POLITICAL & SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT COMMUNITIES:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY

The case of Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and Greece

Solidarité
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Introduction

The opening of the European Year of Citizens 2013 represents a good opportunity to look at the rights EU citizens actually enjoy across Europe. Are those fundamental rights still guaranteed when they move and settle down in another member state? Are they welcomed to participate in local political or civil dynamics?

Whatever the reason, European citizens are often moving and settling down in European member states other than their country of origin but their participation in the democratic life of their immigration countries remains very low. This is why the European think tank Pour la Solidarité and 5 other European partners set up the project 'Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for All', co-financed by the DG justice programme "Fundamental rights and citizenship" whose main aim was to address the lack of migrants' participation to the political life of the host countries. Furthermore, the project aimed at increasing the access to information available to European citizens residing in a member state other than their own, providing them with incentives to vote and stand in municipal and European elections, and raising awareness about fundamental rights and the fight against racism and xenophobia. Moreover, as the presence of women in key political decision-making positions is often low, the project has sought to address the cross-cutting issue of strengthening the participation of associations of women residing in member states other than their own.

In order to meet these goals, an exhaustive research was undertaken in all the 5 countries participating to the project; this report is a summary of the research report available on the Being Citizen web portal (www.beingcitizen.eu). A video about the project will also be available on http://blog.transit.es/access2rights.

This publication is a comparison of national studies conducted by the project partners in their countries. Each of these national studies focused on a specific migrant community:

- In Belgium, Pour la Solidarité (www.pourlasolidarite.eu) worked with members of the Polish community who are not exercising the rights associated to EU citizenship because of a general lack of information and because they are living isolated from Belgian society.

- In France, ICOSI (www.icosi.org) worked with members of the Portuguese community which, unlike the other communities of migrants is well integrated socially and economically but still does not fully participate in the local political life.

- In Greece, ISI (http://www.isi.org.gr/) worked with members of the Bulgarian community. The research undertaken shows that members of this community live isolated from Greek society and are generally misinformed about the rights they have as EU citizens.

- In Spain, CEPS (http://asceps.org/en) worked with members of the Romanian community which, according to the study, is misinformed about fundamental rights and the rights they can enjoy as EU citizens and as a result of this, their participation in the political life of their host countries is very low.

- In Italy, CGM (www.consorziocgm.org) also worked with members of the Romanian community. According to the study, the main problems faced by this community are discrimination, social exclusion, and a general lack of information about fundamental rights and labour laws.

Finally, Diesis (www.diesis.coop) was in charge of realizing a comparative analysis of the 5 national studies and putting forward useful recommendations.

The analysis of the communities under study demonstrated that their patterns of migration started before the accession of their countries of origin to the EU. During this period, emigration was mainly based on economic and political reasons. Their histories of migration started with tourist visas and in certain cases, some immigrants obtained the status of refugees; this situation led to huge numbers of migrants living in an illegal or quasi-legal situation for many years. The accession of their country of origin to the European Union brought about the legalization of their residence and the recognition of their civil rights as EU citizens. More information about the project is available on www.beingcitizen.eu

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GENERAL

CONTEXT

PART 1: GENERAL CONTEXT

Introduction

European Union citizens often move to and settle in other EU member states, and this is leading the EU to become increasingly heterogeneous. This change has been led by the phenomenon of European integration; whereas freedom of movement within the European Union, as well as the procedures enabling EU citizens to reside in other member states have made this process more simple. Moreover, it is likely that this trend will reinforce the development of a European society and further strengthen the concept of European citizenship.

Nevertheless, the participation of European citizens residing in a member state other than their own in European parliamentary elections and local elections (as voters as well as candidates) in their country of residence is still quite low. Since 1979, when the first direct European elections were conducted, participation has steadily decreased and the average turnout in the last election in June 2009 was just 43%. The situation is similar when we consider the local elections. For example, in France in 2001 around 1.2 million European citizens were able to take part in the elections; however, only 166,122 were actually registered as part of the electoral system.[1] Since then the rate of participation has not increased very much. Despite this, political decisions that are taken at local and national level have an impact on the everyday lives of EU citizens living in other EU member states in areas as diverse as employment, education, social and even fiscal issues. Consequently, the participation of all EU citizens is important; however, low rates of participation are partly due to a lack of information and incentive.

Be this as it may, low levels of participation in municipal and European parliamentary elections do not mean that EU citizens residing in a member state other than their own are not involved in the democratic life of their country of residence. In fact, many associations

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[1] Data from the French Ministry of the Interior, in Sylvie Strudel, « La participation des Portugais aux élections européennes et municipales en France », *Cahiers de l'Urmis*, N°9 | février 2004. URL : http://urmis.revues.org/index35.html

representing such EU citizens are committed to developing citizenship, and EU citizens living in a member state other than their own have also set up numerous associations. However, some of these are more aimed at promoting the culture of their members' country of origin and are not always involved in civil dialogue in their country of residence. Despite this, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are pillars of civil society and play an essential role in the development of civil society dialogue, strengthening democracy and promoting fundamental rights. They mediate between the state and citizens, help develop new ideas, and their expertise can be drawn on when drafting public policy. Associations of non-national EU citizens also have an important role to play in the representation of the interests of EU citizens residing in member states other than their own. They are important intermediaries between non-national EU citizens on the one hand, and public authorities and other NGOs on the other.

The project 'Access to Rights & Civil Dialogue for ALL' seeks to foster the participation of EU migrants in the democratic and civic life of their host country. Consequently, the project conducted a comparative study of national studies that had been undertaken in the countries involved in the project. Each national study focused on a specific migrant community such as Portuguese migrants living in France, Polish migrants living in Belgium, Bulgarian migrants living in Greece, and Romanian migrants living in Italy and Spain. As an action research project, the project also aimed to develop a training curriculum that fosters the citizenship and political participation of EU citizens who move to another EU country; the project particularly focused on women.

I. BEING CITIZENS

1. EU legal framework

According to Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TEFU), an EU citizen is a person holding the nationality of an EU country. In this sense, EU citizenship is additional to national citizenship and does not replace it. Each EU state sets out its own conditions for the acquisition and loss of the nationality of that country.[2] EU citizenship rights are firmly anchored in primary EU law and have been substantially developed in secondary law.

Originally, the only people taken into consideration by such treaties were workers; making it easier for workers to move around the EU was a step towards the proper allocation of labour in the common marketplace.[3] At the same time, although such legislation was designed essentially for workers, the Treaty of Maastricht provided all Europeans with European citizenship. The introduction of EU citizenship represents a turning point in the evolution of free movement within the EU.[4] EU citizenship was formally introduced as part of the EU system by the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 in order to foster the political dimension of European integration, and was extended by the Treaty of Amsterdam. Before the Maastricht Treaty came into force, the European Community's treaties guaranteed the free movement of economically active people in order to ensure the free movement of workers and services. However, over the years its role has been further developed through judgements made by the European Court of Justice.[5]

Today, there are approximately 500 million European citizens in the European Union's 27 member states and this number will increase with any future European expansion. At first,

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[2] See EU Citizenship Report 2010, Dismantling the obstacles to EU citizens' rights, COM (2010) 603 final, 27.10.2010.
[3] Lamassoure, A. (2008) *The citizen and the application of Community law*.
[4] See Forni, F. 'Free Movement of "Needy" Citizens after the Binding Charter. Solidarity for All?' in *The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*, G. Di Federico, (ed), 1st Edition., 2011, XIX, Springer.
[5] For example, in the Levin case (Judgment of the Court of 23 March 1982, D.M. Levin v Staatssecretaris van Justitie, Case 53/81, European Court reports 1982 Page 01035) the court found that the "freedom to take up employment was important, not just as a means towards the creation of a single market for the benefit of the Member State economies, but as a right for the worker to raise her or his standard of living".

