons, the rest usually imposed at least double fees. Some guilds charged migrants even more.

No doubt registration fees were unwelcome to those who paid them, but to put them in context, we can compare them with the other up–front costs new apprentices often faced: premiums. Apprentice premiums were private payments made by apprentices and their families directly to masters who agreed to train them. Guilds were not involved in setting them, although Munich’s guilds did set rules that varied apprenticeship terms depending on the amount paid.85 Instead, the size of premiums reflected training costs, term length, room and board and the productivity of prospective apprentices. Premiums would also reflect any economic rents that could be obtained by successful apprentices following their accession to the guild, but their existence did not depend on guild restrictions on apprenticeship places. Indeed, where we can observe apprenticeship in the absence of guilds, as in French Canada and parts of eighteenth century England, premiums were still paid, and were set at a similar level to premiums within guild-regulated apprenticeship.86

83 10 of 15 guilds surveyed. Another two only charged non-sons more on some occasions.
84 Haarlem’s Carpenters Guild.
85 Puschner 1988, 244, Table 49 n.3, 14.
Training premiums could be very large relative to registration fees. Even a modest premium of £10, which was fairly typical in the early 18th century in London’s trades, was equivalent to over 100 days of unskilled labour. This was many times larger than guild and city fees of a few shillings. In elite occupations, such as the goldsmiths, premium of £100 or more were typical, implying costs of over 1000 days’ wages. Premiums of 20-40 fl. (100-200 days’ wages) were the norm by the 1700s in Munich. In Antwerp, gold and silversmiths’ apprentices who paid premiums paid an average of 242 guilders (over 330 days’ wages), over ten times the guild registration fee. Those Parisian apprentices who paid premiums expended over 200 livres (around 200 days’ wages) on average - ten times the highest fee observed in any of our sample of guild ordinances. Premiums were not uniform within guilds or occupations. Many apprentices, particularly in less profitable trades, paid nothing, sometimes in exchange for serving longer terms. Master’s sons, even when training with non-kin, often paid less. Nonetheless, unlike guild registration fees, premiums represented a barrier that could in some occupations exclude all but those with substantial wealth.

**Opportunity costs**

Guilds potentially had a greater impact on apprentices through their requirement that they serve for a minimum period if their service was to qualify them as ‘skilled’. Although often justified by guilds as necessary if an apprentice was to be trained sufficiently, the minimum duration of apprenticeships in fact varied widely across Europe. Unusually, from 1563 until 1814 English law set a minimum term of seven years, generalising the practice of London’s trades. Even a modest premium of £10, which was fairly typical in the early 18th century in London’s trades, was equivalent to over 100 days of unskilled labour. This was many times larger than guild and city fees of a few shillings. In elite occupations, such as the goldsmiths, premium of £100 or more were typical, implying costs of over 1000 days’ wages. Premiums of 20-40 fl. (100-200 days’ wages) were the norm by the 1700s in Munich. In Antwerp, gold and silversmiths’ apprentices who paid premiums paid an average of 242 guilders (over 330 days’ wages), over ten times the guild registration fee. Those Parisian apprentices who paid premiums expended over 200 livres (around 200 days’ wages) on average - ten times the highest fee observed in any of our sample of guild ordinances. Premiums were not uniform within guilds or occupations. Many apprentices, particularly in less profitable trades, paid nothing, sometimes in exchange for serving longer terms. Master’s sons, even when training with non-kin, often paid less. Nonetheless, unlike guild registration fees, premiums represented a barrier that could in some occupations exclude all but those with substantial wealth.

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87 Tyszka 1907, 44.

88 De Munck 2007, 42-43. Tinsmiths and plumbers paid 94 guilders. Calculation includes contracts with zero premiums.

89 Median premium of 234 livres (n=160), based on a sample of the 13 occupations for which more than five individuals had premiums recorded in notarial contracts. Only 34% of the full sample of 629 contracts reported a premium. The highest fee was 20 livres, specified by the Bakers in their 1719 Ordinances.

90 De Munck 2007, 43-44; Minns and Wallis 2013, 344, Table 3; Puschner 1988, 242-4.
guilds.\textsuperscript{91} Elsewhere, guilds mostly set terms autonomously. Terms were largely stable over the period, but varied widely between cities.\textsuperscript{92} Although several guilds in Paris specified shorter terms for master’s sons, such preferential rules were rare.\textsuperscript{93} As a result, for the same trades, we can observe terms of only two years in the Southern Netherlands, while seven or more years was demanded in London and Paris. The difficulty of the trade may have played a part in shaping minimum terms at times – goldsmiths’ guilds often demanded long terms, as did apothecaries in London – and other preoccupations such as exclusion and labour market regulation may have mattered as well.\textsuperscript{94} But in most trades, terms reflected where one trained more than what one learned.

