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AND THEIR INTEGRATION
IN AGEING SOCIETIES



RESULTS FROM FEMAGE PROJECT

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Results of FEMAGE Project

Sixth Research Framework Programme
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Needs for female immigrants and their integration in ageing societies

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1 Executive Summary

The FEMAGE project

FEMAGE – Needs for female immigrants and their integration in ageing societies – was an international research project funded by the European Commission under the 6th Framework Programme. Partners from nine countries (Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) participated in this project from January 2006 until December 2007.

The overarching objectives of FEMAGE were to generate and gain knowledge about the experiences, living conditions, and expectations of third country immigrant women regarding their migration and integration on the one hand, and investigate the need for female immigration in ageing societies on the other. FEMAGE focused on identifying the requirements for integrative interaction between immigrants and the host country. The results from the project have been used for developing policy recommendations.

Methodology

FEMAGE used a multi-method approach: (1) it undertook a small-scale qualitative survey by means of interviews including a narrative and semi-structured part with immigrant women. Altogether 239 interviews were conducted among immigrant women of nine different ethnic origin groups in eight European countries; (2) FEMAGE utilized data from the Population Policy Acceptance Survey (PPA), a large-scale standardized survey, consisting of a total of 21,812 Europeans to analyse the attitudes of the native population in the host countries towards immigration and integration of migrants; (3) eight national and one European focus group discussions were organized with experts, stakeholders and migrant women on their viewpoints on the FEMAGE results.

Results

The results of the international comparative analysis of the qualitative interviews gave an insight into the migration history, the life course perspectives, gender roles, ethnicity of the female migrants and their expectations about their own old age. The migration of third country women affects profoundly their family lives and gender roles. Family networks are often destabilized and child-bearing might be postponed or even abandoned. The women also have to adjust their gender role models. As to their perspectives about their own ageing the results show that problems can occur which are caused by shorter labour market participation and social isolation. Consequently, it is difficult for them to make serious plans

for old age in the host country. Regarding ethnicity, the project found striking similarities among different immigrant groups from different ethnic backgrounds. In all migrant groups women reported getting into a social and economic, legal or emotional vacuum or being subordinated as a woman.

The results from the PPA survey of native populations in the eight countries under study show that, all in all, negative views on migration issues are more prevalent than positive ones, and this is more prevalent in the east than in the west of Europe. Especially the fear of competition with migrants on the labour market is expressed by the native populations. However, we found significant differences in attitudes between the countries and between different levels of education. Comparing the attitudes of the nationals with those of the migrant women, it appears that the latter perceive the native population in a more positive light than vice versa and also that the migrant women consider that they are perceived positively by the natives.

The majority of natives expect that foreigners have to adapt to the host countries. In their view, migrants are obliged to learn the language and the customs of the host country. The native population does not appear to favour an approach towards multiculturalism understood as immigrants' cultural 'separateness'. This is not contradictory to the viewpoints of migrant women. The overwhelming majority of migrant women share the quest for permanence and integration. Most have been naturalised, or intend to do so, and most feel at home in the host countries.

Regarding gender roles and task division, it appears that the viewpoints of female nationals and female immigrants are largely identical. In both groups a majority prefers a 'modern' approach towards gender roles and task division.

The panellists in the focus groups from the "FEMAGE countries" unanimously agreed that early labour market participation facilitates the process of integration and limits the danger of immigrants' long term dependency on social welfare payments. Experts also highlighted the need to make the benefits of migration and integration more visible to society as a whole. There is a need to assist migrant women to foster their independence. The panellists also stressed that female immigrants have to deal with the same problems as native women because they are gender specific. Examples are labour market disadvantages, child care (reconciliation problems) and future old-age pensions.

The focus group discussion between members of European Institutions showed that 'new' issues in the migration debate, such as the blue card, need to be addressed along with 'old' issues such as the recruitment and integration of unskilled labour. Female immigrants need

gender-specific support. Migrant women need to obtain access to affordable language courses and to general information about values and norms of the host country. The depreciation of skills – with which immigrant women arrive – leads to a loss of human capital, for the immigrant as well as for the host society. For economically-active women there is a growing need for portability of pension rights, i.e. taking along pension rights and social benefits from one country to another.

Policy implications

The above results from the surveys and the focus group discussions show that the national population needs to be better informed and educated about the benefits of the presence of migrants and migration policy measures in the European countries. There is a strong need to provide early assistance particularly to immigrant women for their integration. This is requested by both natives and by immigrant women.

The importance of European Institutions and actors in defining standards and the framework conditions for effective immigration and integration policies cannot be overstated. In view of the diversity of national legal frameworks and practices, greater convergence towards good practices in legislation and policy formulation and implementation are a must. High-level institutions such as the European Parliament and the European Commission are well placed to ensure that the gender aspects of the immigration and integration of women migrants assume a central position in policy formulation.

Due to the fact that the EU must compete for foreign labour with other developed regions of the world, it is very important to re-think EU immigration, as well as integration policy, so that it provides a secure legal status and enables those who are admitted to integrate successfully. When encouraging the immigration of labour immigrants and experts in the future, we should not forget the existing, underutilised labour in the country. Policies concerning immigrants' labour market participation should also consider the ageing process and the need to work to secure sufficient resources for old age.

Successful, efficient integration policies should focus on full integration – that is cultural, socio-economic and civic-political.

2 Introduction: The objectives of the FEMAGE project

The overarching objectives of the FEMAGE project with the full title “Needs for Female Immigrants and their Integration in Ageing Societies” are to generate knowledge about obstacles and needs for opportunity enhancement for economic and social integration and emancipation of women immigrants in a life-course perspective, identify requirements for integrative interaction between immigrants and national population in the host country, build this knowledge into a platform for policy deliberations among key policy stakeholders, and elaborate recommendations on needs for immigrants and support policies and services for their integration in view of population ageing in Europe.

The broad context underpinning the general objectives is the need to identify gaps in knowledge and to feed into policies the knowledge-base findings about:

- The life opportunities and expectations of immigrant women in eight Member States (Germany, Austria, Finland, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia)*;
- Integration requirements for female immigrants already present in the host country, taking into account their current needs but also the fact that immigrants themselves age and need care and social security in old age;
- Long-term demand for immigrants and impact on host society in view of the experiences and expectations of national populations and expected socio-demographic developments.

The comprehensive approach towards attaining the general objectives encapsulated findings from a small-scale targeted survey of female immigrants; it capitalised on the data already gathered but unexplored among nationals of the host countries regarding migration and the integration of immigrants, and involved the key stakeholders in the policy elaboration with a view to identify challenges to integration and expected needs for future immigration and integration in an ageing European society.

The project addresses directly migrant women residing in eight EU countries. It records their profile, needs and viewpoints as to their experiences, attitudes and expectations concerning immigration, integration, and emancipation policies and practices. The integration of immigrant women into economic and social activities, as the ultimate objective of the enhancement of opportunities for all, requires both facilitation and mobilisation. The analysis of the facilitating institutional environment and specific support for female immigrants went hand in hand with the study of mobilisation in terms of motivation, preferences and identity of immigrant women (see Chapter 3).

In order to address integrative interaction between immigrants and nationals of the host country, this study also analyses the views, expectations and preferences of nationals on migration matters. This analysis draws from data gathered under the national Population Policy Acceptance Survey (PPAS) that was undertaken in 14 European countries between 2000 and 2003 with the standard core questionnaire on attitudes towards demographic dynamics and family policies. Eight out of 14 countries also included a module on attitudes towards migration and migrants. These existing but as yet unexplored data on migration-related issues were integrated and streamlined in an international database and analysed in a comparative perspective under the FEMAGE project (see Chapter 4).

The data of the two surveys – the qualitative interviews of migrant women and the quantitative PPAS results of the attitudes of nationals towards migration and integration - has been merged into an international database and has been analysed in a complementary and comparative way (see Chapter 5).

The findings from the two surveys have been used for reflective and evaluative focus group discussions among policy stakeholders at national and European level: representatives of immigrant groups, organisations providing assistance to migrant women, national and immigrant women's organisations, immigrant women themselves, civil society organisations active in the field of social integration, social partners, care-giving professionals and public authorities (see Chapter 6).

Finally, the results from the surveys and from the focus group deliberations will be used for a reflexive policy analysis in order to deduce policy implications and draft policy recommendations (see Chapter 7).

3 Survey of female immigrants

The aim was to reconstruct what present life course perspectives immigrants create in their new host societies with regard to migration, integration, gender and ageing. This helps understanding their positioning with regard to all these issues in a complex way.

3.1 Methodological remarks

3.1.1 The methodology

The interviews combined narrative and structured elements. They have been analysed with hermeneutic methods. The qualitative interviews which we conducted and interpreted contained three parts. The first was a narrative part specifically asking about migration histories. In the second part, certain follow-up questions were asked on six major topics. The last part, containing more than 180 closed and open questions, was taken in order to have specific information with regard to the relevant topics and for the sake of counterbalancing the narrative parts.

The methodology chosen was a complex and concrete interview and interpretation plan in order to carry out the tasks of this work package of the FEMAGE-project. A novel combination of methods and interpretation was followed in order to tackle issues related to the needs for female migrants in the countries concerned.

In order to elaborate migrants' present perspective in a life course perspective, in the first two parts of the interview we employed and adapted a version of biographic narrative method and the related objective hermeneutic method as the most systematic way of understanding the structure of presented life courses.

During the narrative parts, and in the case of open questions in the "questionnaire", we used a so-called guided interpretation which aimed at securing a direct link to the set research questions on gender, emancipation, integration, work experience and positioning with regard to the host and sending society. This method has been developed in order to conduct the international work in a more systematic and standardized way.

The narrative part of the interviews was planned to secure answers for the following major research issues:

- The situation of migrating here (turning points, the gender perspective in narrating this story)

- Family, partnership, children, parents, friends (emancipation practices, social networks, gender perspectives on employment, financial independence, care, etc.).
- Relationship with the sending society
- Work (employment history, perception of the labour market, preparation for retirement, also with regard to experiences of women working in health care and families)
- Legal status (the story of gaining residence (legality) in the host country).
- Relationship with the host society

The function of additional open and closed questions (182 in number) was to collect additional systematic information with regard to the

- life course,
- family and partnership background,
- work experience,
- social status,
- social integration,
- emancipation,
- religiosity,
- health,
- provision for old age,
- relationship with the host society,
- relationship with the sending society, and
- social and political attitudes.

These issues have been combined in order to give a complex analysis of the life course perspectives of female immigrants. These perspectives are important to gain an insight into how female immigrants present themselves in the eight EU countries as women, as migrants and as people gaining legal residence in the designated countries. This helps us understand their specific social and cultural positioning and strategies. It is important for us to see what happens to them and what future problems they might encounter in their own perspectives to counterpoint this with the views of nationals and in terms of policy considerations (which are also parts of this report).

With regard to the practical issues of conducting this international research project, a systematic method has been developed in order to obtain the maximum amount of information and the maximum co-operation between the different partners. Each FEMAGE partner prepared national reports and national contributions to feed a comparative analytical table for the comparative analysis.

3.1.2 The sample

The findings about attitudes of 239 female immigrants in eight European countries, Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia, towards migration, integration, emancipation and ageing are one of the major outcomes of the FEMAGE project.

The interviewees were 20-60 years old and had lived in the host country for at least three years. 15 interviewees of two different ethnic groups were interviewed in each host country. The qualitative interviews were divided according to ethnicity as follows:

FEMAGE partner country	Sending countries of immigrants
Czech Republic	Ukraine, Romanian Ukrainians, Romanians
Austria	Turkey and Bosnia-Herzegovina
Estonia	Russia versus Tatar, Tshuvash, Caucasian and Central Asians territories
Slovenia	Bosnia-Herzegovina, post-Soviet territories
Hungary	China and Ukraine
Finland	Russia and Kosovo
Germany	Russia and Turkey
Poland	Ukraine and Vietnam

In terms of age groups, FEMIG succeeded in establishing the dominance of women in their thirties and forties, these being the most important group in terms of labour. We were also able to find young immigrants who are just in their twenties. This overall proper distribution was imbalanced (too many young interviewees) in the case of female immigrants coming from Romania, Kosovo or China. In the case of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland, middle-aged interviewees are slightly fewer in number than designated.

When we look at the age when the women migrated, we can see that interviewees mainly came under the age of forty. This fits into the general observation that migration is intensive in these age groups. It is important to note that FEMIG interviewed a rather large number of Turkish immigrants who migrated into the designated countries as very little children.

Most of the interviewees immigrated after 1990. Only Turkish immigrants differ in this respect, as almost half immigrated before 1990, but this actually allows us to gain an insight into the perspective of women who came via the guest worker system as an institutionalised system of migration based on work done by men.

In terms of activity, FEMIG mainly interviewed women who were wage-earners, either as employees or as entrepreneur/self-employed (the latter groups are mainly Chinese and Vietnamese women). With regard to occupational status, we also have a wide variety of interviewees ranging from elementary occupations to managers, including a large number of service-sector workers being a prime target of FEMIG interested in women's life-course perspective. The differences between migrant groups can be seen as signs of different backgrounds (sending social spaces), and not as problems emanating from our interview sample.

The same can be said of household composition, family structure and the number of children. The variety is huge, and we have people living alone, as well as women living in smaller and larger families.

3.1.3 Migratory spaces

There are significant differences between the different host countries in terms of having a longer period of immigration as opposed to those which experienced substantial immigration only after the collapse of state socialism. Austria and Germany are two countries which implemented deliberate policies for attracting guest workers from Southern Europe and Turkey in the 1960s. The second group of countries can be divided into two subgroups. There are two countries in our project (Estonia and Slovenia) which were part of federal/imperial frameworks during the state socialist period and experienced substantial immigration even within these frameworks. The other subgroup contains those countries which were not part of such supranational frameworks and experienced immigration only after the collapse of state socialism. They have a major impact on the samples and life-course perspectives of the women interviewed in terms of timing migration, the major discourses in the host societies and cultural encounters.

3.1.4 Method of interpretation

After finalizing the national reports, the responsible FEMAGE-partner DRI (Demographic Research Institute, Budapest) prepared an analytical national table based on the individual case studies in order to provide a systematic framework for the comparative analysis. Just as in the case of national reports we followed the abductive method, or in other words we set up hypotheses and we controlled them at the same time at all stages of the analysis.

3.2 Life-course perspective of female immigrants. Results and discussion

3.2.1 Gender

From the present perspectives of female migrants, they mainly relate to a family framework. This is evident from the legal form of migration presented, from the biographical reasons for migration, and also with regard to the results of migration as seen by them today. Even the description of their integration and further plans are influenced by this family framework. Our qualitative analysis has shown that familial forms and processes of migration are important institutions, but behind and beside them there are other strategies and meanings widely utilized by female migrants:

"Traditional" gender patterns seem to be extremely costly for those female migrants who still maintain these ideals. They show themselves as isolated, and even have to confront discrimination. It is even possible to state that migrants' traditional life-course perspectives cannot be maintained during the narration, and looking at the interviews with second- and third-generation female migrants, we can observe that children brought up in this environment do revolt against this pattern. From time to time, there is a trap in which they reconstruct some traditional identities, but pushed to a meta-level in narrating this traditionalism through the common frameworks of religion, ethnicity and culture. It is also important to note that this is the "fate" of those women who according to their biographies come from and end up in the lower classes of European societies. Thus there are clear signs of a crisis in these life-course perspectives.

The above traditional patterns of self-representation are to be distinguished from temporarily "traditional women" who get into such a passive and subordinated position due to the huge costs and transformation of personal spaces related to migration. Some of them break out from these patterns, but we have to note that some show themselves as being stuck in it and a list of complaints forms the basis for their narration.

The break-ups presented, or the transformations of families, can be directly related to migration. They serve as a reason for migration, and the process is embedded into migration. This later life-course strategy is a "hidden" way of showing that they have wished to increase their independence and welfare. This reported struggle around family and independence can be related to the overall huge change in family patterns in and around Europe so much discussed in the demographic literature.

This means that the relationship between female strategies concerning family and migration has changed. Seemingly traditional women objectify these life-course events and look at them as a means to enhance their own strategies. This is completely different from traditional patterns. Behind this change we see a reaction to changes in the marriage market in the local society. These women are not looking for a marriage with a new meaning and substance, but they cling to the institution itself to fulfil their individual goals. Very importantly, these women actually get into a trap in their present perspective and the original ideas are not fulfilled. A very important facilitator of this strategy is the hierarchically seen level of well-being in the different countries and the related discourses.

There are also young women who position themselves outside familial patterns and look for individual goals, seeing family formation as something to be decided later (postponement) or as something marginal in their life course. This seems to be a new pattern, and migration helps them because it offers individual success and they can avoid the serious difficulties of managing family life as a migrant being such a burden on their family-oriented counterparts.

Altogether, the femininity of migration can be understood as a complex manoeuvring in which the huge presented costs of migration can be redistributed. It is clear that in the view of female migrants they have to sacrifice something in order to rebuild their personal and familial spaces around them. These sacrifices do differ, and this might make political considerations very difficult. The following different types of manoeuvring were observed:

- They have to give up the stability of family life where it is understood as a norm. Migrant families or families including migrants seem to be very vulnerable.
- Or they might have to give up or restrict child-bearing, and this means that public debate on immigrants as substitutes for the lack of children in European societies might be misleading because it disregards the tense situation experienced by female immigrants.
- Or there are huge problems in managing everyday family life. In extreme cases this can lead to the brutal abandonment of children in the sending communities. Or children are placed into inhuman situations, such as being locked up in a flat while the mother works. Or they have to queue up in the early morning to get residence papers

for their mother. They are left in an alien environment of nannies whose language is unfamiliar to them. This definitely requires policy considerations.