the concept of European citizenship was more symbolic than substantial,[6] but "over the years the European Court of Justice (ECJ) put flesh on the bones of citizenship".[7]

According to the ECJ, European citizenship can be considered the fundamental status of EU nationals. Within the scope of the treaty it ensures that people who are in the same situation enjoy the same treatment before the law irrespective of their nationality. [8] Accordingly, EU citizenship has enhanced individual rights significantly. In particular, the ECJ has ruled that EU citizens are entitled to reside in other EU member states purely because they are citizens of the EU; thus recognising EU citizenship as a source of free movement rights.[9]

The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty has strengthened the concept of EU citizenship. In particular, the TFEU defines the rights of EU citizens and even clarifies that the list it provides is not exhaustive. At the same time, by bringing the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR) into force the Treaty has further enhanced the notion of EU citizenship. In particular, the CFR's preamble states that the EU "places the individual at the heart of its activities, by establishing the citizenship of the Union and by creating an area of freedom, security and justice".

2. The EU legal framework

As stated above, an EU citizen is a person who holds the nationality of an EU member state. At the same time, EU citizens are also EU rights-holders. This status then provides EU citizens with certain fundamental rights and benefits in many areas of their daily lives.

EU Citizenship is the essential link all European citizens have with the European Union. It provides EU citizens with rights and benefits in many areas of their daily lives. In particular, the TFEU and the CFR list (non-exhaustively) a number of rights connected to this status:

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[6] Opinion AG Colomer, Case C-228/07, *Petersen*, [2008] nyr, para 26.
[7] This expression is borrowed from S. O 'LEARY, 'Putting Flesh on the Bones of European Citizenship', (1999) 24 *European Law Review* 68—79.
[8] Court of Justice of the European Union, Case C-184/99 Grzelczyk [2001] ECR I-6193, paragraph 31.
[9] Cases C-200/02, Zhu and Chen [2004] ECR I-9925, paragraph 26.

- **The right to move and reside freely within the EU** (articles 20 letter a, and article 21 TFEU; article 39 CFR): "Every citizen of the Union shall have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down in the Treaties and by the measures adopted to give them effect". These rights have been specified in Directive 2004/38/EC.[10] More precisely, EU citizens can reside on the territory of another EU country for up to three months with the sole requirement that they hold a valid identity card or passport. In order to reside in another EU country for more than three months, EU citizens are required to meet certain conditions depending on their status (i.e. workers, students, etc.) and may also be required to meet certain administrative formalities. EU citizens can acquire the right to permanent residence in another EU country after legally residing there for a continuous period of five years. Furthermore, family members of EU citizens have the right to accompany or join them in another EU country, subject to certain conditions.

- **The right to vote for and stand as a candidate in European parliamentary and municipal elections (**articles 20, letter b, and article 22 TFEU; article 39 CFR): every EU citizen "has the right to vote and to stand as candidates in elections to the European Parliament and in municipal elections in their Member State of residence, under the same conditions as nationals of that State".

- **The right to diplomatic and consular protection** (articles 20, letter c, and article 24 TFEU; article 44 CFR): this is the right to be protected by the diplomatic and consular authorities of any EU country: "Every citizen of the Union shall, in the territory of a third country in which the Member State of which he or she is a national is not represented, be entitled to protection by the diplomatic or consular authorities of any Member State, on the same conditions as the nationals of the Member State".

- **The right to petition the European Parliament** (article 20, letter d, and article 24 TFEU; article 46 CFR): "Any citizen of the Union and any natural or legal person

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[10] Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC. In GUCE L 158, 30.04.2004, p. 77.

residing or having its registered office in a Member State has the right to petition the European Parliament".[11]

- **The right to complain to the European Ombudsman** (article 20, letter d, and article 24 TFEU; article 44 CFR): the European Ombudsman investigates complaints made against the institutions and bodies of the European Union. Any EU citizen, or natural or legal person residing or having its registered officer in a member state has the right to refer cases of maladministration (poor or failed administration)[12] to the European Ombudsman about the activities of EU institutions, bodies or agencies, with the only exceptions of the European Court of Justice and the High Court acting in their judicial role.

Furthermore, EU citizens are entitled to other rights, these include:

- **The right to freedom from discrimination based on nationality** (art 18 TFEU): this is the right not to be discriminated against on grounds of nationality within the scope of application of the Treaty.
- **The right to contact and receive a response from any EU institution in one of the EU's official languages;**
- **The right to access documents from the European Parliament, European Commission and European Council** under certain conditions;
- **The right of equal access to the EU civil service;**
- **The right to a good administration**. This right is accorded to everyone in the EU (and not only to EU citizens) and refers to the right to have a person's own affairs handled impartially, fairly and within a reasonable time by the institutions, bodies and agencies that constitute the European Union. According to article 41 CFR this right includes: the right of every person to be heard before any individual measure which would adversely affect him or her is taken; the right of every person to have

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[11] The possibility to react to a specific request on the part of individuals was firstly recognised by the EP in 1952 in its Rules of Procedure, but was included in the Treaty only after Maastricht. See Camporesi, F. (2011) 'The role of the European Parliament in the Light of the Binding Character of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights', in *The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*, G. Di Federico (ed), 1st Edition., XIX, pp. 77—95, Springer.

[12] Maladministration means poor or failed administration. This occurs if an institution fails to act in accordance with the law, fails to respect the principles of good administration, or violates human rights. Some examples are: administrative irregularities; unfairness; discrimination; abuse of power; failure to reply; refusal to provide information; and unnecessary delay. For further information, see http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/start.faces.

access to her or his file, while respecting the legitimate interests of confidentiality and of professional and business secrecy; and the obligation of the administration to provide reasons for its decisions.

- **The right to a citizens' initiative** (Article 11, Paragraph 4 of the Treaty on European Union). The Lisbon Treaty has introduced a new form of public participation for citizens in the European Union: the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). It enables one million EU citizens who are resident in at least one quarter of the EU member states to call directly on the European Commission to bring forward an initiative of interest to them within the framework of the Commission's powers. As required by the Treaty, according to a proposal by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a Regulation which defines the rules and procedure governing this new instrument.[13] The organisers of a citizens' initiative – a citizens' committee composed of at least 7 EU citizens who are resident in 7 different member states – have 1 year to collect the necessary statements of support. The number of statements of support has to be certified by the competent authorities in the relevant member state. The Commission has 3 months to examine the initiative and decide how to act on it.