<<Insert Table 2 about here>>

Terms were potentially major barriers to entry. If we make the cautious assumption that apprentices were sacrificing potential earnings of about $2/3$ of the typical daily unskilled wage, the foregone income equalled the wages for about 167 days of work for each year. Most apprentices received compensation in the form of food and lodging; taking London as an example, if this is valued at 59 days of labour per annum, it suggests apprentices sacrificed the earnings of 160 days of labour for every additional year they served.\textsuperscript{95} If their potential earnings were those of a skilled worker, as they might be at the close of their training, the net opportunity cost would exceed 200 hundred days. These opportunity costs dwarf the upfront costs coming from registration fees, and, multiplied by the years of service involved, greatly exceeded many apprenticeship premiums. Regional differences in

\textsuperscript{91} Eliz 1, c. 4 (1562).
\textsuperscript{92} Wesoly 1985. See also Grießinger & Reith (1986).
\textsuperscript{93} Lespinasse 1886-97.
\textsuperscript{94} Reith 1989, 3; De Munck 2007, 59-68.
\textsuperscript{95} We calculate the value of subsistence from Allen’s (2009) respectability basket, which provides the cost of subsistence for an adult male for one year. For London in 1700, the basket cost 1,307d; unskilled wages were 22d per day; skilled wages were 30d per day. Assuming, as Allen does, 250 working days a year, the opportunity cost at two thirds of the unskilled wage is $250 \times 14.6 – 1,307 = 2,359d$. 
apprenticeship terms, therefore, have a large impact on differences in the opportunity cost associated with training for guild membership and citizenship.

However, even apprentices and masters outside guilds would negotiate terms lasting several years in order to receive training and recover their costs, respectively. The impact of guilds was therefore largely felt where they obliged apprentices to serve for longer than they would have otherwise. In this regard, it is important to note that apprenticeship contracts in Antwerp, Amsterdam and Paris often exceeded the minimum term specified by the master’s guild.96 While the median formal term was 4-5 years, in practice the average length of 599 Parisian apprenticeship contracts in 1761 was 4.4 years with a range from 2 to 8 years.97 Of over 2,000 apprenticeship contracts concluded by the Amsterdam Civic Orphanage for its male pupils, the normal term was 3-4 years, while most Amsterdam guilds required only 2 years.98 If we take the three to four years that Antwerp apprentices agreed to as a threshold for the point at which guild requirements started to bite, it is only the English rule that stands out - and this was frequently circumvented in practice.99 Most European guilds specified terms that were close to that set by the market. Even when terms were longer, they may not have formed an substantial barrier as they would not exclude the poor or credit constrained.

Apprenticeship requirements were a nearly universal feature of Europe’s guilds. The stage that followed was much more varied. In some areas, apprenticeship was followed by an obligation to work for a minimum number of years as a journeyman, and often a minimum period working in a particular city, before applying for mastership. In English guilds, rather than being kept as a separate category, former apprentices were usually eligible to become full guild members and citizens immediately after their term ended. Hence, the division there between journeymen and masters was determined by who had the resources to establish a business.

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97 Calculated from a sample from the notarial archives of the Archives Nationales, Paris

98 McCants 1997, 70.

99 Wallis 2008; Minns & Wallis 2012.
Journeyman periods were longest in German cities, reflecting the significance of the *Wanderschaft*. German guilds demanded up to six years wandering experience, but two to four years was customary. ²⁰⁰ In Paris, too, some guilds expected three to five years of journeywork from immigrants; where journeywork was expected of all, including former local apprentices, it was more often two years in length, bringing the total period before guild mastership could be obtained into broad equivalence with English norms. In both France and German Europe, master’s sons were often exempted, giving them a significant advantage. By contrast, in the Southern and Northern Netherlands and England, minimum journeyman periods were rarely expected. Just three of twenty six London guilds surveyed tried to impose them. ²⁰¹ In the Southern Netherlands, among the few exceptions were the Antwerp gold- and silversmiths, who had to serve two years. ²⁰²

The distribution of residency/waiting requirements was similar. A minimum period working in the city (the *Mutzeit*) was regularly required in Germany, and by some Parisian guilds. ²⁰³ Residency or waiting periods were also expected in some guilds in the Northern Netherlands, but are not found in the Southern Netherlands or England. Generally, these periods were shorter, often around two years, but again, master’s sons might be exempted, and they anyway tended to be informal rules rather than formal regulations.

Journeyman terms and wandering/waiting added to the time to which would-be citizens/masters had to wait to benefit from the status they sought, which would serve as a strong disincentive to the present-oriented. It is unclear, however, how to cost this stage. Journeymen could command skilled wages on the labour market, and were highly mobile between cities, and in this sense were likely compensated closer to their marginal productivity than apprentices under the classic scenario. On the other hand, incomes were

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²⁰⁰ See Wesoly 1985, 405-6; Kluge 2007, 181.

²⁰¹ Guildhall Library, MS 4647 (Weavers), f. 122; Fisher 1936: 109; Atkins 1931, xiii-xiv.


²⁰³ German: Wesoly 1985, 405-6.
almost certainly higher for masters and citizens, particularly in environments where guilds were able to exclude outsiders to extract economic rents.