- Or they have to sacrifice the extra efforts needed for integration, especially when somebody is isolated as a woman (language learning).
- Or they have to sacrifice their profession, education and individual work, which is very difficult anyway. But we will come back to this issue in detail when integration is discussed.
- Or they have to sacrifice their original gender role models. This can be called "forced" traditionalism, and this phenomenon might explain why women present biographies which oppose their answer to closed questions on attitudes. This contradiction has appeared in many of our national reports and in the narrations themselves.
- Or they have to give up their need to satisfy their ideals on how women should look. Actually this could be one of the failed expectations with regard to living in "wealthy" European societies.

These findings certainly need to be considered from a policy point of view.

3.2.2 Age and life course perspective

In the relationship between age and life-course perspectives we have to stress that migrant women often have to sacrifice their preparation for their old age due to the high costs of migration. It is not surprising that female migrants, who are often absent from the labour market at least for a shorter period, or become socially isolated as women, cannot seriously plan for their old age. Interestingly, they do not want to rely on the social welfare system but mainly refer to the support they expect to receive from their family. In extreme cases, as a fallback strategy, they want to go home in order to capitalize on the income differences between the sending and receiving societies. This reported insecurity requires policy considerations. Our qualitative research also shows that female migrants who settle down in late middle age face very serious problems when it comes to integration. They leave behind established families and professional careers which they cannot continue validate in their new social space. Some of the most isolated self-representations are related to this age group.

3.2.3 Different groups of female migrants (ethnicity and class)

Our comparative analysis has shown that these seemingly ethnically-specific characteristics can be found across different ethnic groups concerning their life-course perspectives. There is a striking similarity of life-course perspectives among different immigrant groups coming from different ethnic backgrounds.

The different types concerning the process, the reason and the results of migration were all found in the different migrant groups.

They all relied on the different patterns of voluntary and involuntary migration, with the exception of being a forced migrant coming from the former Yugoslavia or experiencing an ethnic mixing up historically due to an imperial mobilization during the Soviet period.

All the major types of reasons for migration as narrated by female migrants, including family formation and individualist gender strategy, were found among the different migrant groups. They seem to be legitimate in the different migratory contexts. However, when we looked at the subtypes, some differences could be observed. Mainly post-Soviet female migrants have an idea of realising individual goals through cross-border marriages, which we called emancipation through migration and marriage. Also, mainly female migrants coming from Bosnia and Turkey were able to utilize the pattern of self-representation as a traditionally-minded woman following her husband. But the self-representation strategy of some post-Soviet female migrants is very close to this pattern.

We were also able to observe in the case of changes in the status of women after migration that there is a rather huge homogeneity in experiencing the different life-course perspectives such as deskilling, regaining status or being successful. We found reports in all migrant groups of falling into a social and economic, legal or emotional vacuum or being subordinated as a woman. Or conversely, we could find successful young single, global, business or even refugee biographies in the different migrant groups. Chinese, Vietnamese, Turkish and Romanian women report on advancement in education, business/profession or global type of career.

Even in terms of integration and its different types, we found a somewhat homogenous picture. With regard to the dominant in-between status, there can be the perspective of an ethnic revival in all groups; they can report this level of integration individually, and even Diaspora perspectives can be set up in all the different migrant groups.

All female migrant groups report on their desire to stay in the receiving countries. They rarely raise the possibility of migrating further into another country. Many of them have the idea of going home, but they certainly want to remain in the receiving country during their active period.

Beside the essentialisation of ethnicity among female migrants, we can also refute religious background as an important factor in generating different life-course perspectives. Muslim, Buddhist and Orthodox women come up with very similar life-course perspectives, and in

general we can say that they do not actually very often come up with any kind of religious narration. Some symbolic differentiations such as headscarves seem to be important but, on the basis of the individual cases, we can say that it is as much a religious symbol as it is a way of talking about being accepted or discriminated against. Even more, some migrant women talk about religion only when it shows some link to the host society (Catholic and Protestant Chinese and Vietnamese, Jewish Ukrainian, etc.). This shows that religion is not an "essential" characteristic in female migrants' perspective, but basically an issue of integration.

One important way to see how migration is related to "ethnic" specificities is to analyse the social situation in which female immigrants find themselves. This seems to be a very important factor in generating different biographies and narrations across ethnic and national boundaries.

The familial biographies and the self-representation of women as migrants might be a reaction to a global class position in the sense that they offer networks and a background for the sake of improving women's well-being. The gender perspective can thus be linked to social status.

The traditional gender model is also a reaction to the social position, as the "traditionalists" move back to their family unit due to the isolation they experience during migration. An interesting integration trap seems to evolve here. "Traditionalist" women want to integrate to migrant men and to recreate something of the original familial society that they have left behind. In this integration, the social position of not being active on the labour market is a crucial point regardless of the fact that these women are very proud of any kind of regular work. This approach is then understood by the receiving society as a lack of willingness to become integrated. This leads to a "conflict of cultures", understood as a disability on the part of the migrants. The lack of speaking the language of the host society can also be seen as the result of this "cultural" gap.

The Diaspora "identity" and the "ethnic" identity can be linked to migration in a social sense that women do call on such resources in order to counterbalance their costly social manoeuvring during migration in their life-course perspective. This can be seen as a Diaspora and ethnic trap in the sense that migration and the costs of migration are redistributed via these networks, and as a result these women become trapped in their ethnic and Diaspora environment and they find no way to get out of this "help" to be integrated to the host society in another way. This inability to get out is then understood by the host societies as too much of looking inward and a lack of willingness to become integrated.

3.2.4 In summary

Altogether, we can see that the migration of women is a complex transformation of social and personal spaces with huge difficulties in combining different gender, social and cultural goals. Female migrants have to be highly adaptive at all times in order to redistribute the costs of migration as described. We were able to identify very important and distinct strategies with regard to this burden sharing in a life-course perspective. We consider this to be a major result of our project.

4 Attitudes of the resident population towards migrants, migration and integration

4.1 Methodology

Codebook and international database on nationals (MIG)

The data of the Population Policy Acceptance Survey (PPAS) from eight FEMAGE partner institutions have been collated into an SPSS database and accompanying codebook. In addition to the 357 questionnaire variables and 16 country-specific variables as they have been provided by the FEMAGE Partners, these documents include twelve general variables, 257 recoded variables and 21 composite variables. The MIG codebook and SPSS database have been disseminated among the FEMAGE partners for the collaborative analysis of nationals' attitudes towards immigrants and their integration. In the course of the project, PSPC continued to update and complete the MIG database and codebook on the basis of suggestions made by the FEMAGE partners. The MIG database and codebook is available to the international scientific community on request to the FEMAGE-Coordinator BiB (bib-femage@destatis.de).

The MIG database includes the following five groups of variables:

1. General variables
2. Questionnaire variables
 - Core questionnaire
 - Gender Roles Module
 - Values in Life Module
 - Caring Module
 - Ageing Module
 - Foreigners Module
 - Childcare Module
3. Country-specific variables
4. Recoded variables
5. Composite variables

The MIG was created to serve as a tool for the international comparative analyses. The MIG codebook closely follows the structure of the MIG database. It includes labels and titles of variables, as well as codes and code description of variable categories. In addition, it comprises comments on their availability per country or parts of the sample and, in particular for the recoded and regrouped variables, the construction of the variables and their relation to the basic variables.

Basic variables

The basic variables from the standard PPAS questionnaire and some other basic variables, totalling 357 variables, are classified in eight groups:

- general variables on identification, interview date, internal and pooled weighting variables, survey size, population size corresponding to the age composition of the survey sample, and several other basic demographic variables needed for the analysis of some of the PPAS data;
- core questionnaire variables;
- gender module variables;
- values of life module variables;
- caring module variables;
- ageing module variables;
- childcare module variables;
- foreigners module variables.

Recoded, regrouped and composite variables

This section includes 257 recoded or regrouped variables and 21 composite variables which PSPC constructed in order to facilitate cross-country comparative analyses and the use of identical recoded variables in the different analytical and comparative parts of the FEMAGE project.

The recoded variables consist in essence of two types of variable: corrected basic variables and combinations of basic variables. The latter group consists of a wide variety of variables, starting from recoded variables in which the large number of codes has been reduced to a smaller, manageable number, variables constructed on the basis of the combination of different basic variables, variables comparing actual data with PPA estimated data, and computed variables.

The composite variables totalise values of a number of variables which measure a particular attitudinal or behavioural dimension. They were produced to facilitate the relationships between different domains or simplify the presentation of major results.

The MIG database was used for the production of the report and book publication on nationals' attitudes towards migrants (D7) and the report on the comparative analysis of the survey among female immigrants and national population, published in the BiB Working Paper Series.

4.2 Results from the comparative analysis

In cooperation with members of the FEMAGE partners, PSPC produced a comprehensive analysis of the international database (D4). D7 dealt with all major aspects for which information was available in the PPAS surveys. The report has meanwhile been edited for the planned publication: Avramov, D. (ed.): The acceptance of immigrants in Europe? Viewpoints about immigration and expectations towards foreigners in the Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, and Finland. Norderstedt: Books on Demand.

We provide parsimonious answers here to the research questions which we addressed in our study, namely:

- What is the prevalence of foreigners in the eight countries?
- Who is perceived as 'a foreigner'?
- Are there too many immigrants?
- Is the presence of foreigners perceived more frequently as an asset or as a burden?
- Is immigration a remedy for shrinking populations?
- What are the perceptions of the labour market advantages and disadvantages of immigration?
- Is cultural diversity favoured?
- What is the meaning of integration?
- Which policy measures towards foreigners and integration of migrants are being favoured?
- Is immigration perceived in the context of overall demographic processes?
- Is there a relation between attitudes towards migration and gender issues?
- Are attitudes towards ageing and the elderly related to attitudes towards immigrants?
- How are attitudes towards immigrants related to satisfaction?
- How are attitudes towards immigrants related to general values?
- What are the key challenges for new policies?

Facts and figures

Migration, as well as countries' socio-economic and political history, are reflected in the numbers of foreigners present in each country. The share of foreign nationals ranges between 0.1 percent in Poland, at the bottom part of the scale, and 25.8 percent in Estonia, at the upper end of the scale. Foreigners account for between 1.5 percent and 2.1 percent of the population in Hungary, Finland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia; the share stands at 8 and 10 percent in Germany and Austria respectively.

Who is perceived as 'a foreigner'?

When people were asked which group they first identify as 'foreigners' in Estonia, Germany and Slovenia, respondents gave correctly the largest non-national group (at the time of interviewing). Likewise, in Hungary, the most frequent perception of 'foreigners' relates to ethnic Hungarians from Transylvania. By contrast, there is a discrepancy in the Czech Republic, Finland and Poland between the image of 'foreigners' and the largest group of non-nationals present in the country.

Are there too many immigrants?

A realistic idea about the number of foreigners living in one's country is most prevalent in Austria, Germany and Finland, whereas estimates are far removed from reality in Estonia and Poland. Over- and underestimation are strongly inversely related to the size of the foreign population: the smaller the foreign population, the larger the overestimation, and vice versa.

The actual number of foreigners does not appear to impact the prevalence of the opinion that there are too many foreigners in one's country. Countries such as Poland, with 0.1% of foreigners, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia, where foreigners account for roughly 2 percent of the total population, Germany with 8 percent, and Estonia with 26 percent of foreigners, all have in common that some two-thirds of their nationals are of the opinion that there are too many immigrants in their country. In Finland, where foreigners account for just under 2 percent, one-quarter of natives think that there are too many foreigners. In Austria, where foreigners account for some ten percent of the population, one out of two natives thinks that there are too many.

Is the presence of foreigners perceived more frequently as an asset or as a burden?

Negative views about the presence of foreigners and their integration are more prevalent than positive ones in all eight countries. By way of example, respondents in Hungary agree or strongly agree with an average of six negative statements about foreigners, whereas they agree or strongly agree with only two positive ones.

There is however considerable variation within countries and between countries with regard to the number of negative as well as positive opinions about foreigners. A multiple classification analysis (MCA) of the number of positive and negative attitudes towards immigration and the integration of immigrants for eight predictors (country, urbanization, sex, age, education, activity status, equalised income, importance of religion in life) shows that the country is the most important differentiating factor. Among respondents' personal

characteristics, education is the most important differentiating factor, both for the prevalence of positive and negative attitudes. Higher educational levels are positively associated with a higher number of positive attitudes, and negatively with the number of negative attitudes, towards foreigners and their integration.

Is immigration a remedy for shrinking populations?

Immigration is often referred to in policy circles and in the media as a partial remedy for the expected population decline. Our research shows that between-country differences in attitudes towards immigration (that would be used to counteract population decrease) are huge. Most respondents in Finland, seven out of every ten, are in favour of such immigration, and only one out of ten is against immigration as compensation for demographic shrinkage. Respondents in Austria who hold the same position are slightly more prevalent than those who expressed disagreement (41% versus 35%). Respondents in the three ex-socialist countries hold quite different opinions: only 5% of Estonians and Poles, and 8% of people in the Czech Republic, would favour 'replacement' immigration. Immigration as a means for compensating for the low natural growth of the population is not favoured in Germany either, although this attitude is not as prevalent as in the above three countries. Respondents in Eastern Germany are less inclined to accept immigration as a means to deal with population decline than those from Western Germany.

What are the perceptions of the labour market advantages and disadvantages of immigration?

Attitudes towards the labour market disadvantages of the presence of foreigners predominate over attitudes towards the advantages. By way of example, more than half of respondents in Poland, the Czech Republic, Eastern Germany and Hungary believe that foreigners take away jobs. It is only 25% and 30% in Austria and Western Germany respectively. Three to four out of every ten respondents in Slovenia, Western Germany and the Czech Republic are of the opinion that foreigners are necessary to do the work we no longer want to do, whereas this is the viewpoint of only one out of every ten respondents in Hungary.

The social differentiation of attitudes on labour market (dis)advantages of the presence of foreigners is most salient for respondents' educational and economic background: The lower their educational level or income, the fewer consider that foreigners bring economic advantages. The same holds for the unemployed and retired, when compared to the employed. People with less educational capital or in a weaker economic situation are more prone to fears of the socio-economic competition that comes from foreigners.

Is there support for cultural diversity?

The educational attainment of the natives has an unambiguous impact on attitudes towards the acceptance of cultural diversity associated with immigration and the presence of foreigners. Higher education is associated with a higher level of acceptance of immigrants. This association can also be found for integration measures, but is somewhat less pronounced. The impact of education can be found in all countries, with the exception of Estonia where attitudes towards foreigners among all citizens appear heavily marked by years of foreign occupation.

The basic positive statement on the presence of foreigners is expressed by the question: 'The presence of foreigners is positive because it allows an exchange with other cultures'. A relatively high degree of association is found between this variable and the statement that the 'Integration of foreigners should be fostered'. The quite strong positive relation between these two variables shows that attitudes towards foreigners are quite nuanced: Those in favour of the presence of foreigners are at the same time in favour of fostering integration, and hence do not appear to favour an approach towards multiculturalism that enhances immigrants' cultural 'separateness'.

More than half of respondents in Western Germany share the view that 'The presence of foreigners is positive because it allows an exchange with other cultures', whereas only three out of every ten respondents in the Czech Republic and Estonia agree with this statement. There are salient between-country differences both for positive and negative general attitudes towards immigrants and their integration.

A dividing line exists between Eastern and Western countries, the former displaying less positive attitudes towards cultural diversity and integration. Only 13 out of every 100 respondents in Western Germany agree that there is no room for foreigners, whereas as many as four out of every ten people in Hungary hold this view. More than half the population in all the countries shared the opinion that an increase in the number of foreigners favours the spread of crime and terrorism. As many as eight out of every ten respondents in the Czech Republic agree with this statement.

Regarding the social differentiation of general attitudes towards foreigners and their integration, urbanisation is slightly positively related to positive attitudes towards immigration and the integration of migrants. People living in rural environment tend to have more negative views. Education, and to a lesser degree also equivalised income, differentiate quite clearly: The higher the level of education or income, the larger the proportion of respondents who agree or fully agree with positive statements. The inverse relation with negative

statements is even more pronounced. Somewhat less salient relations are found among unemployed and retired people. Non-religious or less religious people are somewhat more in favour of the integration of immigrants than religious people.

Multivariate analyses show that country and educational level are the two most important differentiating factors amongst the independent variables investigated.

What is the meaning of integration?

The meaning of integration and the importance attached to integration are reflected in natives' viewpoints about the significance of mastering the language and abiding by the customs and rules of the host country, and in the opinion that those foreigners who do not integrate should return to their own country.

The overwhelming majority of the population, more than 80 percent, in Estonia, Eastern Germany, Western Germany, Slovenia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Austria agree that foreigners are obliged to learn the language and to get used to the customs and rules of the host country. The share of people in agreement with this statement ranges between 77 percent in Austria and 92 percent in Estonia.

Similarly, an overwhelming majority of respondents in Estonia, Eastern Germany, Western Germany, Slovenia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Finland share the view that foreigners who have not integrated after five years should return to their own country. The share of people in agreement with this statement ranges between 59 percent in Western Germany and 85 percent in Hungary.