3. Internal migration

The rights set out above are deeply connected to the phenomenon of migration. Human migration is the movement of people from one area to another, sometimes over long distances or in large groups. Historically this movement was nomadic, often causing significant conflict with the indigenous population and their displacement or cultural assimilation. At EU level, migration is referred to as the free movement of persons. Furthermore, the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the EU member states is a fundamental right guaranteed to all EU citizens and their families by the treaties.[14] Generally speaking, this freedom enables citizens of one member state to travel to, reside in, and to find employment in another EU member state either permanently or

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[13] Regulation (EU) No. 211/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative.
[14] The concept of the free movement of persons came about with the signing of the Schengen Agreement in 1985 and the subsequent Schengen Convention in 1990, which initiated the abolition of border controls between participating countries.

temporarily. The idea behind this freedom is that citizens from other member states should be treated in the same way as the country's nationals. As stated above, this right was specified in Directive 2004/38/EC, which extended the right to move and reside within the EU to all members of the person's family, including registered partners. This directive entered into force in April 2006 and replaced a set of directives and a regulation that were adopted between 1964 and 1993. It codified and reviewed the existing instruments in order to simplify and strengthen the right of free movement and residence for all European citizens and their family members. In particular, it extended the family reunification rights of EU citizens to their registered partners under certain conditions [15] and granted autonomous rights to family members in case of the death or departure of the EU citizen, or a couple's separation or divorce. This directive also introduced the new right of permanent residency after having completed five years of continuous legal residence in the host country, and eventually replaced residency permits with a simple registration certificate issued by the relevant authorities. Furthermore, it limited the scope of member states to end an individual's right to residency on grounds of public policy, public security or public health.[16]

As underlined by the EU Commissioner for Justice, Viviane Reading, during the EU Citizens' Rights Conference held in Brussels in June 2010:

"according to 2008 estimates 11.3 million European citizens live in a different Member State than their Member State of origin. Many more have cross-border experiences when travelling, studying or working, possibly getting married or divorced, buying or inheriting property, voting, receiving medical treatment or just shopping online from companies in other EU countries. For instance, there are 16 million marriages involving a cross-border aspect. Two million European students have studied in another Member State since the launch of the Erasmus programme in 1987".

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[15] Partnerships have to be registered on the basis of a member state's legislation. This provides the registered partner with the right to accompany or join their partner in member states that treat registered partnerships as equivalent to marriage.

[16] See European Parliament and Council Directive 2004/38/EC of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC, and the Official Journal of the European Union L 158/77 of 30 April 2004. For a complete explanation of Directive 2004/38/EC, see *Right of Union citizens and their family members to move and reside freely within the Union, Guide on how to get the best out of Directive 2004/38/EC*, Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/guide_2004_38_ec_en.pdf.

Furthermore, many EU citizens regularly travel to other member states for business or tourism and enjoy fast-track checks at borders or even no border checks at all.

In Europe, inter-regional migration flows are influenced by labour market conditions and by geographical proximity. In several cases, including some of those analysed in this study, immigration started before the accession of a migrant's country of origin to the EU. This form of immigration was mainly due to economic and political reasons and emigrants often left their countries of origin on tourist visas; however, in certain cases these people should be considered refugees. This left numerous migrants in an illegal or quasi-legal status for many years. Finally, the accession of their country of birth to the EU brought with it a change in their status: the legalisation of their residency and the recognition of their civil rights as EU citizens.

Whatever the reason for the phenomenon and its particular context, the European Union foresees a system of rights connected to citizenship in order to enable its citizens to move freely within the territory of the EU.

4. Political participation

An analysis of the latest reports on EU citizenship and links to the national studies.

From a legal standpoint, citizenship denotes a link between an individual and a community (usually a state). At the EU level, we have seen that citizenship is accorded to any person holding the nationality of an EU country. Important rights are connected to this status.

As underlined by Virginia Leary, citizenship connotes "a bundle of rights – primarily, political participation in the life of the community, the right to vote, and the right to receive certain protection from the community, as well as obligations."[17] In this sense, political participation can be defined as the actions of individual citizens aimed at influencing the configuration of society.[18] The basis of democratic societies is determined by the possibility

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[17] Leary, V. 'Citizenship. Human rights, and Diversity', in Alan C. Cairns, John C. Courtney, Peter MacKinnon, Hans J. Michelmann, David E. Smith. *Citizenship, Diversity, and Pluralism: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives*. McGill-Queen's Press - MQUP. pp. 247–264. (ISBN 9780773518933).

[18] González et al. (2007) *Particiapció política i joves. Una aproximació a les pràctiques polítiques, la participació social i l'afecció política de la joventut catalana*. Secretaria de Joventut, Generalitat de Catalunya. Collecció Estudis, 22, Barcelona.

accorded to citizens of voting and choosing their representatives as part of an electoral process, leading the government to be an expression of the will of civil society. However, political participation can take many forms including affiliation to political parties, following political debates, participation in electoral campaigns, subscribing to a petition, contacting politicians, writing letters to government representatives and becoming a candidate in elections, among others.[19]

But citizenship means the enjoyment of full political and civil rights and responsibilities. As stated above, being an EU citizen means being the titular of a status to which fundamental rights are connected. EU citizens who live in a member state other than their own have the right to vote and stand as candidates in European parliamentary elections.[20]Nevertheless, the participation of these EU migrants in the democratic life of their new countries of residency remains very low. Despite the fact that these laws were introduced 20 years ago, EU citizens still face major obstacles in exercising their voting rights in European parliamentary and municipal elections. The countries that still require nationals of other member states to fulfil additional conditions that are not permitted by EU law, such as holding a national identity card issued by the member state in question, are a good example. Other member states do not adequately inform EU citizens from other member states about their right to participate in elections.

In terms of mobilisation, the lack of awareness among citizens does not help. A November 2007 Eurobarometer report showed that although three European elections have been held since the Maastricht Treaty, the treaty which created the right to participate, over half of all European citizens continue to be unaware that they are able to vote in European elections and even stand as candidates in the country in which they have chosen to live. A majority of people stated that they had never seen or read anything in the media about the European Parliament. More than half of the people surveyed also believed that MEPs in Strasbourg are grouped according to their country and not by political affiliation. Even worse than that:

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[19] Ahokas, I. (2010) *Promoting immigrants' democratic participation and integration*, Epace Theme Publication, (ISBN 978-952-259-008-4).

[20] Article 22(2) TFEU and Directive 93/109/EC of 6 December 1993 laying down detailed arrangements
for the exercise of the right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament for citizens of the Union residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals (OJ L 329, 30.12.1993,
p. 34).

two-thirds of respondents stated that they had no opinion – neither positive nor negative – about the European Parliament.

According to the 2010 Eurobarometer reports on EU citizenship, 79% of European citizens claim some familiarity with the term 'citizen of the European Union'. However, only 43% know the meaning of the term and 48% indicate that they are 'not well informed' about their rights as EU citizens. Indeed, only 32%, which is slightly less than one third, consider themselves 'well' or 'very well' informed about their rights as EU citizens.[21]

However, as underlined by the *2010 EU Citizenship Report,* a gap still remains between the applicable legal regulations and the reality confronting EU citizens in their daily lives, particularly in cross-border situations. Many obstacles stand in the way of citizens' enjoyment of their rights. However, the report shows that a lack of EU legislation is not the main reason why citizens face obstacles in the exercise of their rights. Instead, the majority of actions that would help dismantle such obstacles outlined in the report fall into three main categories: effectively enforcing EU rights, making their enjoyment easier in practice, and raising awareness about them.

The participation of non-national EU citizens in local and European elections is a delicate issue.[22] Participation tends to increase the longer people have been resident in a new country; it also depends on the person's roots in the country of residence, but participation is also influenced by individual factors such as age, education and income level.[23]

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[21] Flash Eurobarometer 294 'EU Citizenship', March 2010.
[22] While voting rights for EU citizens in EU member states has been regulated both by the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties, the right to vote for non-EU citizens is still regulated by each member state. See Mantovan C. (2007), *Immigrazione e cittadinanza. Auto-organizzazione e partecipazione dei migranti in Italia*, FrancoAngeli, Milano (ISBN: 9788846483133).
[23] Ahokas, L. (2010) *Promoting immigrants' democratic participation and integration*, Epace Theme Publication, (ISBN 978-952-259-008-4).