**Completion costs**

The final formal requirement for becoming a full member of a guild was a test of the skill an individual had acquired over the years spent as an apprentice or journeyman. In crafts, this was often through their production of a master piece or a demonstration of their abilities in the presence of an experienced workman or guild official. In all the cities discussed here, examinations for competency were common although not universal.\(^\text{104}\) They were most often required by craft guilds, but generally absent in retailing and trade guilds. As with other barriers, exemptions were applied in some cases. For example, in Paris, as in the Southern Netherlands, sons in many cases were entirely exempt or only had to show their ‘experience’ to the guild.\(^\text{105}\)

Given the limited amount that guild records generally contain about the content of masterpiece tests and examinations, it is impossible to compare them directly across cities. In cities where we know more, it appears that guilds largely specified masterpieces that tested relevant knowledge and skills, rather than demanding artificially elaborate pieces that might reduce the number of successful entrants. Moreover, while masterpieces might require a substantial investment in time and money from the journeyman – it reputedly took Antwerp cabinet makers’ five weeks to construct theirs – they could often recoup this after the examination by selling their test pieces, which were in the cabinet makers’ case worth 100 to 200 guilders.\(^\text{106}\) The examination might, however, involve fees that were not recoverable.\(^\text{107}\) In 18\(^{\text{th}}\)-century Frankfurt, the city investigated the mastership process after

\(^{104}\) In Paris, 9 guilds of 60 in our sample never included a masterpiece in their ordinances. In London, 7 of 23 guilds did not establish a masterpiece/test in ordinances.

\(^{105}\) Dambruyne 2002, 211; De Munck 2010, 8-9. L’Espinasse, XXX.

\(^{106}\) De Munck 2007, 68-81.

\(^{107}\) These are rarely recorded in the data. For Paris tailors, non sons paid 59 livres, sons 8. In Nijmegen the linen weavers paid 6g for their test. The full process in 18\(^{\text{th}}\)-century Frankfurt could often cost over 100 fl (see Soliday 1974, 150). See also De Munck 2007, 85-113.
complaints that crafts were making it too costly, including extra costs such as meals and gifts for the existing masters. For most craftsmen seeking mastership, the barrier presented by the masterpiece is perhaps best seen as a further moment of friction in an already lengthy process. There is, however, one group for whom masterpieces did present a high bar: merchants hoping to enter crafts. And for this reason masterpieces formed part of the struggles between merchants and artisans that occurred in a number of guilds and cities.

At the point of achieving full membership of a guild, individuals often faced a final financial barrier in the form of an admission fee. This was generally far larger than the registration fees paid by new apprentices, but some of the same patterns of preferential treatment for insiders can be discerned.

The fees that guilds charged for membership varied greatly depending on who was seeking entry. In order to understand this adequately, we have to appreciate the categories guilds used to distinguish between potential entrants. In England and France, guilds distinguished between sons of guild members, former apprentices who had served guild members, and all others. Only skill acquired within that specific guild was recognised; other entrants were forced to buy an exemption from apprenticeship requirements as part of their entry fee.

In the Southern and Northern Netherlands and German cities, most guilds recognised skills acquired elsewhere (if proven with a certificate from master, guild, or city), but might distinguish between sons of guild members, other locals, and migrants in the fee charged. Unusually, several guilds in Antwerp, Haarlem and Rotterdam favoured those who had apprenticed in the city, although they mostly continued to recognise training received elsewhere.

108 Hussong 1936, 45 notes tailors paid over 11 fl in administration & gifts for the masterpiece process; see also Soliday 1974, 150.
109 See e.g., De Munck 2011, 232-235.
110 In 1755, a royal edict allowed finished apprentices to enter guilds in any city of the realm, with the exception of Paris, Rouen, Lyon, and Lille, which continued to admit only local apprentices: Arrest du Conseil d’Etat du Roi, 25 mars 1755.
If we look at fees in general, high levels again distinguished the Southern Netherlands. In a number of Antwerp guilds, fees were about half a year’s worth of unskilled wages after the mid-17th century. In the Northern Netherlands, Munich and especially England, for most categories of applicants fees were much more modest. Fees ranged from a few days wages in England (where they had been capped by law in 1530) to a couple of months for outsiders in Munich (with some flexibility below a civic-imposed maximum).112 In Paris, fees were mostly equivalent to just a few days wages in the 16th and 17th centuries, but rose substantially in the 18th century. In the same period, quotas on the numbers of masters allowed in Paris’s guilds became more common. German crafts often had annual quotas on the number of new masters, such as those in Frankfurt and Augsburg.113

Master’s sons generally received a large discount, with the solitary exception of London where they paid the same or more than former apprentices. In Munich, the sons of citizens and masters, and those who were marrying their daughters, paid half the fee charged to those without kin ties, whatever their origin, and informally could pay even less. In the Northern Netherlands, master’s sons averaged a twenty percent discount relative to other locals, and paid two-thirds of the fee charged to migrants. Guilds in the Southern Netherlands generally charged masters half the fee demanded from both other locals or migrants. In Paris, terms were sometimes even more favourable. Some guilds asked members’ sons for just a tenth or less of what they charged former apprentices, although the median discount was two-fifths of the fee.

Both London and Paris – cities that only recognised local training – offered an expensive alternative to those who were neither sons nor finished apprentices. Masters who entered ‘sans qualité’ in Paris paid eleven times more than master’s sons, on average, with the median fee in the mid-18th century exceeding 500 days unskilled wages. Entrants by ‘redemption’ in London paid five times more than sons - around half a years unskilled wages - in the 18th century. In both cities, the number of places sold was limited by quotas, helping

113 Soliday 1974, 151 n41; Hussong 1936, 25, 37; Stuart 1999, 193.
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to keep fees high.\textsuperscript{114} It should be emphasised that these entrants might have high levels of skill. It was just not acquired locally.