This meaning of integration and the prevalence of agreement that non-integrated foreigners should return to their own country, which cut across all countries irrespective of the lower or higher levels of xenophobia observed, appears to leave little scope for the policy discourse of multiculturalism as egalitarian mutual adaptation. The native populations clearly expect foreigners to make a very strong effort to adapt to the host country.

Which policy measures towards foreigners and integration of migrants are favoured?

Integration into political life and the decision-making process via voting rights does not get majority approval in any country. The proportion of respondents who agree that "Foreigners should have the right to vote in local elections after five years of residence" stands at 48 percent in Finland, at the upper end of the scale, and 20 percent in Hungary, at the lower end of the scale.

The majority of the population in all countries agrees that illegal immigrants should be expelled. The share stands at (for example) 81 percent in Estonia and Eastern Germany, and 56 percent in Poland.

Attitudes regarding specific policy measures towards foreigners and their integration show significant differences between the countries studied, and this applies to measures regulating both the numbers of immigrants and their integration. Also here the major dividing line runs between East and West.

Attitudes regarding policy measures towards immigration and the integration of foreigners are the only domain for which men are somewhat more in 'total disagreement' with positive policy measures than women, and vice versa for negative policy measures. Also age produces, in general, slight differences for the policy measures: Older age groups are slightly more frequently against positive policy measures. As always, higher levels of education are associated with more positive attitudes towards positive policy measures for the integration of migrants.

All positive policy measures are positively related to demographic incentives for immigration, whereas they are negatively related to demographic disincentives for immigration.

Is immigration perceived in the context of overall demographic processes?

We examined the relationships between the acceptance of immigration, and the views on three groups of demographic processes - the change in population size, demographic ageing and fertility. In most cases, the analysis reveals systematic and statistically-significant associations between attitudes towards immigration and the perception of major demographic trends. This finding substantiates the hypothesis that people develop definite views on the general population trends, including immigration and foreigners. These views and attitudes are grounded in the overall reality, and reflect the awareness, to a smaller or greater extent, of the relationships between demographic phenomena that encapsulate population growth/decline, fertility, ageing and migration.

Is there a relation between attitudes towards migration and gender issues?

The conservative views on gender and partnership are echoed in the negative attitudes towards immigrants. The more individuals advocate the traditional position of women in the family, the more they express negative attitudes towards immigrants in all the countries studied. The more individuals support gender equality measures, the more they express positive attitudes towards immigrants. The more importance individuals attribute to children for their parents, the more they express negative attitudes towards immigrants. All these

findings feed into the hypothesis that the debates on ideologies of national reproduction are closely related to views on traditional gender relations, as the ethno-nationalist vision stresses precisely the traditional gender roles.

Are attitudes towards ageing and the elderly related to attitudes towards immigrants?

People who have a positive viewpoint about the role of the elderly in society also express more positive attitudes towards foreigners. By contrast, people who think that the elderly are a burden think that immigrants are taking away jobs and share the viewpoint that there is no room for foreigners in their country.

Respondents who express concern over population ageing and worry about the increase in the number of elderly people are generally more in favour of immigration and the integration of migrants.

The associations between ageing/the elderly and immigration differ between the countries under study. Attitudes towards foreigners in Eastern and Western Germany and Austria were visibly interrelated with attitudes towards ageing and the elderly. These countries also shared more positive attitudes towards foreigners than other countries under consideration. In Poland, where respondents expressed a more negative perception of immigrants and their integration, similar associations were found between the two sets of attitudes as in Germany and Austria. The inter-relationship between attitudes towards ageing and the elderly and immigration and migrants is much weaker in Estonia and Slovenia, while no association was observed in the Czech Republic.

How are attitudes towards immigrants related to satisfaction and general values in life?

Satisfaction in several domains of life, namely housing, immediate environment, standard of living, work and work-free time, is loosely related to positive and negative attitudes towards immigration and the integration of migrants. High levels of satisfaction are conducive to more positive attitudes towards immigration and the integration of migrants, and vice versa. Dissatisfied people more often react negatively towards immigration. The relations between the satisfaction variables and attitudes towards migrants are most salient for standard of living and household income. These relations are largely independent of respondents' major socio-demographic, socio-economic or socio-cultural characteristics. We tend to interpret the relations between satisfaction with various domains of life and attitudes towards migrants to be due to the presence or absence of fears or experiences of socio-economic competition.

Of the three value dimensions studied: having good financial circumstances, sufficient leisure time and the importance of the private sphere, the first two are most likely to show a

correlation with attitudes regarding immigration. People who emphasise the importance of a solid financial background are less likely to show a positive attitude; they are less likely to agree that immigrants are necessary because the population is shrinking; they reject the idea that their integration should be supported and also that immigrants ought to be given the right to vote in local elections after five years of residence. At the same time, this value orientation goes hand in hand with the view that immigrants take away jobs, contribute to the spread of crime and terrorism, and that there is no room for them in the country, even in order to compensate for demographic shrinkage.

The emphasis on leisure time, presumably revealing a degree of individualism which places a high value on the freedom of the individual, correlates with a more positive attitude towards foreigners: It enhances positive attitudes towards them and reduces negative ones. People who attach a high value to work-free time consider immigration as beneficial rather than harmful, both from an economic and a cultural point of view; they reject the idea that foreigners contribute to the spread of crime or that there is no room for them in the country. At the same time, they are more likely to favour the idea of supporting the integration of foreigners and are less willing to send them home if they fail to become integrated into the receiving society after five years.

How do PPA findings relate to other attitudinal surveys?

The attitudinal data on immigrants in the Eurobarometer, ESS and PPAS surveys largely show the same social differentiations, notwithstanding the somewhat different conceptual framework and interpretative approaches. However, PPAS also shows some strong points. Firstly, in studying attitudes towards immigration and the integration of foreigners, PPAS developed highly-specific and well-differentiated questions. Secondly, by focusing on immigrants and foreigners PPAS did not merge notions of ethnicity, race and religious groups which relate to quite different social processes in many countries. Thirdly, migration issues are related in PPAS to a broad array of individual features and studied together with a broad range of issues that shape people's lives.

What are the key challenges for new policies?

At a time when the European Union is inviting in skilled labour from outside and proposing the EU blue card to facilitate the entry and integration of immigrants needed over the next two decades, the FEMAGE project reports how badly the national populations are informed about the real magnitude of the presence of foreigners, their current contribution and their potential for contribution to the host country. Natives in all countries largely overestimate the number of foreigners, believe that there are already too many and share the view that

immigrants take away natives' jobs and favour the spread of crime and terrorism. The actual number of foreigners does not appear to matter at all.

Notwithstanding the existence of heterogeneity within as well as between countries, negative attitudes towards immigration generally prevail over positive ones. The view that immigrants are needed as contributors to the host society is not shared by any significant number of people in any of the countries studied.

The prevailing population climate indicates that immigrants are expected more or less spontaneously to find their socio-economic place in the host society or else leave. Nationals are of the view that foreigners are obliged to learn the language and to get used to the customs and rules of the host country, otherwise they should return to their country of origin.

Political participation of foreigners in local elections, largely promoted in policy circles, especially at European level, is rejected by the overwhelming majority of natives.

It appears on the basis of the general population climate in the host countries that one of the pillars for the successful integration of immigrants from third countries, namely their acceptance en masse by natives, is remarkably fragile.

The population climate is however also underpinned by ambiguous attitudes of natives, as there seems to be a significant minority that sees negative consequences of immigration but that also extends its gaze beyond perceived economic disadvantages of the presence of immigrants in their country. One-third to one-half of nationals – depending on the country - agrees that the presence of foreigners is positive as it allows for cultural exchange.

The preponderance of a negative perception of immigrants can largely be explained by the failure of public policies and the appeal of populist movements that thrive on fear of 'otherness'. On the one hand, the global transformation of the socio-economic system in most Eastern European countries is also associated with a sense of insecurity felt by large segments of the population, which easily transposes into negative reactions towards 'others' who are perceived as competitors. On the other hand, many countries that received large numbers of immigrants in the last decades of the 20th century have badly managed the process of integration of people arriving from ethnically more distant regions and having religiously more distinct features. It was thought in some cases that immigrants would be 'guest-workers' who would only remain in Europe temporarily, whilst in other cases it was believed that those migrants would integrate as easily as earlier migrants of European origin. Neither of these things has taken place.

Migration has historically been an inherent feature of human societies. Today, in the light of communication and transportation facilities and the globalisation of the economy, on the one hand, and the civic rights deeply rooted in the European tradition on the other, the management of the push and pull factors, and the management of diversity associated with the inflow of immigrants, has a central place in strategic policy planning. This planning should not turn a blind eye to fear of foreigners as competitors on the labour market and bearers of 'other' social values which is so saliently captured by the FEMAGE project.

We can conclude, on the basis of the key findings stemming from our research, that there is great need for policy adaptation and reform of immigration policies and integration practices. National populations also need to be targeted by migration policy discourse in view of sensibilisation, information and education as to the real magnitude of the presence of immigrants, their contribution to the host country and about migrants' quest for permanence and integration. Measures which are proposed or introduced at the highest policy level need to be explained well in order to be acceptable and accepted. There is a need to considerably step up efforts in education and the public media to combat the obsolete but deeply-rooted in-group and nepotistic drives which may and do flare up even in modern culture, where personal capabilities, much more than nepotistic features, underpin the social, economic and cultural values.

The goal of our research was to capture the population climate with regard to the acceptance of immigrants. Our research findings led us to choose a title of the book (based on Deliverable 7 of the FEMAGE-project) with a question mark "Acceptance of immigrants in Europe?", not to question whether immigrants should be accepted, but to pass on a strong message about the importance of policy choices that need to be made and implemented to manage diversity in a society in order to build a more immigration-friendly climate and reinforce social cohesion in Europe.

5 Comparative analysis of the survey among female immigrants (FEMIG) and national population (MIG)

5.1 Remarks on the FEMIG database

FEMIG is an SPSS database and accompanying codebook containing information on the basis of the semi-structured questionnaire included in the interviews with immigrant women in the eight countries. In addition to the 182 basic variables, it contains 68 recoded and regrouped variables. In the course of the project, PSPC also continued to update and complete the FEMIG database on the basis of suggestions made by the FEMAGE partners. The FEMIG database and codebook will be made available to the international scientific community on request to the FEMAGE-Coordinator BiB (bib-femage@destatis.de).

The content consists of the following main sections:

- basic variables
 - general information to be completed by interviewer;
 - basic personal data;
 - parents;
 - migration history;
 - partnership / children / household;
 - housing;
 - activity;
 - relationship with the home community (family);
 - integration;
 - emancipation;
 - provision for old age;
 - general feelings and attitudes;
 - information to be provided by interviewer;
 - data to be coded on the basis of the narrative;
- recoded variables.

The FEMIG database was not only used for the analysis under Workpackage 2 (see chapter 3) and drafting by DRI of the report on the comparative transnational analysis of the FEMIG interviews, but also and indeed mainly for the comparison of the key findings from the survey among natives (MIG), for interviews with immigrant women (FEMIG) and for the drafting of the report (Deliverable 10) by PSPC.

5.2 Aim

The aim of this part of the project was to compare the results of the survey of female nationals and interviews with immigrant women in order to capture similarities and differences in the eight EU countries and identify the key features of experience, attitudes and expectations of female third-country nationals. The report is focussed on four critical questions regarding attitudes and experiences: How do native and migrant women regard each other? How is the need for immigrants viewed? How is integration perceived? What are the perceptions and experiences of discrimination? D10 has been edited for publication in the BiB Working Paper Series: Avramov, D. and R. Cliquet (2008), *Comparative analysis of the interviews among female immigrants (FEMIG) and the surveys among the national populations (MIG)*. FEMAGE Project, WP3, Deliverable No. 10. Wiesbaden: BiB Working Paper Series.

5.3 The background

Our general theoretical approach builds on the acknowledgement that the responsibility for the integration of immigrants rests on many actors: immigrants themselves and governments and institutions, but also citizens in the receiving society. That is why we set out to capture the viewpoints of natives, immigrant women and the key policy stakeholders in order to provide a broad knowledge base for policy development and implementation.

The FEMAGE project relies on three major data sources, the results of a large-scale survey in eight EU countries - the Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Slovenia and Finland - in which information was gathered from some 21,000 native citizens on the attitudes of nationals towards immigration and the integration of migrants, and the results of interviews (30 per country) with selected groups of immigrant women in the same countries, and the focus groups with stakeholders.

For the present report, only data from the survey of natives for 20- to 59-year-old women (some 11,000 respondents) have been selected in order to compare the key findings among native women with the same age group of immigrant women who were interviewed. This choice was topic driven since the focus of the FEMAGE project is gendered.

It is, however, relevant to note that our comparison of the views of native men and native women has shown that attitudes and expectations of men and women are remarkably similar in all the countries regarding migration issues. This may be partly explained by the fact that the methodology of the survey among natives was gender neutral rather than feminist.

The immigrant women, legally resident in host countries, were deliberately selected according to their country of origin to capture groups that are more extensively present in the host country. 15 women from each of the two different ethnic groups were interviewed in each country. They were women aged 20-59 who had lived in the host country for at least three years. A total of 239 immigrant women were interviewed, belonging to nine different ethnic groups: Romanian and Ukrainian women in the Czech Republic; Russian and Turkish in Germany; Russian and Central Asian in Estonia; Chinese and Ukrainian in Hungary; Bosnian and Turkish in Austria; Ukrainian and Vietnamese in Poland; Bosnian and Russian in Slovenia; and Kosovo Albanian and Russian female immigrants in Finland.

The interviews with the immigrant women consisted of two parts: a narrative part and a complementary structured questionnaire. It was endeavoured to include in the structured questionnaire part of the interviews of the migrant women questions that were as comparable as possible to the information available in the PPAS. However, given the nature of the samples and the interview methodology, strictly-comparable questions were not always possible. The narratives and part of the structured questions of the interviews with immigrant women were analysed in each country, and an internationally-comparative analysis was produced. The data on the standardized questions of the interviews with the immigrant women were brought together in an SPSS file, labelled as the FEMAGE-FEMIG database.

The interpretation of the results of the comparison between the PPAS samples of 20- to 59-year-old women in eight EU countries used in this report and the FEMAGE samples of migrant women to those host countries has to take into account the fact that the former are large, nationally-representative sample surveys, whereas the latter are small-scale qualitative surveys on female migrants to the host countries, belonging to different ethnic groups. Nevertheless, the data available from the PPA surveys and the structured questionnaire part of the interviews with migrant women allowed us to identify and compare a broad range of attitudes and/or experiences with regard to native-migrant in-group/out-group relations.

The multi-method FEMAGE approach obviously does not allow a comparison of databases as such, but it generates policy-relevant findings and allows us to look at issues of integration and discrimination against migrants through the eyes of both nationals and migrants themselves.

In this summary we focus on four critical questions regarding attitudes and experiences:

- How do native and migrant women regard each other?
- How is the need for immigrants viewed?

- How is integration perceived?
- What are the perceptions and experiences of discrimination?

5.4 Results

5.4.1 How do native and immigrant women see each other?

In the survey of native women we explored the framework conditions for the acceptance and integration of immigrants. One of the key research questions was: Are immigrants perceived by women in their host country more as an asset or as a threat?

Our research documented analytically that the vast majority among the native populations expresses fear of foreigners, more particularly as competitors on the labour market. When measuring positive and negative attitudes of nationals towards immigration and immigrants, we observe that native women share a larger number of negative than positive views, more so in the East than in the West.

A large majority in most countries is of the view that there are too many foreigners; a substantial proportion thinks that foreigners take away jobs, and that foreigners favour the spread of crime and terrorism.

Attitudes towards the labour market disadvantages of the presence of foreigners predominate over attitudes towards advantages. By way of example, more than half of female respondents in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary believe that foreigners take away jobs; it is 45% and 47% in Slovenia and Eastern Germany respectively, and 27% and 30 % in Austria and Western Germany respectively.

A multiple classification analysis (MCA) of the number of positive and negative attitudes towards immigration and the integration of immigrants for eight predictors (country, urbanization, sex, age, education, activity status, equivalised income, importance of religion in life) shows that the country is the most important differentiating factor. Among respondents' personal characteristics, education is the most important differentiating factor, for the prevalence of both positive and negative attitudes. Higher educational attainment is positively associated with a higher number of positive attitudes, and negatively with the number of negative attitudes towards foreigners and their integration.

It is important to underline here that the views expressed by native women were captured in a quantitative survey, and are thus more general, whereas the qualitative interviews with immigrant women captured a more direct experience gathered at neighbourhood level.

In the interviews with immigrant women we asked how they perceive natives. The large majority of migrant women perceive natives in a very or quite positive light. All interviewees

in Estonia, Poland, Finland and Slovenia had a largely positive perception of natives. In Germany and Hungary nine out of every ten and in the Czech Republic and Austria eight out of every ten migrant women has a very or quite positive perception of people in their host country.

We also explored how women as migrants consider themselves to be perceived by natives. Although the viewpoints vary somewhat from one country to another, the overwhelming majority share the opinion that, as migrants, they are positively perceived by the natives. This viewpoint was shared by all the women interviewed in Hungary and Slovenia, whilst it was nine out of every ten in the Czech Republic, Estonia and Finland. In Austria eight and in Germany and Poland seven out of every ten migrant women believe that natives have a very positive or quite a positive perception of them.

Whereas part of the difference in how native women see immigrants, and how immigrants see natives, may be attributed to the methodological issues, it is also legitimate to assume that immigrant women were trying to please the host society or had the experience that they were not allowed to express themselves other than in positive terms.