II. THE PROJECT "ACCESS TO RIGHTS & CIVIL DIALOGUE FOR ALL"

1. The objectives and focus of the comparative study

The European project 'Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for All' aims to examine the way in which EU citizens residing in a member state other than their own participate in the democratic life of their country of residence and the European Union (EU).

Furthermore, it aims to provide European citizens residing in an EU member state other than their own with increased information and incentives to vote and stand in local and European elections, as well as ensure these people are better informed about their fundamental rights and the fight against racism and xenophobia. Moreover, as the presence of women in key political decision-making positions is often low,[24] the project seeks to address a further cross-cutting issue: the need to strengthen the participation of women's associations made up of EU citizens residing in a member state other than their own.

In order to meet these goals, a comparative study has been undertaken of empirical data on the participation of European Union (EU) citizens residing in a member state other than their own in municipal and European parliamentary elections. At the same time, data was also studied on the participation of representative associations of non-national EU citizens, in particular women's associations, in the democratic life of their hosting country and of the European Union as a whole.

The study is a comparison of national studies that were conducted in the member states involved in the project. Each of these national studies focused on a specific migrant community: Portuguese migrants living in France, Polish migrants living in Belgium, Bulgarian migrants living in Greece and Romanian migrants living in Italy and Spain.

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[24] For example, the percentage of women in the European Parliament is around 35%; according to a Eurobarometer survey on women and European elections, 53% of the women who took part in the survey thought that women should be encouraged more to take part in politics. This aim goes alongside the project's other aim of targeting the specific problems relating to racism, xenophobia and discrimination that can exist between EU citizens residing in a member state other than their own and the national population and other communities of immigrants residing legally in the country.

2. Methodology

In regards to methodology, an analysis was conducted in each partner country. The migrant communities that were studied were chosen according to their relative importance in the countries under study. All of the project's partners were able to select one expert on fundamental rights and electoral rights in particular, or on migration to support them in their research.

The research focused on cultural and representative associations belonging to the communities under study, and analysed these communities' characteristics, organisation and involvement in the political life of their host country. Another important research focus was the identification of good practices in civic education initiatives aimed at EU citizens living in other member countries; this was followed up by providing a number of recommendations on the needs of these migrants, including what would have to be done to increase their participation in local and European elections.

The project's partners began by mapping the associations belonging to the respective communities, and focused on women's associations. They then developed a desk analysis of these associations in the democratic life of each host country. They continued by analysing the role of women, their influence within their own community and in the democratic life of their country of residence. The partners conducted interviews with representatives from the associations they had selected to evaluate the needs and interests of these associations. They focused their research on women's empowerment and women's associations in municipal and European parliamentary elections and in civil dialogue. The project's partners also analysed the rate of participation of each community of non-national EU citizens in local and European parliamentary elections and their level of knowledge of the national and European political systems. Additionally, they studied the issues of racism and discrimination that can exist between non-national EU citizens and the national population, and especially national citizens with third country origins. These studies were brought together in order to present a broad view of EU citizenship and of how EU citizens enjoy their civil rights, as set out in EU law.

Diesis, with the support of Pour la Solidarité (PLS), then used the working papers provided by each of the partners to conduct the comparative study. The following working papers were used in the study:

A working paper on the Polish community living in Belgium.

This paper was provided by PLS. It found that the Polish community in Belgium is mainly concentrated around Brussels and – to a lesser extent – in Flanders. The academic expert who worked on the project is Polish and is completing her PhD on the Polish transnational community in Brussels. A dozen interviews were held, including interviews with the Polish ambassador to Belgium, Polish journalists, and representatives of migrants associations, etc.

A working paper on the Portuguese community living in France.

ICOSI, the partner in charge of the study, chose to work with the Portuguese community in France, the 'oldest migrants' in the project. The Portuguese community is one of the most important foreign communities in France, and is mainly present in the Parisian suburbs. The community is rather well integrated but Portuguese immigrants still have a strong sense of belonging to their country of origin. With the help of academic experts on migration issues, ICOSI identified the relevant people to interview or to invite to the activities they were running, these included representatives of Portuguese associations and people from the Portuguese community who had stood in the local elections.

A working paper on the Romanian community in Spain.

CEPS, the organisation in charge of the study, chose to work with the Romanian community, with a special focus on Romanian Roma, who mainly live in Catalonia and in the city of Barcelona. With the help of an academic expert on migrant integration, CEPS built a strong bibliography on the subject and collected press releases on the Romanian community and its political participation. To complete this background research, interviews were held with academic experts in European fundamental rights or migration processes, associations of Romanian migrants, individual Romanian migrants, and a Romanian political party in Spain, etc. In addition to this, a blog was set up to explain how the project was unfolding (http://www.accesstorights.net/citizenships/)

A working paper on the Romanian community in Italy.

This study was conducted by CGM, which chose to work with the Romanian community and selected an academic expert specialised in gender issues. They organised interviews with relevant people from the Romanian community, academics, people from Italian institutions, and representatives of Romanian associations, etc. They tried to mobilise a large network around the project, and began their reflections on the economic integration of Romanian migrants with the objective of linking it to political participation and fundamental rights.

A working paper on the Bulgarian community in Greece.

The study on the Bulgarian community in Greece was conducted by the ISI with the support of a Bulgarian academic expert. They collected information through numerous face-to-face interviews with selected members of the Bulgarian community and with representatives of its main associations.

In order to develop a common approach, the partners prepared a template for research that was divided into the following sections:

- An introduction to the chosen community;
- The organisation of the chosen community;
- The relations of the chosen community with nationals from the host country and other communities;
- The participation of the members of the chosen community in local and European elections;
- A presentation of the results from the focus groups and lunch debates;
- The presentation of good practices;
- Recommendations: identifying the needs of the community and what would have to be improved to encourage participation.

PART 2

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY

PART II: **THE COMPARATIVE STUDY**

I. <u>The Polish community in Belgium</u>
(Céline Brandeleer and Elzbieta Kuzma)

1. <u>An introduction to the Polish community in Belgium</u>

History

Poland has a long history of migration to Belgium, and there has been a significant number of Polish migrants in the country since 1830. Since this time, there have been several waves of immigration due to changing political or economic situations. A peak in Polish immigration to Belgium was observed in the 1920s, as many Polish people came to work in mines. With the agreement of the Polish authorities, Belgian companies employed more than 5,500 Polish workers in mining and other industries. This pattern of migration changed during and after the Second World War as newcomers were mainly refugees fleeing from war zones or the new regime in Poland. The Cold War made migration more sporadic and irregular, but not impossible; however, those who did leave were not usually able to return. In the 1970s, the Polish government decided to loosen short-term visa restrictions, which created a small rush to the West using tourist visas. Asylum seeker status was only used to obtain long-term or permanent residency. [25]

After the fall of the Berlin wall and the opening of the iron curtain, travelling to the west became far easier and this led to a new important wave of migration concentrated around Brussels (and to a lesser extent on Flanders). The progressive removal of all legal and administrative barriers to migration – as part of the processes associated with European integration – strengthened this pattern of migration. In 1991, Polish people were able to

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[25] Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, *Flux migratoires en provenance des nouveaux Etats membres de l'Union Européenne vers la Belgique. Tendances et perspectives*, Brussels, 24 February 2006.

stay for three months as tourists in Belgium; however, they were not permitted to work during this time. Be this as it may, the majority of Polish people who came to Belgium at this time were more motivated by work than tourism, even if there were hardly any possibilities for them to work legally. Indeed, after the fall of communism in Poland, Polish citizens were no longer considered asylum seekers; a status that had previously enabled some people to work.[26] Consequently, illegal work became common among the growing Polish community and many of these people stayed much longer than legally permitted. The illegal status of many of these migrants is one major difference between the migration that occurred at this time and previous patterns of migration.