If we take apprenticeship premiums as one benchmark, as we did before, then these mastership fees could add a substantial amount to the financial price of entry. For Munich’s bakers and wigmakers and Antwerp’s goldsmiths, guild fees equated to around a quarter to a half of the cost of the median premium. For Antwerp’s tinsmiths, they reached four-fifths of the average premium in the eighteenth century. Only in London were guilds’ extractions trivial. To these we should add additional masterpiece costs. The cost of establishing a business would be even more relevant benchmark. Unfortunately, this is difficult to identify, but some contemporary estimates for mid-eighteenth century London – likely a pricey venue – suggest these dwarf apprentice premiums. By implication, set-up costs would far outweigh guild fees in most cities too if they were of a similar order in other cities.\textsuperscript{115}

High mastership fees could certainly prove a stumbling block or disincentive to journeymen, but at a few months (unskilled) wages they were not insurmountable. They could potentially be saved during the long periods of training and journeying, while social networking and marriage could provide discounts. For aspiring masters, the direct costs of setting up a business, acquiring premises, stock and offering working credit, would have been far more daunting. Quotas on the number of new masters – as in some French and many German cities – were a more restrictive barrier, but they were usually absent in France, the Low Countries or in English towns.\textsuperscript{116}

Citizenship Fees

Alongside guild membership, cities might require individuals to become citizens if they were to exercise economic rights. This was not relevant in France, but elsewhere citizenship and

\textsuperscript{114} In London, there was a limit on the number of city redemptions sold, which implicitly limited guild redemptions. In Paris this possibility was not offered by the city but by the central state, much against the wishes of the guilds themselves and presumably also the city government.

\textsuperscript{115} Minns & Wallis 2013.

\textsuperscript{116} Soliday 1974, 151 n41; Hussong 1936, 25, 37; Stuart 1999, 193.
guild membership formed connected systems, as discussed earlier. Indeed, citizenship was often the broader category, with various occupations outside guild control for which only citizenship was required.

The fees that cities demanded from new citizens provide the final potential barrier to economic rights. Their characteristics illustrate what should by now be a familiar pattern of geographical and social variation. Indeed, for the most part, the division cities drew between potential entrants mirrored those used by their guilds when considering prospective masters.

Sons of citizens were, as this would suggest, treated very favourably. In English and German cities, their fees were generally small – a single day’s wage in early modern London, for example, and between 6 and 26 days’ wages in Frankfurt (where the citizens reduced their sons’ fees in the 18th century) and Berlin. In the Southern Netherlands locals generally paid nothing where birth in the city conveyed citizenship. For migrants or those without kin ties, fees were often markedly higher. If ranked by price, the cost of citizenship for migrants follows the order seen in guild membership. Fees were lowest in the Northern Netherlands, higher in German cities, and higher still in the Southern Netherlands, where they rose sharply in the 18th century in parallel with increases in guild fees. England again takes a different pattern, with those who had completed local apprenticeships admitted for very low fees (although higher than sons). Outsiders who had neither trained in London nor have possession of a kin connection to the city paid the highest citizenship fees in our sample, with the median fee exceeding two hundred days of unskilled wages in both 1600 and 1750. These individuals were, however, buying citizenship outright rather than qualifying via apprenticeship as most did. And even for this group, the fees they paid were small compared to the value of their businesses.

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117 Bonin, 2005; Zeller (manuscript, kindly shared by the author). In Paris active guild members cannot technically be considered bourgeois.

118 Schwarz’s summary of data on business costs for 1747 gives a minimum investment in most fields of around £100. Median insurance values for businesses c. 1780 generally exceeded £300 to £500: Schwarz 1992: 65.
Wealth provided a final requirement for citizenship in some regions. German cities commonly required that prospective citizens possessed a minimum level of wealth, in order to ensure they were able to support themselves and not become a burden on the city. Introduced from the 16th century, wealth requirements grew over time, despite proving hard to police. Augsburg began requiring proof of 50 fl. (XX days wages) wealth in 1535, a level of wealth which separated the poor from the secure (& the tax-paying). In 17th-century Nuremberg, Frankfurt, Strasbourg, Colmar, and Munich, minimum wealth requirements were between 100 and 300 fl (XX and XX days wages). Frankfurt had a higher requirement for non-craftsmen than craftsmen, while Munich required more from those of poorer backgrounds. German cities also generally expected citizens to be property owners. Cities in England and the Low Countries did not have minimum wealth requirements, a major difference in barriers to citizenship, although citizenship had been tied to land holdings in many medieval English cities. In France, where citizenship had a different character, wealth requirements were not a barrier for migrants to settle in a city.

Discussion and conclusion

This comparison of access to citizenship and economic rights in early modern cities illustrates a complex system of barriers that explicitly or functionally excluded large numbers of people. Barriers, however, varied considerably in their height and emphasis, and were often permeable to men with skills and resources.