Whereas the majority share both positive attitudes towards people in their host country, and themselves have a quite positive or very positive perception of natives, a minority shares negative perceptions. The difficulty in establishing one's place in a host country can be associated with the generalized feeling of dissatisfaction that translates into a highly-negative perception of the people in the host country among some migrants. This can be illustrated by the 29-year-old Russian with a university degree who performs an elementary occupation and has been living in Germany for six years. She suffers enormously from the loss of social status which migration has entailed. She believes that natives have a very negative view of her.

Almost seven out of every ten interviewees are of the view that the natives in the host country try to be helpful most of the time. Three out of ten think that they are not helpful. This view about lack of helpfulness is somewhat more prevalent among Turkish, Romanian and Kosovo Albanian migrant women.

5.4.2 The need for immigrants

Our research shows that the majority of natives in most countries are not in favour of replacement migration as a remedy for population decline. At best, immigrants are seen as being needed to do the jobs natives no longer want to do. Three to four out of every ten female natives in Slovenia, Western Germany and the Czech Republic are of the opinion that

foreigners are needed to do the work we no longer want to do, whereas this is the viewpoint of only one out of every ten respondents in Hungary.

Immigrants themselves obviously perceive and experience needs for their contribution in the host country through different eyes. For those who are qualified and eager to work, the first experience is that their skills are underused and not recognized.

The striking commonality in the experience of migrant women is that of temporary or permanent deskilling. Relating educational level to occupational status shows that four out of every ten interviewees with post-secondary education performed activities below the level of technicians and associate professionals. The comparison of the first activity after migration with the present activity of migrant women with a university degree also clearly illustrates the prevalence of temporary and permanent deskilling: Four out of ten women had a first activity which lay below their present high-status occupation and another four out of ten still fulfil an activity below their high educational attainment. The narratives of migrant women show that deskilling is a major pervasive experience and even those who gain the status that corresponds to their qualification go through a period in which it is difficult to maintain that position.

Deskilling of migrant women clearly points to the controversy between the advantages for employers who draw on capacities of overqualified workers to perform less rewarding jobs, and the weak negotiating position of migrant women with regard to access to gainful employment. The 'no choice' situation in which many migrant women find themselves may lead to misunderstandings about the meaning of integration from the host country perspective, which is often limited to integration into gainful employment, and the quest for integration as seen through the eyes of migrant women themselves, which relates to a more comprehensive place in society.

5.4.3 Expectations towards integration

The overwhelming majority of native women in most countries agree that foreigners are obliged to learn the language and to get used to the customs and rules of the host country. In most cases, more than half of the respondents also share the view that foreigners who have not integrated after five years should return to their country of origin.

The quest for permanence and integration is shared by the overwhelming majority of immigrant women. The majority of the migrant women interviewed has acquired or has the intention to acquire naturalization in the host country; most feel at home in their host country, and a substantial majority would migrate to the host country again or do not want to return to

their country of origin. If they had to make a choice all over again, seven out of ten interviewees would migrate to the host country again. This view is even somewhat more prevalent among Russian, Romanian, and Bosnian women, but less so among Turkish and Central Asian interviewees.

Almost all want to stay in the host country, and they rarely raise the possibility of migrating further into another country. Some nurture a vague ideal of going home when they become old.

The desire to settle and integrate is prevalent, but it is a tough and long-lasting process for migrants, as is so clearly illustrated by the transitional stage in which most migrants find themselves.

On the basis of the narratives, we aimed to reconstruct what present life-course perspectives immigrants create in their new host societies with regard to migration, integration, gender and ageing. Kovács and Melegh are writing in their FEMAGE-report about the narrative interviews of migrant women: "Altogether, we can see that the migration of women is a complex transformation of social and personal spaces with huge difficulties in combining different gender, social and cultural goals. Female migrants have to be very adaptive all the time in order to redistribute the costs of migration". Probably due to the high cost of adaptation strategies, migrant women give little if any thought to making arrangements for their own old age.

Female migrants settling down in late middle age face the most serious problems of integration. They leave behind their families, and professional careers which they cannot properly continue in their new social space. Some of the most isolated self-representations are related to this age group.

5.4.4 Pathways to integration

In view of the importance of knowledge of the language of the host country, it is significant that out of 237 women interviewed who have been resident for three or more years in the host country, there are 42 whose knowledge of the language is still bad or very bad. The largest numbers are found among Vietnamese, Chinese and Kosovo Albanian women. Four out of every ten women among these ethnic groups has not acquired a fair knowledge of the language of the host community. Among Turkish women it is three out of every ten.

The majority of women interviewed, seven out of every ten, are wage-earners or entrepreneurs. The most active are Chinese and Vietnamese, predominantly generating income as entrepreneurs. The least active are Turkish and Kosovo Albanian women.

Integration is a process, and the majority of migrant women interviewed are either still in a transitional stage after three or more years of residence, or have forged an intercultural, hybrid identity. With regard to the use of their mother tongue and the language of the host country, there is a dynamic balancing process. The majority of migrant women use their native language at home and with their children. Specifically, some seven out of ten interviewees mostly use their mother tongue at home; two out of ten use the language spoken in the host country, and one out of ten mostly uses a third language. Roughly the same proportions are observed for the language mostly spoken with the children. The information about the language most frequently spoken with friends shows a slightly stronger shift towards the mother tongue. However, a substantial shift is reported for the language spoken at the workplace: The ratios for native and host country language are practically reversed.

Also, the distribution of the languages of the mass media consulted point to a transitional integrative process for the majority of migrant women. Whereas only one-quarter of all female migrant interviewees mainly use media in the language of the host country, more than half use media in both their native language and in the language of the host country or another language; fewer than two out of ten interviewees stick to media only in their mother tongue.

This transitional integrative stage in language matters and social relations is evident in the narratives, as most of the female migrants present themselves as being in an in-between status in general.

On the basis of the interviewee's ethnicity and the ethnicity of her partner/husband, the FEMIG database facilitates to assess the degree of ethnic endogamy or exogamy. Overall, endogamic relations prevail, but we also observe strong ethnic differentials: Bosnian, Kosovo Albanian, Chinese and Vietnamese interviewees show a very high prevalence of ethnic endogamy; Romanian and Turkish women take an intermediate position, whereas exogamic partnerships are predominant among Russian and Ukrainian interviewees.

The structured questionnaire of the female migrants interviewed included two major groups of questions which pertain to social relations with nationals (friends, doctors, shopping, membership in associations), and questions on native-migrant in-group/out-group relations.

Four out of ten female migrant interviewees have friends who are mainly from their country of origin, whereas the same proportion has mixed friendships. Only somewhat more than one in ten mainly has friends from the majority population in the host country. Chinese and Vietnamese interviewees are clearly more ethnocentrically oriented in their socialization patterns.

Some nine out of every ten respondents consult doctor(s) irrespective of their ethnicity, and only one out of ten consult doctors of their own ethnicity or nationality or who speak their language. In response to the question as to in what shops the interviewees usually buy food, six out of ten answers 'predominantly in shops of natives'. Very few buy food predominantly in shops run by people of the same origin. Approximately one-third buys food in both types of shop. As far as membership of organizations can be identified, it appears that almost seven out of ten female migrant interviewees are not involved in organizations, two out of every ten are members of ethnically-identifiable organizations, and only one out of ten is involved in host-country organizations.

We did not directly address feelings of belonging, but we have some information on whether the interviewees feel at home in their host country, and what they like and dislike about the host country. The majority of women interviewed do feel very much or quite at home in their host country. Some two out of every ten women feel only a little bit or not at all at home. These feelings of not being '*chez soi*' are more prevalent among Chinese and Turkish migrant women.

With regard to what women like about their host country compared to their home country, the vast majority identified one, two or three aspects that are better addressed in their host country. Positive aspects mentioned cover a broad variety of advantages ranging from rights and security to health care, working and living conditions, social relations and even environmental issues.

5.4.5 Concerns about and experience of hostility and discrimination

We addressed the question of experienced or perceived hostility and forms of discrimination in the host society in the structured questionnaire. The reasons for discrimination were analysed for nine identity features: migrant, nationality, language, ethnic group, religion, race, gender, age and other. Answers about discrimination on the basis of those nine features were cumulated in a composite variable.

Concerns about hostility of natives towards migrants appear to be highly prevalent. Seven to eight out of every ten women in Germany, the Czech Republic and Austria are concerned

about natives' hostility. It is five to six out of every ten migrant women in Hungary, Slovenia, Finland and Estonia. The lowest shares are found in Poland, where only three out of ten respondents feel concern over natives' hostility towards migrants.

Personal experience of discrimination is also rather prevalent. Six to seven out of ten women in Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic and Hungary have felt personally discriminated against. One out of two women in Estonia, Finland and Poland had experienced some form of discrimination, whereas in Slovenia it is two out of five. According to ethnic group, Turkish, Romanian and Chinese interviewees report the highest prevalence of the experience of discrimination.

The experience of discrimination relates in all countries first and foremost to being a migrant. One's own nationality and language are the other two most prevalently-perceived causes of discrimination, followed by ethnicity, religion, gender, race and age. There is however some considerable variation between the host countries: The Czech Republic stands out for the items 'migrant' and 'nationality', Estonia for 'language' and Austria for 'ethnicity' and 'religion'.

Turkish women report the maximum number of discrimination factors: being a migrant, being Turkish and being Muslim. The Chinese perceive being discriminated for their language and race.

As may be expected, those women who felt discriminated against because of being a migrant feel at the same time that they are less at home in the host country.

The question "How secure do you feel in this country?" was not asked to specifically measure xenophobia. Three out of ten female migrant interviewees had mixed feelings about security, felt unsafe or had bad experiences; the others felt very secure or quite safe in the host country. Only four out of 214 respondents specifically related their feeling of insecurity to xenophobia. On the other hand, eleven respondents specified that the security level in the host country is clearly higher than in their country of origin.

5.4.6 Emancipation, old age and satisfaction with life

As far as emancipation is concerned, and more particularly concerning gender roles and task division, it appears that the views of female nationals and female migrants are largely identical. More particularly, a majority of both groups agrees with 'modern' statements about gender roles and task divisions, such as 'A job is a path to independence for women' and 'Working women are highly respected'. A more mixed picture exists when it comes to statements expressing 'traditional' views - e.g. for the statement 'Family life suffers when the

woman has a full-time job', nationals are somewhat more traditional, whereas for the statement 'What most women really want is a home and children', migrant women agree somewhat more frequently.

With regard to provision for old age and the expectations of nationals and migrant women for being taken care of in their old age, there seems to be no salient difference: A large majority in both population groups expects to be helped by a partner and/or children. However, a substantial section of migrant women is not preparing well for retirement and fears that they will not be able to support themselves in old age. Moreover, the preferred retirement age is lower among female migrants than among female nationals. Migrant women are at a considerably higher risk of having poor work-related benefits in old age.

When it comes to satisfaction with life, a large majority both of the female nationals, aged 20-59, and of migrant women, appear to be satisfied with most of the aspects that have been investigated. We also find identical associations between the satisfaction variables in both surveys and similar associations with some personal characteristics. In general, however, the satisfaction figures lie somewhat lower for migrants than for nationals. This is especially the case for household income.

5.4.7 Challenges for policies

The surveys undertaken in the early 2000s show that natives are concerned about the presence of foreigners and that negative populist reactions to migrants are pervasive. The actual number of foreigners does not appear to matter at all. Countries such as Poland, with 0.1% of foreigners, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia, where foreigners account for roughly 2 percent of the total population, Germany with 9 percent, and Estonia with 26 percent of foreigners, all have in common that some two-thirds of their nationals are of the opinion that there are too many foreigners in their country. In Finland, where foreigners account for just under 2 percent, one-quarter of natives think that there are too many foreigners. In Austria, where like in Germany foreigners account for some 9 percent of the population, one out of two natives thinks that there are too many.

Notwithstanding the existence of heterogeneity within as well as between the countries, negative attitudes about immigration generally prevail over positive ones among nationals. The opinion that immigrants are needed as contributors to the host society is not shared by any significant number of native women in any of the countries studied.

The prevailing population climate indicates that migrants are expected to find their socio-economic place in the host society more or less on their own, or else leave. Political

participation of foreigners in local elections, largely promoted in policy circles, especially at European level, is rejected by the overwhelming majority of natives.

Natives more often share views about threats and disadvantages that migrants bring, such as crime, terrorism and loss of jobs for natives. On the basis of the general population climate in the host countries, we can conclude that one of the pillars for the successful integration of immigrants, namely their acceptance en masse by natives, is remarkably fragile.

The population climate is however also underpinned by ambiguous attitudes of natives, as there seems to be a significant minority that sees negative consequences of migration but that also extends their gaze beyond the disadvantages of the presence of immigrants in their country. One-third to almost one-half of nationals – depending on the country - agrees that the presence of foreigners is positive as it allows for cultural exchange.

Immigrant women themselves express a more positive perception of natives than native women actually do. The majority of migrant women think that natives are helpful. They appear to see themselves through the eyes of natives in a more positive light than is shown by the popular reaction to migrants in our research.

This feeling that they are regarded in a positive light by natives nevertheless goes hand in hand with the fact that the majority of migrant women are concerned about hostility towards foreigners. This concern is also prevalent among those who have not personally experienced discrimination. One-quarter to one-third have experienced discrimination on the basis of being a migrant, having a different nationality or language. So here again, we identify a significant majority that is concerned about the generalised sense of hostility and a significant minority that has experienced discrimination personally.

On the basis of the selected key findings highlighted in this summary, and those stemming from our broader research-based reflections, we can conclude that there is a considerable need for policy adaptation and reform to address all citizens, natives and immigrants.

- The national population needs to be targeted by the migration policy discourses in view of sensibilisation, information and education as to the real magnitude of the presence of immigrants, their potential contribution to the host country and migrants' quest for permanence and integration.
- Measures which are proposed at top policy level (or which have already been introduced) need to be explained well. By way of example, benefits for the host

country of granting immigrants the right to vote in local elections, a right which is not favourably seen by the overwhelming majority of citizens, need to be explained well.

- There is a major need for early assistance to immigrants in general and women in particular, immediately on arrival in the host country, to shorten the painstaking integration period and to prevent lasting deskilling.
- Early assistance must include better guidance to access language courses and other skills to complement those with which immigrant women come and acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the basic values and norms of the host society. This quest comes from both sides – both from native and immigrant women.
- Immigrant women need to become quickly equipped with knowledge about the expectations of the host society regarding baseline norms and values, and civil and social rights (including the pension system), available to residents in the host country.

6 Viewpoints of experts: The focus group discussions

6.1 Methodology

The perils of focus group interviews are well known among social scientists who are acquainted with this method. On the one hand, the dynamic intra-group interactions that spontaneously occur during group discussions make it possible to better approach the issues in focus. Inspired by the responses given by the other participants, people consider the topic discussed more thoroughly than is usually the case during a face-to face interview. Getting engaged into discussion, they are also more likely to display their actual views, often suppressed by constraints of political correctness or social conformity.

On the other hand, focus group discussion is prone to various factors that may negatively impair the participants and the discussion itself. Therefore, special attention has been given to providing the country teams with detailed, easy-to-follow guidelines encompassing technical (i.e. selection of the venue, arrangement of the seats, recording equipment) organisational (selection and invitation of the participants, sample invitation letter, criteria for selection and responsibilities of the moderator and moderator's assistant) and methodological (draft scenario to be adapted to each country's specific and earlier findings) aspects of the implementation of this method. The guidelines discuss in details all stages of the focus group interview (small talks at the beginning, introducing participants and defining rules of the discussion, asking questions and probing the answers, summing up and closing the discussion), effective interviewing techniques (examples of probing and follow up questions), as well as clues to cope with dominant or disruptive participants. Finally, guiding principles of analysing and reporting narrative data obtained out of the focus group interviews were presented.

6.2 Results from the comparative analysis of national focus groups

This part of the FEMAGE-project compares and contrasts the ideas produced during the focus groups held in the national-level group with the stakeholders and representatives of migrant women. The focus group discussions (FGIs), although involving some sharing of research results, were designed first and foremost as forums of experts, national and local officials and practitioners invited to a multilateral dialogue. Transcripts of the lengthy national discussions (some lasted up to six hours) were analysed by the country teams and submitted to the Workpackage 4 coordinator in the form of the national reports. The report (Deliverable 12) compares and analyses national reports recapitulating most intensively discussed and recurring issues.

6.2.1 General perception of immigrants and immigration

Although the FGIs organised in each country had the same fundamental scenario, the problems discussed differed according to the actual type and scale of immigration occurring in the particular countries. This concerns the general perspective that frames the discourse on migration and influences attitudes towards immigrants – they may be significantly different between the countries though the share of immigrants in the native population or advancement of massive inflows may be similar.

For example, immigration is perceived in Austria as somehow obvious (though authorities avoid making clear statements on immigration in public), while in Germany immigration has only recently been acknowledged by the state and authorities. The general perception of the scale of immigration in Estonia and Slovenia is shaped by the idea of numerous foreigners flooding a small nation, up to the point of threatening its ethnic survival. Participants in Finland and the Czech Republic regarded the number of immigrants in their countries as low. In Poland, despite a relatively small stock of immigrants, especially in comparison to other countries of the project and to a large native population, certain stakeholders referred to immigration as if it were an already large-scale phenomenon with potential to further develop.