Furthermore, these formal residency regulations are one factor that led to temporary migration, as these migrants usually worked for a few months on tourist visas (i.e. a stamp in their passport stating their date of arrival). After this time, they generally returned to Poland and sent a family member or friend to take on their job for a few months, or at least until they were able to apply for a new tourist visa. After 2004 and the adhesion of Poland to the EU, illegal residency ceased to be a problem. However, illegal work was still problematic as Belgium did not open its labour market until May 2009 (although the country did gradually open its labour market to new member states in specific sectors where there was an urgent need for labour). Today, Polish people share the same rights as other European citizens.

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[26] KUZMA Elżbieta, 'La communauté transnationale polonaise', in *Migrants de l'Est*, Agenda interculturel, n.280, Bruxelles, February 2010.

The importance of the community

The importance of the community has varied greatly over time (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The number of Polish people in Belgium between 1920 and 2008[27]
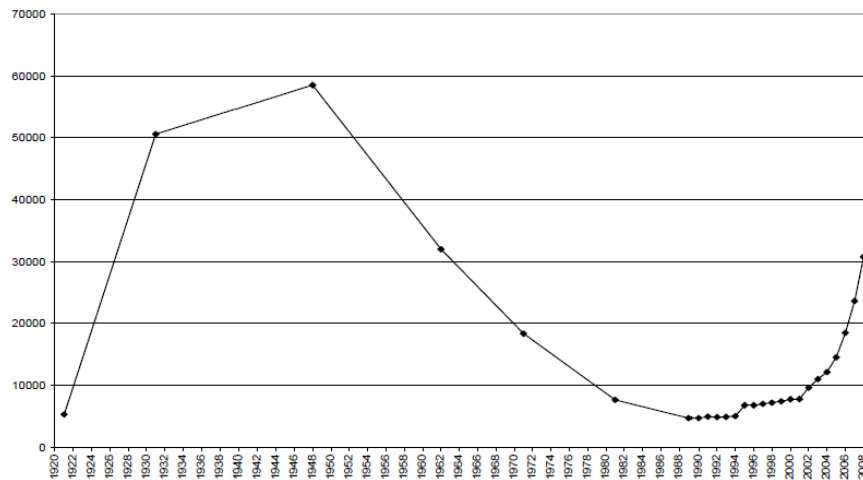
Source: DG SIE

Since the beginning of the year 2000, the number of Polish people in Belgium has risen steadily. In 2006, 18,000 Poles lived in Belgium; in 2008 there were 30,768 Polish people living in the country, and 43,085 in 2010.[28] However, these numbers only account for legal immigration, and the real number of Poles living in Belgium is estimated at between 100,000 and 120,000. This rapid increase needs to be seen in the light of a slow movement towards legalisation. Indeed, it is possible that a large proportion of this expansion is due to the legalisation of the residency status of people who had formerly lived illegally in Belgium. Despite this, Polish people generally have little will to gain legal residency in Belgium. As such, it is even possible that Polish immigration to Belgium is actually slowing down, but this is very difficult to verify.

Today, Polish people are the third most important group of foreign arrivals: in 2007 they represented 10% of all new arrivals to Belgium, behind French migrants at 13%, Dutch

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[27] Groupe d'étude de Démographique Appliquée (UCL) & Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, *Migrations et populations issues de l'immigration en Belgique*, Rapport statistique et démographique 2009.

[28] Direction générale Institutions et Population du SPF Intérieur – Population, Statistiques, Population par nationalité, sexe, groupe et classe d'âges au 1er janvier 2006, 2008 et 2010.

migrants at 12%, and ahead of Moroccans, the fourth largest group at 8%.[29] As a result, Poland is a very important country in terms of migration to Belgium.

Figure 2: Changes in the population from new member states[30]
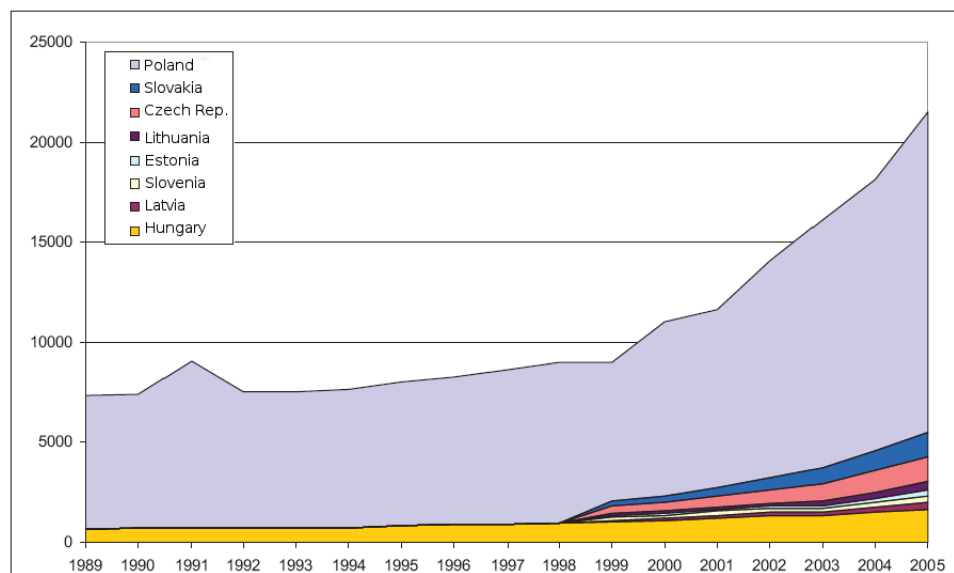
Source: INS/ECODATA, SPF Economie, PME, Classes moyennes et Energie

Another important characteristic of the community is its proportion of women. For a long time, more Polish women were arriving in Belgium than men; although some arrived because of marriage. This is not especially particular to Polish migration but the feminisation of this pattern of migration is still quite striking. The predominance of female migrants is due to the economic situation in Poland where women constitute the biggest unemployed group, especially in the countryside. In Brussels, however, they can easily find employment, even more so than men, and the domestic jobs they take on are often more stable than those in the (male) construction sector.[31]

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[29] Groupe d'étude de Démographique Appliquée (UCL) & Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, *Migrations et populations issues de l'immigration en Belgique*, Rapport statistique et démographique 2009.
[30] Groupe d'étude de Démographique Appliquée (UCL) & Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, *Migrations et populations issues de l'immigration en Belgique*, Rapport statistique et démographique 2009.
[31] KUZMA, E. 'La communauté transnationale polonaise', in *Migrants de l'Est*, Agenda interculturel, no. 280, Brussels, February 2010.