119 Sonkajärvi 2012, 85; Strasser 2004, 53.
120 Roeck 1989, 210; Classen 1984, 313.
122 Soliday 1974, 43; Strasser 2004, 53.
123 Walker 1976, 4, 140.
124 Membership of the bourgeoisie in France depended in large part on property, but also excluded one from craft and trade activity; Webb & Webb 1908.
Background barriers had the largest effects. Early modern citizenship and guilds were predominantly male, and these institutions reflected and reinforced male domination of households and communities. Religious barriers were also highly significant in constructing the urban community, with members of excluded faiths largely absent from those cities that barred them from possessing full citizenship and economic rights. These background barriers were not impenetrable though. Women played crucial roles in urban economies despite these obstacles; religious minorities won important privileges through skill or wealth, either individually or as a group.

For those not excluded on the basis of their gender, religion, or personal background, there were varying practical barriers and costs to be overcome. Europe’s cities and guilds commonly worked with three core criteria to demarcate between potential entrants: kinship, place and skill. Yet in different parts of the continent, institutions deployed them in quite different ways. Kinship mattered across Europe, and favoured sons of fathers with citizenship or mastership. Even where citizenship was based on birth, as in some cities in the Southern Netherlands, kinship provided an important distinction within guilds. But kinship also varied in scope, from the strict male inheritance rules seen in England and some guilds on the continent to the affinal rights that encompassed sons in law or second husbands of widows in some cities. Relevant spatial limits were equally heterogeneous, varying from the edge of the city to the nation state or beyond; like kinship, they generally lowered costs for those closest to the institution. The community of skill generally encompassed those who had served an apprenticeship in the trade, distinguishing them from the unqualified outsider. However, this too divided into two models. In England and in major cities in France, it only provided rights in that specific guild, while in German cities and cities in the Low Countries, the location of the apprenticeship was often irrelevant. From 1755, most cities in France moved closer to the Low Countries’ and German model.

Once the set of religious barriers had been implemented in the aftermath of the Reformation, the basic structure of these urban systems of discrimination differed over space but changed little over time, unless subjected to an external shock. The only exception to this marked persistence in our sample of cities was Antwerp, where some guilds shifted
focus from place of origin to place of apprenticeship. Aside from this, these guilds and cities continued to utilize the same process of entry and categories of entrant over these three centuries. Big changes to the internal organization of these systems largely came from state interventions, whether in 1776 in France, where the number of guilds was sharply reduced, entry to all guilds was formally opened to women and apprenticeship terms were cut to a uniform four years, in Ghent, where entry fees were fixed by Charles V at a flat 6 guilders in 1540 (and again in 1585), or in the German imperial cities, where Emperor Charles reduced the guilds’ independence and political power in 1548-52.\textsuperscript{125}

Where we do observe substantial changes over time as well as geography is in the price extracted from entrants to guilds and cities. One explanation for this is the changing relative power of guilds, cities and states. Antwerp’s guilds were able to demand high fees in part because of their autonomy and political clout. Conversely, guild entry fees for most groups were capped by Parliament in England, and in some German cities. Guilds and cities thus had different degrees of freedom to influence prices.

Why they chose to use what freedom they possessed to raise or lower the price of entry varied. One motivation was simply that entry fees in particular offered a stream of income that could be exploited to meet institutional needs. In the Southern Netherlands, high fees were an attempt to cope with the large debts guilds’ had accrued to pay for guildhalls, chapels, altars and the like. These debts became unsustainable when membership decreased (due to migration to the North after 1585). Antwerp’s guilds were then caught in a cycle in which their efforts to increase income further deterred potential entrants.\textsuperscript{126} In Paris, royal fiscal demands were met in part by the profits from selling places to ‘sans qualité’ entrants, while the crown went further in directly selling individual exemptions from apprenticeship requirements, fixing the price at 30 livres in 1773.\textsuperscript{127} In London, similarly, nominations for citzenships by redemption were awarded as wages in kind for city officials. Guild membership and citizenship were thus entrenched in the venal fiscal apparatus of this period.

\textsuperscript{125} Farr 2000, 167; Dambruyne 2002, 180-213.

\textsuperscript{126} De Munck 2007, 97-101; Davids & De Munck 2014.

\textsuperscript{127} Arret du conseil d’état du roi, 16 mai 1773 (Paris: l’imprimerie royale, 1773).
Another motivation for adjusting the price of entry, however, was to restrict access and migration (or in some cases to encourage it). German cities often manipulated their fees to exclude poorer migrants, especially in bad economic times, or to encourage migration after population shocks, such as after the Thirty Years’ War. Indeed, fees in German cities were generally variable based on the applicants’ wealth and social capital. In London, too, fees – and more importantly local apprenticeship requirements – were cut to encourage the repopulation of the old city after the Great Fire of 1666. More generally, citizenship was frequently gifted to migrants who brought valuable skills or services to a community.

We have approached each of the barriers to economic activity in turn above, but the costs each group faced were of course cumulative. If we sum the total barriers, in time and money, that people faced to obtain economic rights, we see that the different stages in the process reinforced each other in the way they treated different categories of entrant. Figure 1 shows the size and form of cumulative barriers distributed across quadrants for five cities, Paris, Antwerp, Munich, London and a composite Northern Netherlandish city. As before, we convert fees into unskilled day wages, while we sum years, although the terms of apprenticeship, journeymen and mutzeit were undertaken in different conditions.