The debate in Austria, Estonia, Germany and to some extent in Slovenia was orientated towards foreign-origin population stocks and their integration, while in others it concentrated mostly on the inflow and its management. The “stocks” perspective can be found in the frequently-occurring themes of: generations of migrants, unemployment of immigrants or problems caused by their forming a large share of society. The “flows” perspective refers to statements concerning quotas, immigration policies and the need for particular groups of workers. Immigration is referred to in Poland as a future problem which is likely to resemble patterns observed in the Western EU countries. The discussion in Finland touched on the idea of immigration policy designed to respond to the needs of the economy.

When invited to discuss advantages and disadvantages commonly assigned to the presence of the immigrant population in their countries, the participants covered numerous aspects, though they had problems when it came to elaborating on disadvantages. The experts in Poland or Germany avoided the words ‘disadvantage’ or ‘cost’, preferring to say ‘minuses’, ‘problems’ or ‘troubles’. In Austria they named no disadvantages at all, whilst in Germany they only developed a debate over the headscarf, in which the cultural problems were soon counterbalanced by benefits. This reluctance might be related to the status of the persons invited as experts and people interested in immigration. Similarly, the cost-benefit approach was strongly opposed by participants in Austria, Estonia and Germany, while economic aspects were frequently referred to in the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Poland and

Slovenia. A differentiating discourse (“good and bad” nationalities of immigrants, highly-skilled and unskilled workers, hierarchy of the host society’s preferences) was traced in Hungary, Poland, Austria and Slovenia.

Speaking about the advantages of immigration unanimously leads to the labour market, where immigrants are most often perceived as a resource, manpower filling in for labour shortages (HU, PL, SL), workers keen to do the jobs the host population doesn’t want (CZ, PL) or holding specific qualifications for which there is a demand on the local labour market (PL, HU), highly-skilled immigrants believed to largely contribute to economic development (AT, PL), as well as nurses and carers for children and the elderly (AT, PL) rarely employed on a regular basis.

In Germany and Finland these views were not stated directly in this part of the FGI. A similar perception might however be derived from the sections devoted to the labour market. Interestingly, foreign manpower was not treated as an advantage in Estonia, even though immigrants form a large part of the country’s workforce. Other economic advantages for the host country were investment by migrants bringing in capital (the Vietnamese in Poland). It was noted in Austria that immigrants more and more often invest their earnings in Austria, and not in their countries of origin. A representative of the national government in Estonia pointed out that immigrants may help to build economic relations between the host country and their country of origin.

Another group of advantages were those related to the ageing of the host populations. In this context, immigrants were seen as providers of children, nursing and caring services in addition to extra contributions to the pension systems (AT, PL, the latter also in HU). A domain in which immigration was often perceived as advantageous was culture. ‘Cultural exchange’ and ‘cultural enrichment’ were often mentioned in Germany, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria and Poland. Interestingly, Austrian stakeholders named among advantages the upward mobility of the host population made possible thanks to the new waves of immigrants.

Surprisingly or not, the potential disadvantages of immigration affect the same spheres of social life, being almost a mirror reflection of the advantages. The first one is the labour market. Despite the fact that migration led to upward social mobility of natives, the fear of being pushed out of the labour market was identified in Austria as a considerable disadvantage.

The second sphere potentially negatively affected by the inflow of immigrants is social cohesion. This concern was identified above all in Estonia, Slovenia and Poland. The experts

pointed to a lack of social cohesion and problems and conflicts that might appear (EE, SL). One of the reasons for this is the language difference, which might be experienced at various levels. On the micro scale, numerous non-Polish children were described as a challenge that inexperienced teachers find difficult to face. On the macro level, the whole Estonian society is split into two groups that cannot understand each other, as Russian speakers and Estonian speakers “do not communicate with one another, and do not have a common vision”.

Immigrants in Estonia and Poland were associated with criminal activities: organised crime (mafia) and distribution of drugs. It is also a public belief that immigrants are responsible for the introduction of drugs and the appearance of HIV-AIDS. On a smaller scale, illegal activities were also associated with immigrants such as ‘Romanian mafia beggars’ in Hungary. Hungarian, Slovenian and Polish participants pointed to cultural threats. Polish participants mentioned “non-integrated groups” and “cultural enclaves”, while Slovenian ones referred to a generally-shared opinion that immigrants endanger natives’ cultural identity, while the state’s subsidies for the “maintenance of immigrants’ culture burdens the state budget”.

Articulation of disadvantages smoothly led to the issue of negative attitudes towards immigrants shared by natives. Participants in all “new immigration” countries explained these attitudes by pointing to a lack of knowledge and contacts with immigrants, who are not frequently found, especially outside the capital cities. This lack of personal experience is filled in by the media – with their negative, exaggerated image of immigrants found in the country, and in case of their scarcity dramatic images imported from abroad. Thus, hostility towards immigrants (far extending the traditional fear of them as strangers) can develop before they arrive en masse. This idea was mostly developed during the Czech FGI. The participants agreed unanimously that the media are the most powerful factor in forming an image of immigrants. In line with this, politicians have also been accused of provoking the negative attitudes of the public mainly by misinforming them and “playing the immigration card” in their electoral campaigns (AT; HU). Another factor explaining the results of the public opinion poll is the low level of education and low social strata of some respondents. Some experts argued that the more highly-educated members of society are less hostile or at least do not express their hostility, knowing what answers are socially required, and hence moderate their “private” opinions when interviewed “in public”.

6.2.2 Immigrants on the labour market

The overall attitudes towards the role played by migrants on local labour markets seem to be determined by the current economic situation, as well as by shortages of native labour. Migrant workers are defined as a vital necessity in the countries where certain sectors of the economy have become migrant-labour dependent – due either to low wages offered for unattractive and laborious jobs (Austria) or to an inflexible vocational education system (Slovenia). What is more, labour shortages and strong demand for immigrant workers in certain sectors of the economy are important factors that legitimise the presence of immigrant workers. What alarms the experts is in fact rather the risk of ‘disappearance’ of immigrant workers (for example foreign nurses taking care of elderly persons), rather than of ‘being flooded’ by them.

The vast supply of immigrant workers in Austria and Slovenia seems to petrify the status quo, feeding demand for a growing number of immigrants willing to undertake jobs that native workers find unattractive. However, the availability of migrant workers postpones the adjustment of the vocational education system and fuels structural inflation of wages paid for certain services.

What may contribute to this perception of immigrants’ role on these countries’ labour markets is a relatively low unemployment rate. In Austria, the overall unemployment rate is around 4%, while in Slovenia the unemployment among male immigrant workers is lower than among native men. These scores suggest that immigrant workers are rather complementary than competitive to the native labour force.

Interesting evidence confirming the strong interdependence between the overall economic situation and attitudes towards immigrant workers was provided by German panellists. According to them, “the guest worker image is still vivid in the minds of most Germans”. While immigrants were previously perceived as being needed in Germany because there was more work than the Germans themselves could do, now when the economic situation has changed and the work is gone, migrants are seen as a scapegoat: “Spoken at yellow press level, many people now think: If they [migrants] had left, the others would have work”.

In the countries where the shortages of labour have not yet been widely acknowledged, or where the hardships of a recent economic (FI) or post-transformation crisis (PL, HU, CZ) are still remembered, enthusiasm towards the active recruitment of immigrant workers is moderate, yet most of the experts regard this process as somehow unavoidable. The actual or anticipated labour shortages are perceived as another stage in the country’s economic development and the result of globalisation. With regard to this, the experience of the old EU countries was often referred to in the discussions in order to support potential scenarios of

local labour market developments and to prove the assumed effectiveness of certain policies (or the lack of thereof).

In Finland, where active immigration policy and promotion of labour migration have already been announced in the Government's Migration Policy Programme (2006), the experts were divided in their views. Some of them regarded the emphasis placed on labour-based immigration as unnecessary in a situation in which large numbers of existing immigrants as well as native Finns are unemployed. Conversely, the other experts agreed with the necessity of encouraging the inflow of skilled workers before the Finnish economy was hit by a severe labour shortage.

In line with the doubts raised by participants from Finnish trade unions were the arguments brought up by Hungarian panellists. Though (similarly to the situation in Poland) Hungary is experiencing an outflow of native workers who are subsequently replaced by immigrant ones, labour migration is not yet regarded either as a necessity or as a remedy for the current economic situation. The activation of the inactive Hungarian population instead of migrant labour recruitment was identified as an advisable policy measure.

The Czech employers participating in the focus group admitted that native workers are believed to be passive and immobile - unwilling to quit their hearth and home and move to another location to get a job. Immigrant workers, by contrast, are perceived as highly mobile and strongly motivated to work, and therefore competitive to the native labour force. Additionally, the low activity ratio of the local labour force was identified as a side-effect of the social benefit scheme, where the difference between the highest possible benefits and the lowest legal wage is minor and therefore demotivating for the Czech unemployed to take badly-paid jobs. Interestingly, Czech panellists formulated a converse relationship between migrants and the demand for typically migrant jobs, emphasising the supply side of foreign labour. Following this idea, immigrants do not fill the particular demand of the Czech labour market. It is the supply of migrants (particularly those with unclear residence status) who are desperately seeking any job that induces the creation of such poor-quality jobs. This is taken advantage by employers, who become able to benefit from offering immigrant workers labour-intensive but badly-paid jobs.

In Poland, the unexpected labour shortages, as well as a high demand for qualified manual workers in certain sectors (e.g. construction) are the palpable outcomes of Polish accession to the European Union. The phenomenon is a new experience for Poles, as the unemployment rate was high for over 15 years after the socio-economic transformation (reaching a level of 19% in early 2005). Though the necessity of attracting skilled migrant

workers to certain sectors has been recently identified, the experts' statements were somehow ambiguous. On the one hand (with strong advocacy of the labour sector) they took for granted the need to recruit carefully-defined quotas of missing specialists, whilst on the other hand they dwelled on the short-sighted perspective of Polish entrepreneurs who could easily fill their vacancies with Polish unemployed if they increased wages.

As shortages on the Polish labour market are growing (also as a result of inaccurate educational policy), employers are urged to increase salaries in certain sectors. In this regard, the inflow of migrant workers even to unskilled low-paid jobs becomes competitive to the Polish labour force as immigration stops the expected growth of salaries to an acceptable level: "Employers are forced to increase salaries because nobody wants to work, however if somebody comes they will not increase the salary, which will be a disadvantage for us too". Likewise, the recruitment of skilled migrant workers has been used as an argument in salary negotiations to blackmail Polish workers with the loss of their jobs (e.g. this argument has been raised against the Nurses Trade Union on strike).

Estonia was the only country where the foreign-origin population constitutes a regular part of the national labour force, employed mostly in industry. However, the Russian-speaking settlers who enjoyed a privileged position at the expense of the native population under the period of Soviet domination in Estonia suffer after Estonia's 1990s transformation from increased unemployment owing to the structural adjustment of the economy. The transition hit two major sectors of the Estonian economy particularly hard: agriculture and heavy industries, the latter being staffed primarily by immigrants from the former Soviet Union. As a result, the foreign-origin population has featured a systematically higher level of unemployment, sharing the general pattern of receiving countries in Europe.

Another specific feature of the Estonian labour market is a higher income differentiation in the immigrant population in comparison to the native population – they are overrepresented both in the lower as well as in the highest income groups. This fact is connected by the Estonian stakeholders with a greater involvement of the migrant population in a "grey" and "black" economy, as well as drug smuggling and distribution. Hence, in the case of Estonia illegal activities of immigrants concentrate – unusually – on the upper level of the income ladder.

6.2.3 Immigrants' education and deskilling

Worth noticing is an inconsistency in attitudes towards migrant workers. Those immigrants who are doing unskilled, badly-paid jobs are regarded as "troublesome" and competitive to native workers (though some of these migrants may have "two university diplomas"). At the

same time, highly-qualified migrants are perceived as a valuable resource that countries compete for. In the perception of Austrian and Polish panellists their countries lose this competition to other countries (the USA, the UK and Canada in the case of Austria, the Czech Republic in the case of Poland).

The reverse side of the recruitment of skilled workers is deskilling of those migrants who have already entered the country. In the view of the Austrian panellists, deskilling of immigrants is a very uneconomic strategy: Instead of using the high potential which can already be found within the country, qualified workers are searched for abroad. Disqualifying immigrants creates financial bottlenecks, thus increasing the danger of poverty and potentially leading to their financial dependence on the host state: "What we are doing is crazy from an economic perspective. We take skilled workers and turn them into unskilled workers in need who are then always hit by unemployment and who always have to receive social benefits". Migrants' access to the Austrian labour market is in fact very difficult, greatly due to xenophobic tendencies on the part of Austrian employers. Foreign-sounding names seem to deter employers in many cases. Migrants can in most cases participate in the labour market only via unskilled work (with no prospects of upward social mobility), even if they provide certain qualifications.

Czech experts' attitudes towards migrant deskilling were more liberal than those in Austria. They found temporary deskilling permissible, if it is linked with "a clear economic objective" of the migrant (like improvement of financial situation or establishing themselves in a new country). Migrants undertaking this type of job are regarded as economic opportunists, able to take autonomous decisions regarding allocation of their skills, time and efforts. However, the situation changes when the temporary stay turns into permanent residence. What for some people may be the best opportunity in a certain life situation is a source of frustration and despair for others.

Lengthy procedures of the recognition of professional education were identified as an important factor contributing to migrants' deskilling and their inferior position on the labour market. Austrian participants criticized discriminatory practices towards non EU-citizens, who are obliged to have their diplomas recognised even if they have graduated from European universities. Experts interviewed in Finland, where the recognition procedures are also lengthy and demanding, addressed the economic aspect of this procedure. For instance, in Finland recognition of a nurse's certificate (with some exceptions made for certain nationalities like Swedish) requires a language course and professional training. These entail three years' full-time educational enrolment that is paid for entirely by the Finnish budget and postpones the migrant's entrance onto the labour market. However, as pointed out by Czech

panellists, although recognition procedures in medical professions are often costly in terms of time, money and effort for the immigrant, they serve as a protection mechanism developed by a host state to minimise the risk of harm caused by lack of knowledge or inconsistency of university curricula.

6.2.4 Immigrants and the ageing society

From the EU perspective, immigrants could be treated as contributors of children correcting the demographic structure of ageing societies, and as flexible labour supplying the host countries' pension systems. Nevertheless, as pointed out by the participants, these benefits may not be as high as expected due to immigrants' declining fertility (convergence with the host population's rates) and their own ageing. Immigrant women will not necessarily have higher fertility than native women, especially those who are economically active and career-orientated, who contribute to the available workforce. If employed (unemployment and inactivity affects migrant women to a greater extent than men), they are usually paid less than men, and this impairs their future pension provision.

The pension earned by an immigrant, just as by any citizen, depends on his/her economic activity in the host country. In this respect, immigrants are in a precarious situation, as they often work illegally (and pay no contributions) or in poorly-paid jobs (paying low contributions). The negative impact of the type of employment was elaborated in Austria, Germany, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. Austrian researchers pointed out that immigrants often do not have a choice with regard to social contributions as "elderly care nurses, seasonal and other unqualified workers are often exempted from social benefits [schemes]".

A Slovenian official pointed to another situation – when immigrants choose to work on the black market in order to avoid tax, pension and social welfare deductions that decrease the wages gained in a legal manner. Czech law imposes a costly obligation on self-employed foreigners without permanent residence: health insurance is obligatory, but they have no access to the cheap public system, so they have to buy expensive commercial insurance. As foreigners' incomes are often low, this regulation results in their inability to pay into pension schemes, which are not obligatory.

A regular pension is not the only option available for the provision of financial means for old age. It was noticed in Hungary that Chinese immigrants invest in their children, assuming that in turn they will provide for them in future. A similar idea occurred in the Czech and Polish FGIs. This shows that the stakeholders perceive immigrants' future as safe and secure thanks to traditional cultural patterns. This assumption might however prove to be false if migrant families stay in the host countries and the second generation decides to follow European modes of behaviour.

Another problem is the provision of adequate care for old immigrants who have to cope with physical frailty, dependence and dementia or lose the ability to communicate in the host country's language. It was pointed out that losing this ability is a result of dementia and may happen independently of the level of fluency a person has achieved (FI). One response to this challenge is hiring multilingual personnel (FI), multicultural training for nursing staff (AT) or employing immigrants to care for their compatriots (DE).

6.2.5 The meaning of integration

Serious public debate on the actual meaning of integration is still more of a postulate than a fact. The debate on integration in Austria is narrowed down to the small groups of experts, while politicians and the general public tacitly accept the concept of different groups living side by side without influencing each other. In Poland, the idea of integration has been absorbed from the mainstream discourse of the European "old immigration" countries, yet it was planted in without an informed debate. For other "new immigration" countries of Central Europe, the experience gained by the "old immigration" countries constitutes an important source of knowledge that was frequently referred to through the country focus group discussions. Worthy of note is the impact of numerous twinning programs, know-how transfers and study visits paid by the stakeholders at national and local level from the "new migration" countries to their counterparts in "old immigration" countries such as the UK, Germany or France. Both the idea of the potential difficulties accompanying the integration of immigrants to be expected in the future, as well as opinions on the most effective and advisable policy measures, have been shaped thanks to them.