Figure 3: The proportion of male and female Polish migrants[32]
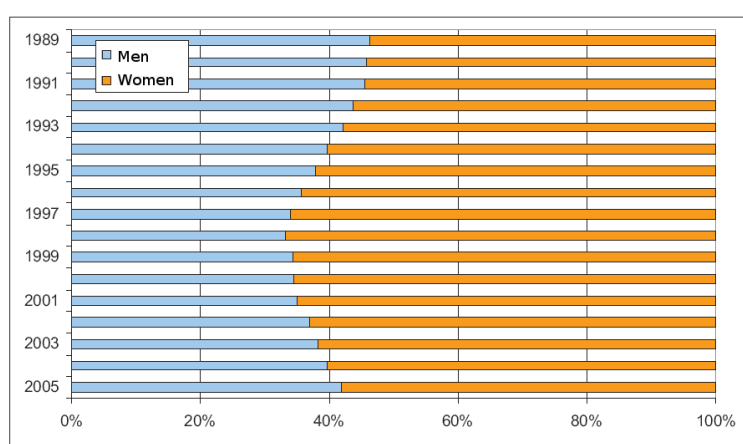
Source: INS

Nevertheless, official statistics suggest that the proportion of female migrants compared to men seems to be evening up over time.

The Polish community is far from homogeneous; this is partly because of its history. The community consists of two very distinctive groups with different characteristics, needs, levels of integration and participation: the oldest and the newest waves of immigration.[33] Whereas the newcomers need to learn the cultural basics of Belgian society, such as how to find accommodation and employment, in order to earn money rapidly (to fulfil their basic needs), the older group, which is much more integrated due to the length of time the people have spent in the country, seems to focus its needs on cultural maintenance. The temporality of migration is not the only dividing factor among the Polish community. During the 1920s, migrants were generally peasant workers seeking jobs in mines; whereas during the Cold War a large flow of highly educated political refugees arrived in Belgium. After the fall of the Berlin wall, economic migrants – both legal and illegal – composed the main cohort of migrants.[34] This divide has territorial resonance. Particularly during the 1930s, the coalfields of Wallonia received numerous economic migrants. In contrast, since the 1990s, the newest wave of migration has focused on Brussels, and to a lesser extent on Flanders.

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[32] Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, *Flux migratoires en provenance des nouveaux Etats membres de l'Union Européenne vers la Belgique. Tendances et perspectives,* Bruxelles, 24 février 2006.
[33] We do not discuss the specific case of people working in the administration of EU institutions such as diplomats.
[34] LAMBRECHT Seppe, *Integration Patterns in urban contexts: the case of Polish immigration to Brussels,* working paper presented at the First International Conference of Young Urban Researchers (FICYUrb), June 11—12, 2007.

This means that most Polish people in Wallonia belong to the older waves of immigration; as such, they have slightly different socio-economic features, and most of these people are very well integrated into society or are actually naturalised Belgians. These factors help explain why this community has relatively weak associative networks in Wallonia, as its need has faded over time[35] (see below). Consequently, this analysis focuses on this latest wave of migration, which mainly consists of economic migrants who moved to Belgium after 1990.

Reasons for migration and migration patterns

Economics are the main motivation behind Polish migration to Western Europe; in particular, Polish people migrate due to the high unemployment rates in Poland combined with the prospects of higher incomes in other countries. Polish people come to Belgium to work and for a better quality of life for themselves and their families. Highly educated Poles do not usually choose Belgium as a destination but go to countries perceived as more dynamic such as the UK – although Brussels does attract some of these migrants due to the presence of EU institutions. Polish employment in Belgium is generally concentrated around certain fields such as the construction sector, the domestic sector, health care, and seasonal agricultural work. They benefit from a good professional reputation which ensures them a small comparative advantage over other foreign workers (especially in the illegal labour market). A substantial part of their income is usually sent back to their family in Poland.[36]

Since the opening of the Belgian labour market it has become much easier to work legally, but the legalisation of Polish workers seems to be taking time. However, more Polish workers are beginning to appreciate the advantages provided by the Belgian social security system; and offers of insurance, a pension, and unemployment benefits increase the likelihood of Polish people taking up legal work, although many Poles still work a few hours illegally to be able to send money to their families.

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[35] LAMBERT Pierre-Yves, *La participation politique des allochtones en Belgique – Historique et situation bruxelloise*, Louvain-la-Neuve, Academia-Bruylant (coll. Sybidi Papers), June, 1999.

[36] Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, *Flux migratoires en provenance des nouveaux Etats membres de l 'Union Européenne vers la Belgique. Tendances et perspectives*, Brussels, 24 February 2006.

A second important aspect of Polish migration is that it has long been perceived as temporary. Although this is slowly changing, most migrants do wish to return to Poland at some point – even though few actually do. The temporary nature of their migration is due to several factors. First, formal residency requirements created a pattern of short residency in Belgium. This led Polish migrants to work abroad for a few months after which they were replaced by a relative or friend. These repeated, short stays abroad has led to the formation of a quasi-community in their host country; which still enabled Polish migrants to combine a job in Belgium with their family life in Poland.[37] This situation has evolved since the adhesion of Poland to the EU in 2004, and particularly since the complete opening of the Belgian labour market in 2009.

Nevertheless, this also explains the slow move towards legalisation, as many Polish people often return to Poland. Improvements to transport infrastructure has made travel easier between Poland and Belgium. But for some Polish people – especially in the period between 2004 and 2009 – Poland still seemed far away. This was especially the case for people with a work permit, as they did not have to return to Poland every three to four months. As a result, they began developing an important network of commercial activities and created a 'little Poland' in Belgium by opening Polish shops that sold Polish products or provided specific services aimed at the Polish community.

Problems encountered

As work permits or visas are no longer needed, Polish people do not encounter many problems linked with illegality anymore. However, from a transnational point of view, Polish emigration has strong consequences for demographic structures in Poland. Since 2004, more than one million people have left the country – at least temporarily! Besides the economic consequences for Poland, migration has an impact on families, as many migrants leave their relatives behind, and contact with other cultures can make reintegration difficult when migrants return home. This is often the case for women who return to peripheral

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[37] LAMBRECHT Seppe, *Integration Patterns in urban contexts: the case of Polish immigration to Brussels.* A working paper presented at the First International Conference of Young Urban Researchers (FICYUrb), June 11—12, 2007.

regions after enjoying more liberties than in villages where life may still be based around traditional structures. Furthermore, family divisions can become problematic and reunion either in Poland or in Belgium is never an easy choice. In cases where migrants decide to return to Poland, they face social pressures to return with more money than they with; consequently, some people never feel able to return.

Conclusion

Geopolitical events and the progressive enlargement of the European Union have played a decisive role in patterns of migration; currently, migration is generally motivated by economic reasons. Polish adhesion to the EU in 2004 and the opening of the Belgian labour market in 2009 represent crucial moments in the status of Polish migrants. However, the formal changes they led to, still need to be translated into attitudes on the ground. The current period is an important time for the Polish community, as it is now able to come out of the shadows of illegality and play a more important role in Belgian daily life.

2. The organisation of the Polish community in Belgium

Polish people stayed illegally in Belgium for many years; during this time they began developing networks to provide them with a 'normal' life. This network of services managed to provide for most of the Polish migrants' needs, with the exception of education and health care. With their own informal labour market based around shops and hairdressers, the daily life of Polish migrants became relatively comfortable, especially when compared to that of other undocumented migrants. Their network also helped newcomers travel to Belgium, and provided them with access to the informal labour market. The presence of 'contact persons' such as relatives, friends, Polish priests and doctors, helped the new arrivals feel safe in their new country. This network largely spread from Belgium to Poland and facilitated the transfer of goods, people and finances. Languages were an important resource in this network.