Figure 1 should be read as a heuristic device, not a precise estimate, and it neglects some barriers, such as the masterpiece, that cannot fit the format. Nonetheless, it offers us a way to compare barriers to economic activity across these cities that suggests some general conclusions. First, comparing the top and bottom rows underlines the advantages granted to the sons of existing masters (and sometimes other relations): the corporate system generally favoured insiders. They spent less – or no – time as apprentices or journeymen, and mostly paid modest fees. Only in the Southern Netherlands in some cities, did their direct costs

128 For example, in 17th-century Berlin, outsiders’ citizenship fees varied at between 2-8 times those of citizen sons (calculated from Gebhardt 1927). For variation in Frankfurt, see Soliday 1974, 47; in Munich, Strasser 2004.

129 Kellett 1957-8.
reach half a years’ wages. Migrants’ fees might be much more substantial, and this was particularly true for those forced (and able) to buy entry without qualification. Second, we see an outward shift in three of our five locations between the long sixteenth and long eighteenth centuries, pointing to growing barriers, particularly for migrants. This coincides with, and likely helps explain, a period in which the share of urban population with citizenship declined across North Western Europe.\(^{130}\) Finally, we can see the wide spread of barriers, driven by the different combinations of fiscal and temporal requirement that different cities specified.

Guild and citizenship fees and required terms of service were – in most places - a limited addition to the total burden of entry costs into urban markets if they are compared to many of the other costs involved in acquiring skills or establishing a business, such as the payment of apprenticeship premiums and the cost of a stock for trade. The largest single item in the inventory we have constructed here was the opportunity cost involved in apprenticeship terms, and, outside England at least, even this did not substantially distort the durations of contracts that a free training market would generate. Moreover, all the benefits of longer terms, and presumably of requirements to spend time as a journeyman, accrued to guild masters personally, and not to the guild itself. These were regressive intergenerational transfers, from which apprentices and journeymen could anticipate benefiting in the future.

This is not to deny that - whether intended as income stream or barrier - guild and citizenship fees and requirements contributed to providing economic rents for existing members, rents that in part gave membership its appeal. The extent of such rents is difficult to measure even in modern contexts, although modern studies of occupational licensing, which often involves a far more abbreviated qualification process than we have described here, frequently find that they are substantial.\(^{131}\) Still, situating guild and city barriers in context thus helps explain why, despite the real barriers they might present, among those who were able to overcome the background barriers, the bias to insiders that they contained did not result in populations that were dominated by city’s own sons, as we have shown


\(^{131}\) Kleiner & Kruger 2013.
elsewhere. Our data, in other words, do not point in one direction, and this confirms similar results by other scholars. Van den Heuvel and Ogilvie, for example, recently found a marked rise of retail ratios in the Netherlands after the abolition of the guilds in 1798. However, they also found remarkable regional variations in retail ratios before 1798 that they cannot relate to guild patterns. Citizenship and guild barriers had real effects, but so did many other factors, and barriers reflected and responded to local circumstances as well as shaping them. These variations were not systematic in the sense of ‘strong’ versus ‘weak’ guilds, or east versus west, or ‘small town’ versus cosmopolitan regions. The longest apprenticeship terms were found in England, the most expensive masterships in Antwerp. This confirms our earlier finding that ‘open’ and ‘closed’ towns were not regionally clustered.

---

135 Prak et al 2014; Minns et al 2014.
References

Unpublished:


Stadtarchiv München, Gewerbeamt.


Zeller, O. (manuscript, kindly shared by the author). ‘La bourgeoisie statutaire de Lyon et ses privilèges: Morale civique, évasion fiscale et cabarets urbains (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles).

Published:


Jacob, G. (1732). City Liberties: or the Rights and Privileges of Freemen. [London].


Table 1: Apprenticeship Registration Fees by Guild, 1500-1800

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days’ Wages</th>
<th>Northern Netherlands (%)</th>
<th>Southern Netherlands (%)</th>
<th>London (%)</th>
<th>Paris (%)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Son</td>
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<td>Migrant</td>
<td>Son</td>
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<td>Zero</td>
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<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Guilds</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>13.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: table reports the registration fees imposed by guilds, sampled at half century intervals. Not all categories of fee were observed for each guild. For Paris, observations are drawn from guild ordinances.
Table 2. Duration of required terms of service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Apprenticeship Terms (%)</th>
<th>Journeyman (%)</th>
<th>Mutzeit (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng</td>
<td>Fr</td>
<td>Ger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Guilds</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Median</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Because terms rarely varied over the period studied, the table reports the maximum known term imposed under each category by each guild in our sample. No formal journeyman term requirements were reported for the Northern Netherlands, and Mutzeit was not in use in the Southern Netherlands or England. Key: Eng. is England; Fr. France; Ger. German cities; NN Northern Netherlands; SN Southern Netherlands.
### Table 3: Entry fees charged by guilds, 1500-1800

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>London (%)</th>
<th>France (%)</th>
<th>S. Netherlands (%)</th>
<th>N. Netherlands (%)</th>
<th>German Cities (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1500-99</td>
<td>zero</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100-500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600-99</td>
<td>zero</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0-25</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td>25-50</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700-99</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1500-99**
- Mean: 8 | 8 | 42 | 13 | 178 | 14 | 46 | 138 | 115 | 0 | 91 | 85 |
- Med.: 6 | 6 | 34 | 11 | 8 | 15 | 40 | 105 | 90 |