Asked to enumerate on decisive requirements for integration, the participants started with a reconstruction of "an average" citizen's perspective or referred to the "official" definitions quoted after legal regulations. All these expectations towards the settling immigrant focus on three aspects: migrants' economic self-sufficiency and contributions to common resources, observance of the host country's norms (both formal and informal) and, last but not least, migrants' willingness to establish interpersonal relationships with members of the host society, together with a certain respect for its cultural heritage and political system. Migrants' self-sufficiency and observance of the law encompass visible and measurable indicators, such as having regular residence status, command of the country's language, a stable job and adequate accommodation, as well as "obeying the law" (with particular emphasis on not committing crimes) and "adopting (local) habits". The very first type of migrants' involvement in the common resources that came to the stakeholders' mind are taxes paid out of a regular, legal job. It is taken for granted that "migrants (if legal) have a positive balance with the central funds" (HU). More elusive, yet still expected, are immigrants' efforts invested into

establishment of direct personal relationships with members of the host society, as well as becoming acquainted with its culture. Integration, according to Hungarian stakeholders, “is a process in which links are set up with society”. “Making friends” (FI), “having friends and acquaintances” (PL), “wider participation in society” (PL); “mixing” (HU), being “treated like buddies, getting along well with the boss, participating here and there” (AT) were stressed in many countries as an important aspect of the integration process.

This simplistic understanding of migrants’ integration shared by general public opinion could be summed up with two basic wishes addressed by the majority to the minority groups: “make us no trouble with your presence” and “give us something of yourself”. The stakeholders criticized this unbalanced attitude, emphasizing the mutual and interactive nature of the process. They also disapproved of the public administration’s standpoint which reduces the complexity of this process to a single act of acquiring the host country’s citizenship.

Integration should not presume one-sided adjustment to the majority group, but it is “an interactive” process “where both the host society and the migrants have to make an effort to make it happen” (AT). However, the low level of European societies’ inclusiveness poses a major challenge for integration. The Austrian experts pointed out that the rejection and discrimination experienced by the person who is permanently reminded of being ‘different’ and ‘alien’ in the host country may severely impair his/her willingness to integrate, thereby fostering “cultural conservatism”.

The problem is likely to grow, as the distance towards immigrants displayed by the majority group results in a lack of direct contact between majority and minority groups. Apart from the small margin of instrumental relationships (e.g. shopping in a migrant-owned grocery shop, employing a migrant nurse or child minder), mutual contacts are rather scarce and superficial, so that the platform for individual and group integration is missing. “I have a funny question: who will integrate the Yugoslavian cleaning lady - the Turkish colleague or the other way round?” asked one of the Austrian stakeholders. Yet the Estonian example of an Ethiopian immigrant who learnt Russian instead of Estonian and became “a Russified black person” proves that the integration process may be founded on cultural values alternative to those shared by the host society.

What was clearly articulated in the “old immigration” countries was the responsibility of the receiving country towards immigrants. In countries where the inflow of migrants is a relatively recent phenomenon, more stress was put on the need to find a balance between the immigrants’ entitlements and their duties. Worthy of note is an uneasiness of “speaking loud”

about migrants' duties that was mentioned by one of the Finnish panellists. It seems that discussing migrants' duties and obligations in public is a rather sensitive topic, particularly in the context of humanitarian migration. This issue was thoroughly discussed in Finland, where immigrants' dependence on the social benefits systems is regarded as a major obstacle to successful integration and a factor fostering negative attitudes towards immigrants. Also in Poland and Slovenia, the stakeholders discussed the potential tensions that could arise if the general public became aware of the actual amount of entitlements transferred to selected types of migrants.

Participation by migrant women in the focus group discussions shed light on the integration process as seen from the immigrants' perspective. Two panellists with an immigrant background claimed with regard to their personal experiences that successful integration is possible, provided that the migrant herself is "really determined" (AT, DE). However, when the discussion went further it appeared that despite personal determination, an impressive command of the host country language and "adaptation to all customs, traditions and practices of the immigration country", some migrant women still feel a sense of distance from members of the host society. The gap between "us" and "you" is very persistent and works as a "Teflon coating" that tacitly but inevitably separates a newcomer from the surrounding society (FI). Also in Poland, the migrant participant confused the whole group with her statement made when she was introducing herself to the group: "Despite the fact that I don't have major language problems, or social problems, I have not integrated with the Polish society at all (...) I simply feel like a stranger, I don't know why..." Asked to explain what kind of obstacles prevents her from completing the integration process, she referred to a lack of cultural skills that could be obtained only through a long-lasting socialization process. She feels alienated, kept outside "the social circles" and punished for her poor command of cultural codes. These personal disclosures addressed a difficult problem. The more the immigrant is advanced in his/her integration process, the more painful becomes the sense of distance from the host society members experienced. Yet letting migrants into "social circles" is a lengthy process that takes place on the micro level of interpersonal relations that could be fostered by policy measures only to a limited extent.

The participants however considered some integration measures that could be easily implemented. The command of a country's language is regarded as a prerequisite for migrants' self-sufficiency and establishing links with a host society. As was pointed out by the Finnish experts, providing immigrants with language courses may be "a tricky issue". As underlined in this discussion, full-time language courses may isolate the immigrant from "normal life" and "natural contacts" within a local community, which are mostly established at the workplace. The rising demand for labour had created a situation in Finland in which

companies employ migrant workers with a poor command of Finnish/Swedish and arrange the language courses simultaneously with full occupational involvement (not as a full-time course preceding entrance to the labour market). What emerges from Estonian experiences is that the language courses should not be entirely covered by the state's budget, as some financial contribution (about 1/3 of the total cost) made on the migrant's side has a significant motivational effect. The Austrian stakeholders hold a different view – according to them language courses should not only be free of charge but also orientated towards migrants' social and working conditions (i.e. adjusted to the special needs of different occupational groups), as well as towards the knowledge of German that has already been achieved. Securing day care for migrant children during lessons is a trivial but effective measure for greater enrolment of migrant women.

Discussion participants in all countries unanimously agreed that early inclusion in the labour market greatly facilitates the process of integration. It also limits the danger of migrants' long-lasting dependence on social welfare payments. This is a particularly vital issue in welfare states, where on the one hand the local population is oversensitive about cases of migrants "abusing" the social policy system, while on the other hand easily-accessible social benefits may demotivate migrants to toil for a meagre salary. As was commented by one of the Finnish participants, "the biggest competitor" for migrant employees "is not another firm, but Finnish social welfare".

This is in line with another postulate for greater visibility of successfully-integrated migrants, which is highly important both to convince the majority population that immigrants' presence is beneficial to society as a whole, as well as to provide immigrants with positive examples of upward mobility. As was raised by the Austrian panellist, "the positive examples, (...)idols [who] can be a sportsman, artist or scientist to show that it is not a prefixed role to do unskilled work as a migrant" can act as role models for the next generations and contribute to peaceful co-existence without the demand for assimilation. Equal importance attaches to the publication of examples of "average" immigrants pursuing their professional careers outside the secondary labour market. For that reason, some NGO representatives postulated that "all ethnic groups should be represented in all employment sectors" (DE), including in the public services, the media or as police officers, in proportion to their number among the general population (AT).

Last but not least, "practitioners" representing both the authorities and the NGOs emphasized the need for an individual approach to immigrants within available integration measures. A common misconception held on the host society side is that of approaching immigrants as a homogeneous group, while in fact they are highly heterogeneous. In

comparison to state-run integration programmes, NGOs can offer programs that are much more flexible and thus effective in responding to individual immigrants' integrative needs. Additionally, NGOs offer another valuable resource – volunteers willing to assist immigrants when they acclimatise in their new surroundings and responding to “the sphere of emotions” (CZ). Despite its positive input, NGOs working in this field must struggle with structural barriers, of which the most difficult to overcome is the temporary nature of “project money” (FI, CZ). “When the project starts to work properly, it already has to finish” (FI).

6.2.6 Female immigrants

Analysis of the focus group discussions also shed light on the tacit assumptions assigned to the figure of ‘an immigrant woman’. The most important feature of migrant women as perceived by the experts is their dependence. The discussion of the female experience of migration focused entirely on women following their husbands and arriving in the framework of family migration. Not only is the migrant woman dependent on her husband, but contrary to male immigrants, who are often single or have left their children at home, she is also under the pressure of having to provide for her children, either in the sending or in the host country. A typical ‘migrant mother’ is framed as a wife of a male labour migrant (FI, AT, DE), a temporary migrant worker earning money for her children (CZ) or a refugee/asylum-seeker (FI, PL, SL). A good example of the one-sidedness of this image is the fact that while Finnish participants concentrated on a Muslim married woman with a couple of children, the majority of immigrant women in Finland come from the ex-Soviet Union and are either single or married to a Finn. In Poland, the proposed explanations for a similarly one-sided picture included looking from the participants' own perspective (young childless participants were in a minority) and following the archetypal image of a self-sacrificing mother which is strongly rooted in Polish culture.

The dependence ascribed to female migrants was largely a consequence of the presupposition of family migration, usually joining a husband who had migrated before. In the case of migrant women, a large family was not presented as a source of support, but rather as a burden. According to the Austrian, Czech and Finnish FGI participants, female migrants who follow their husbands (or are even forced to join them) become dependent on them and/or isolated by them from the host society. This dependence is based on three factors: financial situation, legal status and knowledge of the host country language. The lack of an income results mainly from women's economic passivity induced by cultural patterns, for example “Arab men do not want their women to work in the host society” (HU). Yet even if the woman is willing to work, her rights are limited. In many countries, a foreigner who joined an immigrant spouse on the basis of family re-unification is not allowed to work, at least at

the beginning of residence in the new country. In practice, this law is not gender neutral, as it is usually women who come as followers.

In the case of family re-unification, women are legally subordinated to their partners because the residence permit of the dependent migrant may become invalid if the marriage is dissolved. This creates a threat for victims of domestic violence, who become trapped in the relationship, afraid of being forced to leave the host country (other problems may follow, such as separation from children and stigmatisation of “a disobedient wife” in the sending society).

The third factor making immigrant women dependent on husbands is knowledge of the host country’s language. The first person to come starts learning earlier and gains an advantage over the follower. As a result, the second migrant, usually the woman, becomes passive and needs help in contacts with all institutions (schools, social assistance, health care). Such language dependence becomes a real threat if a woman needs help and protection from her husband, but cannot obtain them due to inability to contact any institution on her own. Another threat is linked to reproductive health – a sphere in which a woman sometimes needs help “behind the back” of her husband (for example gynaecological assistance with birth control or sexually-transmitted diseases).

The above-described dependence seems intrinsic to the situation of a male migrant worker and a female follower. Relations might however change among refugees and asylum-seekers. It was noticed in the Czech Republic and Slovenia that women are sometimes more active in such situations. According to a Slovenian government expert, this was the case with Bosnian women who had arrived in Slovenia during the war. It was explained in the Czech FGI by the fact that placement in a refugee camp undermines a man’s role as breadwinner, while women cope with it better. It was pointed out in Poland that women manage the situation better when they are alone. It is worth noting that marrying a citizen of a host country may also end up with social isolation and subordination to husbands who “fetch wives, particularly from the Far East. [These migrant wives] often do not even have a chance to go out and search for information. They are kept at home on purpose.” (F1).

Interestingly, the views on the uniqueness of female migrant experiences have been split among the countries. In certain countries (PL, CZ), the (mostly female) panellists strongly objected to the statement that migrant women suffer from double discrimination or from a particularly unfavourable position. In their opinion, immigrant women simply suffer from the same problems and barriers as native ones. “It is a problem of women, not of immigrants, but simply of women (PL); they encounter the same problems as we do; they are discriminated against in the same way” (PL). This uniformity of female experience was mostly underlined in

relation to the labour market (Slovenia: childbearing plans as a barrier in finding employment), child care (The Czech Republic: availability of part-time employment to be combined with child care) and future old-age pension (Germany: native women also having low pensions). Some experts however noted that although “the problems of migrant women copy the problems of all women in Czech society”, they are “monstrously large”. The deepest sense of empathy and compassion with migrant women was developed by the Finish panellists (all of whom were women), who addressed another obstacle often faced by immigrant women: “Women’s tendency to be unsupportive towards their female colleagues”.

Being “unsupportive” or disregarding the difficulties experienced by immigrant women are only some facets of the complex process of the transformation of gender roles. Native women in rapidly-Westernising Central and Eastern European societies no longer want to fulfil their traditional roles. The availability of immigrant carers and housekeepers is an advantage for them. The message from the host society’s experts is clear: Immigrant women are welcomed and needed, but only in traditionally-female positions. Professional careers and high posts for women are scarce, native women are striving to get them and are not going to allow immigrant women to compete. Should these intuitions be true on a larger scale, it would be another factor diminishing the chances of immigrant women to succeed on the host countries’ primary labour markets.

6.3 The European focus group report – the key issues

6.3.1 Aim and organisation of the European focus group

The framework

The focus group is conceptualised as a policy deliberation about obstacles and requirements for effective social integration and emancipation of female immigrants in European societies.

The European focus group brought together relevant actors at European level to discuss and reflect on some of the key issues addressed in the FEMAGE research project. Participants were selected in view of their expertise, interest and involvement in immigration and integration issues and policy formulation, in particular from a gender perspective.

One of the specific aims of the European focus group is to deliberate on the desirability and feasibility of the European institutions – the European Parliament, the European Commission, European NGOs - and women who are migrants themselves and are active at transnational and international level, to achieve a greater impact in the formulation and

implementation of gender-friendly immigration and integration policies at all levels of governance.

Composition of the Focus group

Achieving a diversified and pluralistic composition was not an easy task, not because of a lack of interest on the part of the persons or organisations active at European level, but because of their heavily-loaded agenda.

The European focus group included one Member of the European Parliament, one head of the cabinet of a member of the European Parliament, one staff member of the cabinet of a European Parliamentarian, one secretary-general, one president, and one policy migration officer from women's or migrant women's non-governmental organisations, one representative of a Chamber of Commerce, one employer of migrant women third country-national, one journalist from a third country, and one policy analyst from a European think-tank. The group consisted of one man and nine women, most of whom are actually migrant women.

Synopsis of the key findings of the FEMAGE project

The findings of the surveys of female third-country nationals residing in each of the eight EU countries and from the survey among nationals regarding migration matters were summarized. This synopsis was sent to the focus group participants prior to the meeting.

Organisation of the meeting

The European focus group was organized in Brussels in a conference room of a hotel, located close to the European Institutions.

The meeting was held on 3 October 2007 and lasted from 2 pm to 6 pm. The meeting was moderated by Prof. Dr. R. Cliquet, on behalf of PSPC.

The discussions were recorded, transcribed and anonymised.

Agenda of the meeting and issues for reflection and debate

The agenda of the meeting included a list of questions that were considered relevant to the debate. These were sent to the participants in advance so that they could reflect on them. The questions are more a starting point from which further discussion, and further questions, could develop. They are:

- In your view, how can governments and European Institutions best deal with the predominant or widely-spread negative attitudes towards immigrants?
- In your view, what are the advantages of immigration for our societies?
- In your view, what are the most important elements for successful integration of female migrants? Which skills do they need to have?
- In your view, are there gender-specific measures to facilitate integration of women migrants?
- From your personal experience and work, how have you experienced discrimination and exploitation of female immigrants?
- How to assist women who are experiencing discrimination and exploitation?
- How can deskilling be prevented or avoided?
- How can national and European institutions facilitate access to social protection and especially pension rights for migrant women?
- In your view, should European Institutions such as Parliament and the EC have a stronger role in defining the framework of immigration policies?

The meeting started with a brief presentation by Dr. D. Avramov, director of PSPC, about the key results of the FEMAGE project, which included the findings from the surveys on the nationals, findings from the interviews of immigrant women, and a discussion of the policy implications of the research.

6.3.2 Participants' comments on the FEMAGE project in general

The brief presentation of the key findings was followed by a series of questions about notions and concepts used, research methods and the choice of immigrant women. These questions were dealt with in a parsimonious way during the meeting so that the time could largely be used for the discussions of the policy dimensions, rather than research issues per se.

Several suggestions could be deduced from the discussions concerning further research: Extension of the FEMAGE type of research on representative samples of immigrant women; Given the variation between the attitudes and experiences of different ethnicities, inclusion of other immigrant ethnicities, e.g. North Africans, Sub-Saharan Africans; inclusion of migrants within the EU, more particularly migrants from the new Member States to the old Member States; comparative research on Roma; extension of the FEMAGE approach to second- and third-generation people of foreign ethnic origin; extension of research to illegal migrants; the concept, conditions and policy implications of circular migration. The choice of the survey

methodology – a gender-neutral or feminist approach may be expected to impact the extent to which gender aspects are captured.

6.3.3 Fear of foreigners

There is considerable prejudice about migration, which is opportunistically exploited by populist parties.

One participant stressed that a number of mixed messages are coming from governments, political parties and the media. Messages about the need to reinforce border controls and to stop migrants, and those about the need for economic migrants, and how we should take the right approach, do not seem to fit together. They create a lot of confusion, also at European level.

It was underlined that discussions on migration are too often mixed with crime-related issues and security issues inside the EU. This is, in recent years, the most problematic message which is sustained through the national governments and European Institutions as well. This message about the interweaving between migration and crime is also used by some policy circles as a kind of excuse for not proceeding with the enlargement policy of the European Union.

It was stressed in terms of policy conclusions that there needs to be greater clarity at state level as to how immigration is perceived and how the message is communicated to the population. It is not sufficient to acknowledge that we need jobs, that we need somebody to do them, and to communicate the message that we predominantly need somebody to do the 'dirty jobs' or to compensate for demand in professions in which governments have underinvested in the past.