Over time, the network was slowly consolidated. During the 1980s, the combination of solidarity among migrants and the temporary nature of migration led to arrangements in which (informal) employment was guaranteed to new migrants for a period of three months

(after which their visa expired). This solidarity was mainly expressed among relatives and friends. Polish workers were able to secure particular sectors of employment so that members of their community were provided with privileged access to new job openings, while restricting access to outsiders. Family ties are very important in migration processes and in the creation of a real 'migration industry', which is structured similarly to an informal network, comprising of travel agents, fixers and brokers. These people maintain links between Poland and Belgium and act as intermediaries between employers and employees, mostly in negotiations about wages because they usually understand Polish and French or Dutch.[38]

This network enabled migrants to feel 'at home' and to live with Polish relatives or friends, without the need to integrate into Belgian society. It enabled them to read Polish newspapers, eat Polish food, and live a similar lifestyle to that in Poland. Moreover, this feeling is reinforced when migration is viewed as temporary. Even though this is slowly changing, integration into Belgian society is far from a top priority for most Poles in Belgium. This form of organisation created a real 'transnational community' that enabled Polish migrants to live illegally in Belgium while still nourishing deep contacts with Poland. Family, friends and religious organisations are central to this community.

This may explain why most Polish people in Belgium originate from the same region in Poland: Podlasie (in North-East Poland). Society in this peripheral region is built around two main institutions: family and the church; this explains their importance to the Polish community in Belgium. For example, a few years after the fall of the Berlin wall, the church was the only bridge between Belgian and Polish institutions. As such, it provided support to migrants, such as helping them to build their own personal network, find accommodation, employment; and provided administrative help, such as translations, etc. With the development and the organisation of this community, the church began to lose its importance to migrants and it is now slowly returning to a focus on religion.[39] Despite this, there are still three important Polish catholic organisations in Brussels.

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[38] LAMBRECHT S. *Integration Patterns in urban contexts: the case of Polish immigration to Brussels*. A working paper presented at the First International Conference of Young Urban Researchers (FICYUrb), June 11—12, 2007.

[39] KUZMA Elżbieta, 'La communauté transnationale polonaise', in *Migrants de l'Est*, Agenda interculturel, no. 280, Brussels, February 2010.

The Polish town of Siemiatycze, known to locals as 'Mała Belgia' (Little Belgium), is a good example of group migration and is a useful means of examining the long-term consequences of circular migration. Migration from this town to Belgium started in the 1980s, when a local public transport enterprise (PKS) organised a regular service to Brussels. Before the accession of Poland to the European Union in May 2004, about 3,000 people from the town – out of a total of 15,000 inhabitants – were living and working in Brussels. They commuted back and forth by using daily bus services (both public and private) or with their own cars. Due to the fact that restrictions on access to the Belgian labour market remained in force for citizens from eight eastern EU member states until 1 May 2009, the migrants developed an informal and partly illegal circuit, including their own goods, transport and employment services. In the beginning, mostly single family members left for Brussels and often found illegal work in the construction sector and in private cleaning services. On the one hand, the city of Siemiatycze considerably benefited from this pattern of migration via remittances, which were often invested in real estate and more recently in local businesses. On the other hand, the socials costs of this unregulated migration became quickly apparent, mainly resulting in the dissolution of family bonds.

VANHEULE Dirk, MORTELMANS Annika, MAES Marleen, FOBLET Marie-Claire, *Temporary and circular migration in Belgium: Empirical evidence, policy practice and future options*, European Migration Network – Belgian National Contact Point, January 2011.

Several Polish schools were also established in Brussels and Antwerp, and were financed by the Polish authorities. Around 900 pupils attend one of the biggest Polish schools in Belgium, the Joachim Lelewel-School in Brussels.[40] These schools ensure the continuity of the Polish language and culture, and create strong links between migrants.

However, this network of services and organisations is not evenly spread throughout Belgium. In Wallonia, a few cultural associations do exist, which resulted from the oldest migration wave but their aim is more the preservation of cultural identities than fulfilling the needs of migrants. In Brussels and Flanders, where the majority of the new immigrants are settled, the network is very much alive but there are still a number of regional

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[40] VANHEULE Dirk, MORTELMANS Annika, MAES Marleen, FOBLET Marie-Claire, Temporary and circular migration in Belgium: Empirical evidence, policy practice and future options, European Migration Network- Belgian National Contact Point, January 2011.

differences. For example, Polish people seem to be a little less organised in Flanders than in Brussels. Even in Antwerp (the Flemish city with probably the most important Polish population) there are a few Polish shops, a school, and a church, but the services provided are quite limited and there is little coordination. The network in Brussels also lacks coordination, but it provides a much consistent set of services.

Important Polish community organisations in Belgium:
- Conseil de la Communauté polonaise de Belgique
- Polish expat network
- Comité des écoles polonaises de Belgique
- Missions catholiques polonaises
- Institut polonais (culture)

The Polish media in Belgium is an important vector of information for the community. A number of newspapers, internet fora and radio programmes reach a large number of Polish migrants. These media provide information on Belgian society or on administrative matters, glossaries on important words in French and Dutch, articles about Poland and the community's activities in Belgium but also, and even more importantly, classified adverts for items such as housing, job opportunities, Polish products and bus transport to Poland.

The main Polish media in Belgium:
- Gazetka. The most important newspaper: 20,000 copies – 10 times a year, free: http://gazetka.be/
- Nowinki: http://nowinki.be
- PoloniaNet: http://www.polonianet.be
- EmStacja : http://www.emstacja.eu/
- Plus: http://www.gazetaplus.be/
- Radio Roza: http://www.radioroza.eu/
- BelgiaNet: http://www.belgia.net/

3. Relations of the Polish community with Belgian nationals and other communities living in Belgium

The Polish community benefits from a relatively positive image in Belgium, although some stereotypes and misunderstandings can still be quite vivid in both mind-sets. The long history of Polish illegality in Belgium heavily limited Polish migrants' contact to Belgian society as a whole. During this time, contacts mainly remained superficial and were with employers, landlords or random people met in pubs. But this limited contact has forged Polish people's ideas about Belgian society and vice versa. This has been made worse by a poor knowledge of the local languages, which limits conversations to either very basic or work-related matters. As a result, Polish people mainly know Belgians from what they observe, and not from what they hear or understand.[41]

Although their newfound legal status changed the context of these relationships, the importance of the community and its services can still act as a limiting factor regarding contact with Belgians. Some Polish people may still perceive the Belgian community as not particularly welcoming, as they only have contacts with Belgian people through their work, where roles or symbolic power is at stake; this leads to twisted images of each other's community. Moreover, stereotypes can be difficult to change; as such, it may take time before the opportunities provided by their newly acquired legal status has noticeable effects on the Polish community.

Concerning Belgian attitudes towards the Polish community, it seems that Polish people living in Flanders are more likely to feel discriminated against than those living in Brussels, possibly because of the importance placed in Flanders on a good knowledge of Dutch. However, although the majority mainly has Polish friends, socialisation with Belgians living in Flanders occurs more rapidly than in Brussels. In both Regions, a change can often be observed when Polish people have children due to their contact with other parents in school. These contacts can help break down mutual (mis)conceptions: Polish people with many contacts to Belgians are more likely to have fewer stereotypes about their country of residence.

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[41] LEMAN J. *Sans Documents. Les immigrés de l'ombre. Latinos-Américains, Polonais et Nigérians clandestins à Bruxelles,* De Boek – Université, 1995.