**1600-99**
- Mean: 6 | 7 | 95 | 113 | 227 | 14 | 25 | 41 | 50 | 11 | 18 | 20 | 102 | 66 |
- Med.: 5 | 4 | 35 | 59 | 176 | 15 | 16 | 16 | 29 | 8 | 13 | 15 | 62 | 59 |

**1700-99**
- Mean: 5 | 5 | 247 | 87 | 413 | 1154 | 84 | 123 | 140 | 22 | 29 | 37 | 63 | 63 |
- Med.: 5 | 5 | 149 | 53 | 381 | 523 | 56 | 108 | 108 | 19 | 27 | 32 | 56 | 56
Note: Table reports the maximum fee observed per guild for each century, by category of entrant. German cities are Augsburg, Frankfurt-am-Main and Munich. Northern Netherlands’ cities are Alkmaar, Amsterdam, Arnhem, Bois le Duc, Dordrecht, Goes, Gouda, Haarlem, Leeuwarden, Middelburg, Nijmegen, Rotterdam, The Hague, Tholen, Veere, Vlissingen, Zierikzee, Zutphen, and Zwolle. French cities are Paris, Caen, Marseilles, and Rouen. Southern Netherlands’ cities are Antwerp, Ghent, Leuven and Mechelen.
Table 4. Citizenship fees, selected cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>England</th>
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<th></th>
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<td></td>
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<td>App.</td>
<td>Purchase</td>
<td>Sons</td>
<td>Migrants</td>
<td>Migrants</td>
<td>Migrants</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>42</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Citizenship is free in this period to sons of citizens and locals in most towns in the Northern and Southern Netherlands. Fees are expressed in terms of their price relative to daily unskilled wages. Where we have more than one observation for a city per century, we report the highest for the period.
Figure 1: Cumulative Barriers to Economic Activity
Barriers to Citizenship and Trades in Early Modern Europe

Appendix: Data & Sources on Guilds & Citizenship

This appendix lists the cities and guilds for which evidence is used in the paper. Often, only partial information was available for a specific guild or city. The names of guilds are italicised.

France

Guild Ordinances:

Aix-en-Provence: Tailors.
Caen: Tailors.
Marseilles: Tailors.
Rouen: Tailors

**England**

**Guild Barriers and Fees**

**London:** (nb. Date of ordinances in square brackets)

Apothecaries: Guildhall Library (GL), MS. 8251 [1617]. Armourers and Brasiers, Glover, 2008: 67-8 [1569/70], 120 [1709]. Basketmakers: Bobart, 1911: 103-6 [1569]. Bakers: GL, MS. 5197A [1507, 1746, 1760]; Fees: GL, MS 5174/1, MS 51742, ff. 223-6; MS 5174/4, ff. 77-84v, MS 5174/5, ff. 76r-78v; MS 5174/6. Brewers: GL, MS. 05496 [1579, 1580], MS. 05497 [1639, 1641], MS. 05435 [1714], MS. 05501 [1739]. Fees: GL, MS 5442/5-8, MS 5442/13, Butchers, Pearce, 1929: 201-239 [1607], GL, MS. 06460 [1638], MS. 06463 [1752]; Fees: GL, MS 6440/1, MS 6440/2/1, MS 6440/7, MS 6440/9.


**Citizenship**

Appendix: data and sources


Faversham: Godfrey 2000


Great Yarmouth: Calendar 1910.

King’s Lynn: Calendar 1913.


London: Welch 1908; Rappaport 1989: 25; London Metropolitan Archive (LMA), Rep 13.2, f. 508b; LMA, Col/CHD/FR/01/003; Municipal Corporations (England and Wales) Commission, 1837

Shrewsbury: Forrest, 1924.

Sudbury: Berry 1993.


Northern Netherlands

Guild Barriers and Fees

Alkmaar: Carpenters; Gold- and silversmiths; Shoemakers; Tailors: De Munck and Davids 2014

Amsterdam: Coopers; Gold- and silversmiths; Tailors: De Munck and Davids 2014

Arnhem: Carpenters; Gold- and silversmiths; Shoemakers; Tailors: De Munck and Davids 2014.


Bois-le-Duc: Skippers: Stadsarchief Den Bosch (SDB), Bossche ambachtsgilden 354; collectie Martini 63, fol. 526. Ribbonweavers: SDB, Collectie Aanvullingen 8107, fol. 225r-231v, fol. 233r-234r.


Goes: Carpenters; Shoemakers. Haarlem: Carpenters; Coopers; Dyers; Gold- and silversmiths; Shoemakers; Tailors: De Munck and Davids 2014.

Middelburg: Carpenters; Shoemakers: De Munck and Davids 2014.


Rotterdam: Coopers; Dyers; Gold- and silversmiths; Tailors: De Munck and Davids 2014.

Tholen: Carpenters: De Munck and Davids 2014.
Veere: Coopers: De Munck and Davids 2014.

Vlissingen: Carpenters; Shoemakers: De Munck and Davids 2014.