The majority of participants were in agreement that a coherent migration policy and clarity about the overall role of immigrants in European societies is needed at all levels of government, also in order to counter people's fears. All too often, public authorities, as well as political parties and the media, send out mixed messages about the need for immigrants, or even inflame xenophobic reactions by associating the sense of socio-economic and personal insecurity with the presence of foreigners.

It was possible to emphasise the broader societal roles and contributions made by immigrant groups, which go beyond just meeting (temporary) labour needs. New issues in the migration debate which are coming to the policy fore, such as the blue card, circular migration, the

need for attracting highly-skilled workers, need to be addressed together with 'old' issues, such as the recruitment of unskilled labour.

6.3.4 Immigrant women – the integration issues

Heterogeneity of the female immigrant population

Several participants underlined that immigrants, and in particular women migrants, form a quite heterogeneous group. For policy deliberations, and policy formation, it is important to distinguish between the different ethnic groups and types of immigrants. This is important because in addition to general integration policies, specific measures might need to be tailored for a variety of situations in which immigrant women find themselves.

First of all, there is immigration from different countries, but there are also different types of immigrants within the migrant ethnicities, such as documented and undocumented migrants, permanent and temporary or seasonal migrants, and recently also circular migrants. Also immigrants' legal status, and obviously their educational level – skilled or unskilled – are of great importance.

According to the country of origin, we have to distinguish between immigrants from third countries and migrants from Eastern Europe to Western Europe, or in even more general terms migrants within the EU. Differences also exist between immigrants from non-EU Eastern Europe into the new Member States and the old Member States. A major difference also exists between immigrants from 'developing' countries and countries such as the US, Canada and Japan.

The specific national context and legislation also has to be taken into consideration, especially differences in accessing working and residence rights, which may define the type of migrant situation by default.

Little is known about the expected prevalence, characteristics and complications of the new concept of circular migration – especially in Europe with its considerable linguistic differentiation – and its policy implications. Concern was expressed about the situation of families in circular migration.

Biographies of female immigrants

The gender aspects of migration are clearly illustrated in the biographies recorded by the FEMAGE project and endorsed by the participants' experience. One participant underlined that migration is a completely different experience for women and men. Furthermore, "You

see the men on the corners of the streets, you don't see the women, and the question is what happens behind closed doors". There is a need for gender-specific policies towards migrant workers and non-workers.

Immigration to the West implies for many immigrants considerable changes in traditional family roles, both for men and for women. Even children of migrant parents, growing up in the host society, are facing problems of cultural identity, and struggle with their integration and social roles in the family and society.

It appears from the FEMAGE interviews with immigrant women and experience of several participants that most migrant women strive for permanence for themselves, but also because of the presence of (integrated) children (and grandchildren) in the host country. Moreover, even when migrant women want to go back, e.g. in old age, it appears difficult to return to the country of origin for a variety of reasons.

The biographies of migrant women affect their daughters' lives. The specific problems for girls, which were stressed by one of the participants, relate to the fact that they have a different emancipation process than their mothers. Even if they are born in the host country or have acquired its nationality, they are still treated as immigrants. So the second generation is searching for a bi-cultural identity.

The integration of female immigrants

There is general agreement that migrants should master the language of the host society, and should be given opportunities to learn it. Many migrants apparently experienced difficulties in gaining language proficiency because of the absence of sufficient public support for language courses for foreigners. The obstacles are pervasive, in particular when women have to combine job responsibilities, child care and taking language courses, or when they are discouraged or even prevented by their spouses and/or family members.

One participant stressed that the cost of these courses is quite prohibitive in some countries. Language courses cost a lot of money, and this cost excludes some people from the opportunity to become a citizen. Policy choices can also contribute to creating or deepening the stratification of immigrants. By way of example, Japanese migrants are exempted from these Dutch programs presumably because they come to the Netherlands with enough knowledge.

The question of whether women should be obliged to take up language courses upon arrival was saliently addressed by one participant. Although forcing people to take classes raises several perplexities, it can be a facilitating factor especially for women from more traditional

families to become more involved in society in their own right. This is relevant because in some instances women are locked up at home with children, and are not even allowed to learn the language. A question arises as to what a society can/should do in such situations.

The participant also argued in favour of a more general gender-specific policy for all women, but for migrant women in particular, to also facilitate participation in the labour market. If native women express the need for flexible work arrangements, the issue of flexible work for migrant women is surely even more important, especially if immigrant women are assigned more traditional gender roles in their families.

Integration has different meanings for different social actors. The importance of access to education, work, health services, and to social protection in general, forms the core around which there is agreement in policy circles.

The FEMAGE finding that immigrant women from some ethnic communities can be highly entrepreneurial and still remain separated from the dominant population was singled out. Thus, there is not necessarily a cause-and-effect relation between employment and broader social participation.

Integration includes more than language and work (and work-related benefits). There are things that are broader and harder to define. One participant stressed that integration relates to overall participation in society and includes contributing to that society, beyond just having a job or a career. Social participation is of crucial importance, more in particular for women, many of whom, at least in particular ethnic groups, are isolated if not secluded within their own families, even when they perform (casual) paid work.

The issue of integration as emancipation was also mentioned. The heterogeneity of the migrant population, as it is translated into a need for support, was saliently described by a woman who is active at grassroots level "We support immigrant girls and women. Their needs are very different. Sometimes we support them as women, sometimes as mothers, sometimes as immigrants. We have different projects to support them on their way to emancipation or integration. That is not always the same thing. Sometimes emancipation within their own ethnic group is necessary, sometimes we have projects with their husbands to prepare the ground and enable the integration process."

The focus group also dwelled on the integration problems faced by second-generation girls, who still appear to struggle with their bi-cultural background and identity, and as such with their functioning in the host society. Girls from more traditional families are generally better educated than their mothers (and brothers); they want to work and to pursue a career, but

this often gives them problems in their own ethnic community and family. They want individual integration and emancipation, but they are also looking for their ethnic identity, which differs from that of their mothers, as was stressed by one participant who works with girls and young women.

The socio-economic position of female immigrants

The salient deskilling or status loss experienced by many immigrant women was generally perceived as both an individual and a social problem.

There was general recognition that many immigrant women are also hampered in their work or career by a lack of legal recognition of their diplomas, which are often undervalued by employers.

Although it was recognized that there are initiatives at European level, participants stressed that the greatest opposition comes from the Member States which actually do not want to recognize diplomas. Furthermore, some professions are very closed and resist any competition coming from other countries.

The impact of the type of legal status granted to a spouse in some European countries in which the legal status of immigrant women is dependent on continued marriage, and in which they are not allowed to work, was assessed as counterproductive. This double dependency on a husband and on limited rights creates problems, not just for integration but also for the protection of women and their emancipation.

Hostility towards and discrimination against immigrants

It is generally recognised that xenophobia and discriminating practices are widespread phenomena.

There are numerous areas where we observe inter-group competition that gives rise to discriminative practices. However, it was noted that there is also competition within immigrant groups. It was observed that integrated migrants may be opposed to further immigration even from their own country of origin because of fear of intra-ethnic competition. One participant referred to a survey among Turkish students that showed that they opposed more immigration from Turkey.

It was recognized that national governments, regional authorities, the social partners and the European Institutions need to discuss more and to give a central role to the gender dimension in their policies in general, and regarding immigration in particular.

The role of the European Parliament, and especially the activity of the women's committee, via reports and the public hearing of Member States and third countries regarding the phenomenon of immigration of women in the EU today, was acknowledged and appreciated. One participant reported how the subject of women's immigration is very sensitive, and it was not easy to find a consensus in the plenary of Parliament because there are different policies in every Member State, and there are different views and ways to accept women from third countries. At the same time, it is difficult for a woman migrant coming to the EU to integrate in the European system. The common principle was accepted by different political groups – that of addressing integration as a two-way process. That means that European citizens have to respect female immigrants, but at the same time that female immigrants have to acquire knowledge and understand the fundamental principles and values of their host country.

Old-age provision of female immigrants

The findings of the FEMAGE project, namely that many migrant women are not preparing well, or do not expect a secure pension, is a serious problem, especially since many are working either in weak economic sectors, or in the grey (black) economy. Many lack appropriate knowledge about the opportunities and the necessity of preparing for a pension.

Whereas it was acknowledged that many immigrants develop their private coping strategies, it was stressed that systemic policies are needed. The participants also addressed the issue of the growing need for portability of pension rights in this context, i.e. taking along pension rights and social benefits from one country to another, in cases of both longer-term and seasonal and circular migration.

6.3.5 The role of policies and actors

It is only since the late 1990s that some sense of urgency for integration policies has appeared at European level. It is only recently that a number of countries started dealing more comprehensively with migration policies and the integration of immigrants.

There is general agreement among focus group participants that European Institutions such as Parliament and the EC should have a stronger role in defining the framework for immigration policies. As was stressed by one participant, they have to deal with it because Europe is increasingly going to need immigration in the decades to come. The question is not whether we will receive immigrants, but how well we will receive them and help them to integrate. According to this participant, integration policy is essential, and it must be linked to migration, irrespective of the ways people arrive, namely via legal or illegal channels.

It was remarked that we now have discussions about the blue card, and seasonal migration. This debate is extremely difficult at European level. The idea of the blue card and the need for highly-skilled workers is a little bit more acceptable now than a few years ago because there is greater awareness that Europe needs skilled immigrants. But there is the question of the unskilled workers that are also needed. That is still a no-go area at European level.

Another participant stressed that the idea of circular migration as a way to attract highly-skilled workers to Europe in professions in which there is a shortage in Europe, is more a philosophy than a policy. The idea that immigrants may move within the EU from one country to another, go back to their country of origin or to a third country, and then come back to the EU, is appealing, but ways of putting it into practice are quite vague and it is very difficult to see how that will work given the failure of temporary migration programs in the past. How do you deal with families in circular migration? How do you deal with pension-related issues? What if you pay taxes and social welfare contributions which you cannot then take with you? If you are a circular migrant, arriving and leaving, arriving and leaving, you may never get to have certain rights of residence and certain rights of different social welfare systems. All these implications need to be thoroughly investigated.

There is general agreement that the European Institutions play an important role in defining and developing common policies and practices regarding immigration and integration matters, more particularly because the national legislations and practices are so different and frequently cause inequalities.

The importance of integration is unanimously recognized. However, several participants stressed the need to also define integration more comprehensively at European level.

There is general agreement that national integration policies should include much more than providing affordable language courses. They should facilitate and stimulate social integration in general. Immigrant women and their families should be informed of and become acquainted with the general societal values and norms of their host country, more particularly concerning gender equality and the individual rights of women to study, work, choose a partner, marry, divorce, have children and participate in the social life of the host society.

There is general agreement that migrants should be closely involved in the conceptualisation and implementation of integration policies and measures. They should be present, as in this focus group, and should be afforded the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process, since they have knowledge and experience of the challenges and difficulties and opportunities they are facing. This is particularly important for female immigrants, given the specific living conditions they experience.

Indeed, a migrant woman, a third-country national, summarised her perception of challenges and responsibilities so saliently: "... how to put all the issues together: deskilling, immigrants getting a job, pensions? To tackle the pension issues, the problem should be dealt with in the beginning starting with access to jobs and recognizing diplomas. In this respect, a large part of the integration of migrants is also a responsibility of the host country and its institutions. If you say that immigrants should work, but their diplomas are not recognized, how can they perform well? How can immigrants cope if they have a large number of language schools from which to choose, but the courses are unaffordable? And then there are the bilateral relations between countries for recognizing diplomas, social protection, and pension rights... these are all issues beyond the control of individual immigrants. We should not focus only on the migrants themselves and forget the role of the host country. The biggest responsibility for their choices are in the hands of immigrant women themselves, it is their life after all, but let's not forget the responsibility of the host society".

7 Policy implications and recommendations

7.1 Methodology

To fulfil our aim, i.e. to produce the *Comprehensive policy implication and recommendation report*, which can be regarded as the most important output from the project, we will be building up information gradually from our research deliverables produced during the overall research activities. As each research deliverable will contain policy implementations and recommendations, the policy recommendations report will be developed as a synthesis of the following five sets of reports and documents:

1. The impact of population ageing on the general employment market, on female activity and the service economy and the place of female immigrants as a significant human resource;
2. The living conditions, migration history and viewpoints of female third-country nationals resident in eight EU countries;
3. The perceptions, attitudes and expectations of nationals of the eight EU countries regarding immigration and the integration of immigrants;
4. The comparison of the viewpoints of female immigrants and nationals regarding integration policies;
5. The comparison of the deliberation of key stakeholders at national and EU level regarding FEMAGE findings and future integration policies.

The synthesis Workpackage 5 report utilises partners' national documents and reports, and comes out with policy suggestions on overcoming national boundaries.

7.2 Female migrants in ageing European societies – Policy-relevant implications of the FEMAGE project

7.2.1 Aim of the deliverable and methodology of the research

Policy implications and recommendations with regard to female immigration and integration are elaborated on the basis of the findings from the FEMAGE project, in which eight EU countries participated (Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia). A comparative analysis of the results of different project work packages was used for this purpose: quantitative survey among national populations, qualitative interviews among immigrant women, and focus groups with the key stakeholders.

These results were completed by the desk review of literature and demographic analysis and generated knowledge concerning the societal needs for immigrants and integration of immigrant women in ageing societies; perceptions of immigrants among native European populations; profiles, living conditions and migration histories of female third-country nationals; perceptions of immigration by the key policy stakeholders both at national and EU level. The long-term and broader societal costs and benefits of particular and alternative policy options have however not yet been analysed.

7.2.2 Population ageing

The population of the European Union has gone through the second demographic transition that brought about many demographic changes in its countries. One of its most visible effects was the fall in the total fertility rate in most EU countries to well below the population replacement level. The fall in the fertility rate has been accompanied by rising life expectancy and by declining mortality. All these changes have brought about the dynamic age-structural transition (population ageing) now faced by the EU, with well-known consequences: the decrease in the number of people of economically-active age, the ageing of the labour force, the increase in the number of the elderly dependent on pension schemes, the increase in the number of the elderly seeking social and health care services.

7.2.3 Can replacement migration work?

Immigration is often discussed as a possible solution to counter low fertility and population ageing. The reasons for this are various: Immigrants are usually considered to have higher fertility rates than the domestic population; they can represent an important source of much needed manpower since they usually come young and ready to enter the labour market, and they often provide care that is indispensable for the proper functioning of an ageing society.

It is however clear from the demographic analyses that although immigration can be an important element of demographic development, its role is limited. Our study showed that female immigrants who often have to give up or restrict child bearing due to high migration and integration costs, and who are in a similar situation to native women in terms of reconciling family and work/career, do not have (much) higher fertility than natives. Moreover, immigrants themselves age and become a part of the elderly and economically-dependent population, and can therefore only postpone the whole problem of the sustainability of the host countries' social systems. Also, other existing data on replacement migration indicate quite clearly that immigration as a remedy to the problems caused by population decline can work only in the short run, and that its impact is limited to filling labour shortages in particular regions and/or particular sectors of the economy.

7.2.4 The need for immigrants

The native populations in the eight countries participating in the project are not very inclined towards the idea of further immigration. The majority of natives do not share the view that immigrants are needed because of the demographic development and labour shortages or for cultural enrichment. This leads us to conclude that the public should first learn more about the negative consequences of population ageing, and that secondly they should be better informed about the benefits that immigration brings about, not only in economic terms but also in other domains, and thirdly, they should be always addressed when political measures are taken concerning immigration and the integration of immigrants. All these measures need to be explained to them well.

The focus group participants in most FEMAGE countries expressed the need for labour immigrants. The only country where further labour immigration was not considered to be necessary was Estonia. According to the stakeholders, the groups that are needed are the following: manpower in general that would compensate for labour shortages, workers keen to do the jobs the host population does not want to do any more, people with specific qualifications (e.g. English teachers or qualified construction workers), students, highly-skilled immigrants, and finally nurses and carers for children and the elderly. They stressed that the EU must compete for foreign labour with other developed regions of the world to meet the needs of its economy. Therefore, it is very important to think over EU immigration, as well as integration policy, so that it provides a secure legal status and enables successful integration for those who are admitted.

Whilst encouraging immigration of labour immigrants and experts in the future, we should not forget the existing, underutilized labour force in the country – immigrants who have already integrated at least to some degree. The host societies should prepare and offer better conditions in using the skills and qualifications of these immigrants. Failure to do so means a waste of human capital and leads to frustration of immigrants who are stuck at the bottom of the host society or must struggle enormously for the recognition of their value.

Finally, our research showed that although many legal immigrants hold the appropriate qualifications to work in the care sector, not all of them are suitable or willing to do so since care jobs have low social value and their legal status increases the cost of their labour, so that they cannot compete with illegal immigrants. This situation deserves political considerations. A mainly holistic and long-term approach to this issue is necessary. Work on the black market should be countered – for example by introducing more flexible means of employment for immigrants and by penalising employers who employ immigrants illegally.

Moreover, legal possibilities of care supply that could compete with the black market should be developed and supported.

7.2.5 The significance of integration and the responsibility attached to integration

The concept of integration should be seriously discussed in the public domain without forgetting the voice of immigrants. The discussion should concentrate mainly on stipulating the aims of integration, determining responsibilities of different actors in the process of integration, defining the conception of integration and fixing the limits of tolerance. As the key stakeholders stated, the word “integration” means today mainly minority groups integrating themselves in the majority group, which can be well illustrated by natives’ opinions. The majority of native populations in all eight countries expect foreigners to make a major effort to integrate. They are requested to either find their place in the host society more or less on their own or, if they fail to integrate, to leave the country. The experiences of immigrant women however show that they need to be supported in their efforts to integrate mainly in the initial stages of their stay in the host country since they struggle with the high social and emotional costs of migration and the approach taken by the host society influences their integration significantly. This shows that the process of integration should be conceived as a two-sided process and that the public should learn more about their role and responsibilities in it.

7.2.6 Attitudes of natives

The acceptance of immigrants by the public is one of the most important factors influencing the integration of immigrants into the host society. Natives in the eight countries studied however show rather negative attitudes towards immigrants and immigration, and many immigrants interviewed recounted experiences of discrimination. Gaining knowledge about the lives of immigrants, the problems they face, the real magnitude of their presence in the host country, their potential for contribution and quest for permanence and integration could reduce the fear of the unknown and bring about greater tolerance. The public awareness of immigration and contacts between natives and immigrant groups should be promoted by long-term, systematic programmes. These can be facilitated by different actors such as government, municipalities, the media, NGOs, schools and migrants’ organisations, and can take different forms such as intercultural meetings and activities, discussions, various courses, cultural events, neighbourhood activities, intercultural housing projects, etc. The mass media should provide more balanced information on immigrants and immigration; they should also stress the positive aspects of immigration and show examples of successful as well as normal lives of immigrants in host societies. The political discourse – the role of the

state, its institutions and politicians – also seems to be crucial in this respect. Finally, anti-discrimination policy should be promoted and implemented by judicial practice, and anti-racist and anti-xenophobia awareness training courses for clerks, teachers and other people dealing with immigrants should be supported.

7.2.7 Legal channels for migration

Migration policy sometimes poses many serious obstacles for immigrants, and results in illegal immigration, fake marriages or misuse of the asylum-seeking process. This situation could change if other channels for legal immigration were found (mainly labour-based). Some segments of the labour market could be opened according to the needs of the country's economy, and professional migration could be facilitated. Consequently, it would be possible to allow immigrants to enter the country as job-seekers and stay there for a limited period of time. In this case, accurate and detailed forecasts of the demand on the labour market should be prepared that would make it possible to manage immigration. Also, regulations for seasonal workers could possibly help to restrict the black market, albeit the possibility to prolong immigrants' legal residence should be considered and the issue of social welfare should not be neglected.

The interviews with female immigrants showed that long waiting periods for family reunion and the suspicious treatment of marriages that form the basis of family reunion can cause significant damage to family life and undermine immigrants' emotional balance. Political measures should allow immigrants to live a decent family life.

7.2.8 Immigrants' legal status

Legal status in the host country does not always mean that immigrants have secure residence status. Long-term residence usually needs to be renewed quite frequently, and it is conditional on fulfilment of several requirements that immigrants often find difficult. The legal status of foreigners residing in the long term should be improved so that they can stay in the host country without fear of deportation if they live a normal life.

Moreover, the legalisation procedure of immigrants' residence often poses problems. It is necessary to improve, simplify and speed up the ineffective, confusing and frequently-changing procedures concerning legislation which regulates immigration.

The legal status gained thanks to family reunion and connected with the legal status of the spouse/family members can place immigrant women into a vulnerable position vis-à-vis their

partner. The legal status of family members should not depend on the person who initiated the family reunion, but should be considered separately.

7.2.9 Naturalisation

The conditions for obtaining citizenship are often harsh, and in some cases unnecessary or contra-productive, and this should change. A crucial problem concerns the issue of dual citizenship, which is not allowed in the countries studied. It brings about many practical problems, like having to give up real estate in the country of origin, or difficulties with travelling. Allowing immigrants to keep their original citizenship or at least facilitating access to their original citizenship (which may be enacted by bilateral international agreements, or the EU could take initiative in this matter) would probably solve many of these issues. Moreover, the provision of *ius soli* should be reconsidered in the case of immigrants' children.

7.2.10 Labour market integration

Early inclusion into the labour market greatly facilitates the process of integration for immigrants. However, we found out that most immigrant women face the problem of deskilling, which causes "brain waste". Several factors lead to this situation:

In most countries, immigrants are discriminated against in legal terms since they do not have the same right to work as natives. We found out that policies restricting the possibilities open to immigrants to work do not enable them to become successfully integrated into the host society, and endanger their old-age provision. Work on the black market might then be a solution to achieve at least some economic independence. In the case of family reunion, when immigrants are not allowed to work for some time after their arrival in the country, these restrictions may also stress the gender imbalance in the family by deepening women's dependence on their husbands. Several focus group participants stated that immigrants should have easier access to the labour market or even have the same rights as natives.

The recognition of qualifications obtained abroad is also one of the main areas in which significant changes must be made to national policy and practices. The state as the guarantor of the standard of education has to examine the level of immigrants' education to guarantee a certain level of quality in the system, but the whole process should be speeded up and simplified so that it is not so time-consuming and costly.

Many examples of employers who are unwilling to employ non-citizens were documented in our research. Better anti-discrimination legislation should be implemented and more 'equal opportunities policies' should be promoted when it comes to the employment of female immigrants. Campaigns targeting potential employers of immigrants should be prepared, providing information on legal possibilities to employ immigrants.

There should also be greater investment in training, vocational counselling and assistance for immigrants who are looking for a job. The labour offices could do more in this respect. Immigrants should have the right to access 'active employment policy' programmes, mainly when they have just begun their life in the host country or have completed parental leave.

Harsh working conditions faced by female immigrants at their workplaces often do not enable them to take care of their children, whom they leave in their countries of origin. They often face problems in reconciling family responsibilities and life and gainful employment. Foreigners' children should be given the same rights to education as native children at all levels, including pre-school care. Flexible, cheap childcare facilities would help women to combine work on the labour market and family life.

7.2.11 Language learning

Both native populations and key stakeholders expect immigrants to learn the language of the host country, and immigrants also understand and acknowledge the necessity of learning it. Our study showed that it is important to help immigrants in this respect and to motivate those who are not interested. We established that the language learning process for immigrants should be supported at a very early stage in their lives in the host country.

There is a need for widely-available language courses that should be of good quality, flexible, at a time and in places which suit immigrants and address people of all ages and in different life situations. The courses should be accompanied by childcare. Immigrants could partially contribute towards financing these courses (to be motivated in studying and continuing studies); they could be partly supported by state finances, and partly by the contribution of various grants administered by NGOs. Some immigrants should have them wholly subsidised (refugees, children, people in need). Such courses could be offered by local authorities, either as their own activity or through local NGOs and schools. Another option would be to offer these courses on television, which would make them geographically accessible for all.

7.2.12 Information and integration courses for immigrants

Immigrants need comprehensive and sufficient information about the system in the host country immediately after their migration or even before. Mainly information on the legal system and legislation, the labour market, school system and possibilities of education, child care, housing, the medical and social system and possible assistance offered by migrants' organisations is vital, and could help immigrants to orient themselves better in the new society. Apart from that, they have to learn about their obligations and rights (special

attention must be paid to communicating knowledge about women's rights to women) and also "need to become quickly equipped with knowledge about expectations of the host society regarding baseline norms and values, and civil and social rights (including access to pensions) available to the citizens in the host country" (Avramov 2007). This information should be offered in different languages in brochures and on regularly-updated websites.

Immigrants' access to sufficient information should be accompanied by integration courses: practical courses promoting better social, economic, cultural and legal orientation in the host country. All the courses should be free of charge, within a reachable distance for immigrants and accessible to women, meaning that childcare should be provided. They can be organized by NGOs or other organisations dealing with immigrants, or by municipalities.

7.2.13 The integration of immigrants' children

The integration of immigrants' children is highly desirable. However easy it seems to be, it needs to be promoted. The most important issue for these children is rapid integration within the school system in the host country. Discrimination in access to education and school selection due to legal obstacles, culturally-biased tests, and insufficient knowledge of language or lack of information on behalf of parents, constitute obstacles to the integration of these children.

Immigrants' children have special needs with regard to their participation in the educational system. The traditional education systems are often quite rigid in gearing cultural diversity. Flexibility, individual attention and technological and didactic innovation seem to be the keywords in creating a school type that effectively motivates and supports immigrants' children in their striving for success at school. It is also crucial that they master the language of the new country as soon as possible. The possibility to attend kindergarten in early childhood would be very helpful in this respect, as would intensive language courses. Remedial action by means of supplementary assistance would help them in case of difficulties.

Schools with immigrant children should organize lessons on the culture and history of immigrants' countries and prevent them being discriminated against. The role of teachers is significant in this respect, as they can either help a lot or push children into exclusion.

7.2.14 Ageing of immigrants

Our research revealed that the overwhelming majority of the female immigrants interviewed do not intend to return to their countries of origin, but are looking for permanence and

integration in the host countries. Consequently, the ageing of immigrant populations is no more a matter for the distant future, and should be regarded as one of the concerns to be tackled by policy makers. Moreover, it is not only young immigrants who come to the host countries. The financial security of immigrant women in their old age is mostly interrelated with their participation in the labour market. Policy on the participation of immigrants in the labour market should consider the ageing process and the need to work to secure adequate resources for their old age. Immigrants should have the possibility and be encouraged to participate in official economic life, and contribute to the public pension system. Moreover, the transfer of pensions from or to their country of origin, or the recognition of working years in different countries, should be made feasible.

Politicians should also focus more closely on providing families with institutional assistance in care for the elderly, without which care for the elderly will become a heavy burden for immigrants' children.

7.2.15 NGOs and other organisations assisting immigrants in the host countries

Immigrants need a more personal and individual approach in their integration that may be adopted for instance by NGOs and other civil-sector organisations. The existence and intervention of these organisations is significant in the early stages of the migration process. In addition to helping immigrants to find employment and earn their living as contributing members of the host society, they could help them to create and retain a positive understanding of their own cultural particularity; they should focus on helping mothers with small children to integrate socially, and should provide legal and psychological counselling, culture-sensitive conjugal counselling and counselling for immigrants' children who face an identity crisis.

Organisations assisting immigrants should be supported. We found out that there are several "structural barriers" that stop them functioning well. The main problem is funding which is temporary and provided for too short a term. Moreover, the administrative load in preparing and running projects is continually increasing, and the benefactors are not always suited to the specific nature of their projects, which frequently do not bring any measurable outcomes.

7.2.16 Immigration statistics

One of the important results of the FEMAGE project is that a number of European countries do not have accurate figures on immigration (or on emigration). We regard this fact as a serious obstacle preventing countries dealing with immigrants. Significant and systematic

attention should be paid to the development of statistics on migration and the stock of immigrants, comparable over time, space and different data sources. These should include gender-specific statistics that would enable a better analysis of gender-specific phenomena connected with migration. The issue of the second generation should also be covered better.

7.2.17 Conclusions

Integration/inclusion policies

Writing about policies on the integration of immigrants in the EU countries leads to questions: What are the final goals of the European integration policies? What do Europeans mean by integration? And do immigrants have to integrate without full assimilation?

The success of immigrants' integration is often undermined by the fact that immigrants face different types of social exclusion. We therefore consider that immigrant integration policies should go hand in hand with those on social inclusion. This could be achieved by National Action Plans (NAPs) including the issue of immigrants in their contents. Such a step would make it easier to formulate coherent integration policies aimed at social integration of immigrants.

It must be admitted that the NAPs have one shortcoming: Most of them do not take into account the fact that social inclusion is a very complex and broad phenomenon which cannot be reduced only to the economic dimension of the problem. Integration policies should be focused on full integration if they want to be successful and efficient – that is in cultural, socio-economic and civic-political terms.

We found out that some immigrants are subject to the dependence trap, which entails an inability to escape dependence on social programs and benefits created to foster their integration. Far too often state policies do not reflect the necessity to break this situation up. For this purpose, policies and interventions to improve the living conditions of immigrants need to balance three objectives: increasing economic opportunities by expanding employment and supporting the business environment; building human capital through better education and health, and strengthening social capital and community development through increased empowerment and participation of immigrants.

Active labour market policies aimed at the integration of immigrants should be accompanied by anti-discrimination measures, and their cost-benefit analysis should be prepared in order to learn whether or not they are meaningful.

Definition of the core society

The most important issue to be tackled when the integration of immigrants is concerned is not an economic one, but one that is connected with the coexistence of immigrants and the majority population. We found out that the attitudes of natives towards immigrants matter

more than any integration policy. There is a major structural problem in this respect which de facto excludes immigrants from full accommodation into the host society and causes the fallacy of most integration policies: the definition of the “core” part of the nation and the definition of social solidarity in the EU countries. It is well known that the more universal the definition of society’s identity, the more particular contents and groups it is able to include. Consequently, the issue of immigration and the expected rise in the stock and flow of immigrants cannot be resolved in a long-term perspective in an ethnically-defined country where processes of national self-identification are more on the ethnic and cultural than on the civic and territorial side. Without a reconfiguration of the collective identities, the integration processes of migrant communities will lead to a deadlock. If the EU countries want to succeed in integrating immigrants into society, they should choose a Renanian “elective” notion of “nation” that makes it possible to differentiate political and legal identity from ethnic and cultural.

In legal practice, this situation is reflected in citizenship issues. Citizenship is understood in mainly ethnic terms in most EU countries. Modern citizenship should however secure the equality of all citizens in the respective countries, which means that it should be primarily egalitarian, democratic, and socially consequential, and thus non-ethnicised. In practical terms, only the modes of citizenship acquired at birth suit these requirements. The EU countries should not retain the mental framework of a Westphalian state system with clear-cut boundaries between policies, but should adapt the republican concept of citizenship as equal membership where boundaries are increasingly overlapping.

Multicultural approach to the integration of immigrants

At the beginning of the 21st century, developed and secularised countries face new challenges that are connected with a loss of ability to strengthen the social cohesion of modern societies. Effective policy-making in handling the multicultural society remains a major challenge. The complexity of multiculturalism is difficult to reflect in public policies, something which can be illustrated by Europe’s inability to adapt to multicultural societies through Democratic Diversity Management.

The problem might lie in the fact that the EU behaves as a group of “neutral states”, ignoring that membership of a cultural group is one of the primary facts by which people are identified by others and that it is a matter of belonging, not of achievement. Designing an institutional mechanism allowing individuals to pursue their interest exclusively from the perspective of the majority population means that the state places other cultural groups at a major disadvantage. It forces immigrants to assimilate culturally if they want to participate fully in

the life of the society, which means that they must transform their identities. This is a problematic, slow process which at group level leads to altering or annihilation of the group's identity.

It seems that the more a cultural group differs from the mainstream, the larger becomes the resulting disadvantage induced by the culturally-biased institutional mechanisms. In order to achieve true equality, the state should not treat each group identically, but differently, respecting the group's cultural specificity. Group-differentiated rights can compensate for inequalities caused by a systematic disadvantage. The idea of multiculturalism carries the notion that communities should enjoy their fair share of opportunities and resources to maintain their cultures.

The multicultural policy adopted in some EU states has failed. One of the causes was uncritical multiculturalism that tolerated traditional patterns of behaviour despite the fact that they were in sharp contrast to liberal democratic principles of modern secularised countries. This led for instance to the unfavourable status of immigrant women in some migrant communities. EU countries should try to balance multicultural and intercultural policies with the liberal-democratic concept of the state when solving questions as how to proceed in a situation when demands of minority representatives are in opposition to gender equality. Particular provisions of multiculturalism (the right to non-discrimination, securing of the language education of migrants and of their children, affirmative action arrangements, securing of participation at the level of political parties, securing of participation of minority members in governing bodies) are not in contradiction with civic integration policies.

This report is based on the following deliverables produced under the project:

Deliverable No.2	State of the Art and Mapping of Competences	BiB, Germany
Deliverable No.3	Project presentation	BiB, Germany
Deliverable No.4	Codebook and international database on nationals (MIG)	PSPC, Belgium
Deliverable No.5	Methodology, including questionnaire and sampling plan, of the survey of female immigrants (FEMIG)	DRI, Hungary
Deliverable No.6	Methodology for the development of policy recommendations	FSSMU, Czech Rep.
Deliverable No.7	Analysis of viewpoints of nationals towards migrants and migration (MIG) and contextual data	PSPC, Belgium
Deliverable No.8	Codebook and the international database on female immigrants (FEMIG)	PSPC, Belgium
Deliverable No.9	Comparative analysis of the survey of female immigrants	DRI, Hungary
Deliverable No.10	Comparative analysis of the survey among female immigrants (FEMIG) and national population (MIG)	PSPC, Belgium
Deliverable No.11	Methodology for the focus group	CEFMR, Poland
Deliverable No.12	Comparative analysis of the national focus groups	CEFMR, Poland
Deliverable No.13	Report of the European focus group	PSPC, Belgium
Deliverable No.14	Policy implications and recommendation of the project and the assessment of the impact of population ageing on female activity and service economy in view of future needs for immigrant women	FSSMU, Czech Rep.

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Immigration is a universal phenomenon that meets with a mixed reception depending on the host countries' historical and socio-economic background, their integration policy, the cultural differences between foreigners and nationals, and many other factors. One such factor is gender.

Researchers from the FEMAGE project (Needs for Female Immigrants and their Integration in Ageing Societies) have studied the integration issue from the dual gender perspective of women nationals from the host countries and the women migrants who have come to join them. The result is a unique and detailed record of the experiences, needs, attitudes and expectations of women in relation to this urgent topic. In addition, the project has produced a number of key recommendations on support policies and services for the integration of female migrants in view of an ageing European population.