Zwolle, Shopkeepers: Streng, 2001: 50n12, 52, 112, 133


**Citizenship**

**Fees:**

Amsterdam, Haarlem, Bois-le-Duc, Utrecht, Deventer, Kampen, Nijmegen, Zutphen, Zwolle: Lourens & Lucassen, 2000: 15-16

**Barriers:**


Bois le Duc: Maarten Prak, 1999: ch. 2


Kampen: Berkenvelder, 2005.


**Southern Netherlands**

**Guild Fees and Regulations:**

Antwerp: Bakers; Carpenters; Coopers; Diamond Cutters; Goldsmiths; masons; Mercers; Shoemakers; Silkweavers; Tailors; Woollenweavers: De Munck and Davids 2014.

Ghent: Bakers; Carpenters; Coopers; Diamond Cutters; Goldsmiths; masons; Mercers; Shoemakers; Silkweavers; Tailors; Woollenweavers: De Munck and Davids 2014.

Leuven: Carpenters; Mercers; Shoemakers; Woollenweavers: De Munck and Davids 2014.

Mechelen: Carpenters; Coopers; Mercers; Shoemakers: De Munck and Davids 2014.

**Citizenship Fees and Regulations:**


Ghent: City Archives Ghent, series 122.
German Cities

**Guilds**


**Frankfurt am Main**: Bakers; Barbers; Blacksmiths; Bookbinders; Braziers; Brewers; Carpenters; Cartwrights; Coopers; Cutlers; Fishers; Glaziers; Goldsmiths; Joiners; Locksmiths; Purse Makers; Ropemakers; Saddlers; Shoelacemakers; Shoemakers; Tailors; Tile Roofers; Trousmakers; Turners: Soliday 1974; Hussong 1936; Lerner, 1929; Elkan, 1890; Wesoly, 1985: 405-6.


**Mainz**: Barbers; Coopers; Potters; Shoemakers; Tailors: Wesoly, 1985: 405-6.

**Munich**: Bakers; Barbers; Brewers; Builders; Butchers; Carpenters; Dyers; Glazers; Glovers; Gold/Silver; Goldsmiths; Leatherworkers; Linenweavers; Loden; Millers; Needlemakers; Painters; Shoemakers; Surgeons; Tailors; Wigmakers: Puschner 1988; StAM Gewerbeamt 2/3; 1791, in Der Raths-Entschluss, oder, Bürger-Vergleich von München über die Handwerks-Gerechtigkeiten (Munich, 1791), Anhang.

**Speyer**: Barbers; Furriers; Goldsmiths; Ropemakers; Shoemakers; Swordsmiths; Tailors: Wesoly, 1985: 405-6.

**Worms**: Coopers; Tailors: Wesoly, 1985: 405-6.

**Citizenship**

**Augsburg**: Fassl, 1988: 20, 99;

**Colmar**: Wallace, 1995.

**Frankfurt am Main**: Soliday 1974; Wiesner 1986; Hussong 1936

**Munich**: Strasser, 2003.

**Nuremberg**: Harrington, 2009.
Bibliography of Published Sources mentioned in Appendix:


Berry, Allan W. *A Book Conteyning the Names of the Free Burgesses of the Burrough of Sudbury in the County of Suffolk*. Colchester: A.W. Berry, 1993.


ANNEX

Confirmation of submission to the *International Review of Social History*

Subject: RE: Article submission for the International Review of Social History  
Date: 20 04 2015 16:23:38  
Attachments: inarea1.iso.png

On 29 Apr 2015, at 17:52, Review IISG <review@iisg.nl> wrote:
Dear Patrick,

Thank you for considering the *International Review of Social History* as a possible publication outlet for your research.
I have forwarded your article to our executive editor, David Mayer.  
He will decide whether your submission fits to the scope of our journal and can enter the review process.  
You may expect an answer within one month.

Best regards,

Angèle Jans Editorial Assistant  
(working days: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday)  
*International Review of Social History*  
Visiting address: Cruquiusweg 51 | 1019 AT Amsterdam | The Netherlands  
Postal address: PO Box 2159 | 1000 CD Amsterdam | The Netherlands  
t +31 (0)20 668 58 66 | irsh@iisg.nl | socialhistory.org/en/irsh

From: Walls.PH [mailto:P.H.Walls@lse.ac.uk]  
Sent: woensdag 29 april 2015 11:19  
To: Review IISG  
Subject: Article submission for the International Review of Social History

Dear Dr Mayer,
I attach an article, Barriers to Citizenship and Trades in Early Modern Europe, that we would appreciate you considering for publication in the *International Review of Social History*. We think it speaks directly to the debate on guilds, work and early modern institutions that is ongoing, in part within the IRSH.
I attach two copies, one anonymised, one not, as you instruct. I have incorporated all tables and figures within the text for the present.

For convenience, I have kept the data appendix separate. We do not anticipate publishing the appendix in this form, but imagine that it might be useful for any referees.

Please would you be kind enough to indicate receipt of our submission by email as soon as possible? We are obliged to report submission to the EU under the project grant which has in part funded this work, and embarrassingly their reporting deadline is nearly upon us.

Many thanks,
Patrick

---
Dr Patrick Wallis
Department of Economic History
London School of Economics