All in all, compared to other non-national communities, Polish people do not suffer from major problems of discrimination or stereotypes, although misunderstandings do exist, partly due to the language barrier.

Figure 4: Do Belgians think in stereotypes about your community?[42]
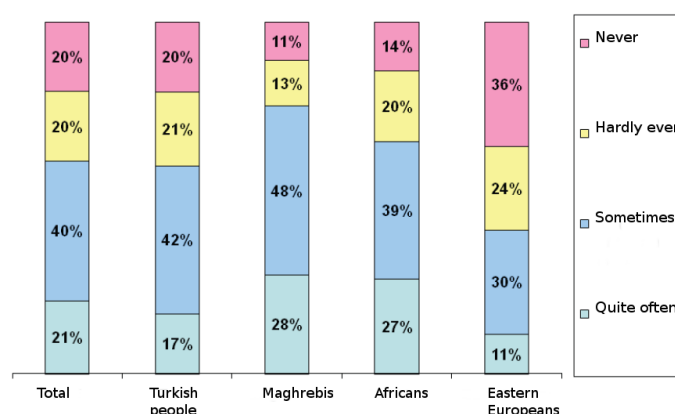
Concerning their relationship with other foreign communities, Polish people seem to be less positive than Belgians. Hence attitudes are not particularly friendly, but these relationships generally remain polite and are hardly ever aggressive or even tense.

igure 5: Relationships with people from other communities[43]

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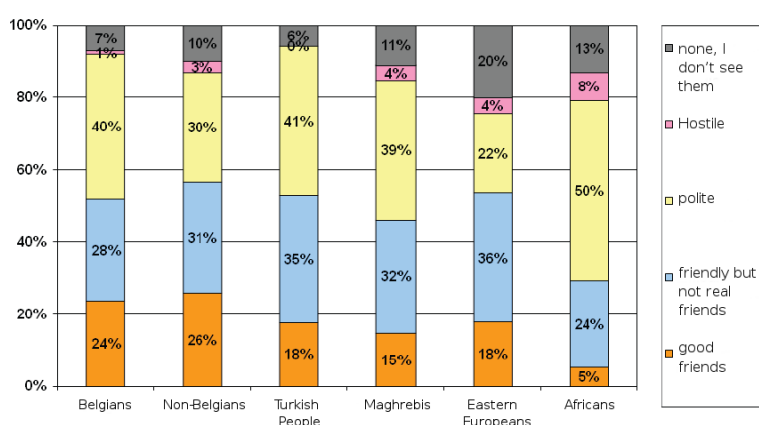
[42] Eastern European people in this survey were from Central and Eastern Europe, mainly Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania. Source: Independent Research Bureau, *Quelle perception les minorités ethniques ont-elles de la Belgique ? Présentation des résultats d'une enquête auprès de populations d'origines différentes en Belgique*, Etude pour le Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, November 2009.

[43] Source: Independent Research Bureau, *Quelle perception les minorités ethniques ont-elles de la Belgique? Présentation des résultats d'une enquête auprès de populations d'origines différentes en Belgique*, Etude pour le Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, November 2009.

Political & social integration of migrant communities: a comparative study

4. The participation of Polish citizens in local and European elections

Formal participation: election turnout

In Belgium, the turnout in European and local elections is quite low. In local elections in 2006, the turnout was as follows:[44]

	Potential voters	Actual voters	% of potential
Brussels	8,712 (4,352 men, 4,360 women)	436 (162 men, 274 women)	5%
Flanders	5,400 (869 men, 3,035 women)	342 (80 men, 262women)	6.3%
Wallonia	2245 (2,365 men, 1,376 women)	222 (75 men, 147 women)	9.9 %
Belgium (Total)	16,357 (7,586 men, 8,771 women)	1,000 (317 men, 683 women)	6.1%

In local elections in 2012, the turnout was as follows:

	Potential voters	Actual voters	% of potential
Brussels	19,415 (8,285 men, 11,130 women)	1,147 (397 men, 750 women)	5.9 %
Flanders	22,120 (10,924 men, 11,196 women)	688 (248 men, 440 women)	3.1 %
Wallonia	3,456 (1,437 men, 2,019 women)	336 (110 men, 226 women)	9.7 %
Belgium (Total)	44,991 (20,646 men, 24,345 women)	2,171 (755 men, 1,416 women)	4.8 %

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[44] Source: Direction générale Institutions et Population du SPF Intérieur - Registre National, statistiques officielles des électeurs, au 1/08/2006. Données par commune, sexe et nationalité, du nombre d'électeurs inscrits et potentiels. Available at: http://www.contact.rrn.fgov.be/fr/statelc/elec.php.

These numbers are incomplete as we do not know the proportion of Polish people from the newest waves of immigration and those from the older waves. This is important, as the different integration capital possessed by both groups could explain why Polish people living in Wallonia are more likely to vote. In addition, the potential voters' data only takes into account Polish people who are registered locally; as such, it ignores the huge part of the community without legal registration. In this sense, it is interesting to note the general increase in the amount of potential voters, which has more than doubled in Brussels, and has increased by a factor of four in Flanders. Again, it is hard to say whether this means that there are more Polish people in these regions or whether they are more likely to be registered. However, while the average percentage of Polish people who vote remains relatively stable, the actual number of Polish people voting has doubled both in Brussels and in Flanders, which is a very positive sign. A further interesting development is that women seem to be more active in the elections than men by a two to one ratio; this implies that Polish women are also more active in Belgian society than men.

At the local elections held in October 2012, six Polish candidates stood for election in Brussels (all were women):

- Magdalena Sikorowska, Saint-Gilles, LB
- Danuta Żędzian, Saint-Gilles, MR
- Renata Bednarz, Saint-Gilles, MR
- Beata Kocon, Ixelles, CDH (stood down just before the election)
- Ewa Chrypankowska, Ganshoren, LB (elected councillor)
- Dorota Dobrzyńska, Bruxelles, MR

Even if there have been major improvements in the integration of the Polish community in Belgium, it is interesting to note that their participatory profile matches that of other Eastern European communities, and clearly contrasts with those from Western Europe. Indeed, by looking at the statistics associated with voting, it is easy to understand the

participatory gap between Eastern and Western Europe when it comes to participation in Belgian local elections:[45]

Country	% of voters in local elections in 2012	Country	% of voters in local elections in 2012
Germany	18.6 %	Bulgaria	8.2 %
Austria	19.5 %	Estonia	5.7 %
Denmark	20.1 %	Hungary	5.1 %
Spain	16.9 %	Latvia	6.2 %
France	19.9 %	Lithuania	5.7 %
Italy	30.4 %	Poland	4.8 %
Luxembourg	25.6 %	Czech republic	6.2 %
The Netherlands	17.6 %	Romania	4.6 %
Portugal	10.3 %	Slovakia	4.5 %
United Kingdom	14.7 %	Slovenia	5.9 %

As we can see, the average level of participation in 'new' member states is significantly lower. This phenomenon can partly be explained by a lack of participatory tradition due to the former communist regimes in these countries, but also by a general lack of trust in politics (see below).

European elections
By the last European elections on 7 June 2009, 1,357 Polish people had registered to vote (out of 28,367 potential voters).[46] This means than less than 5% of potential voters participated in these elections. Although we do not have further specific data, it is still clear that a tiny proportion of Polish people did actually vote.

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[45] Source: Direction générale Institutions et Population du SPF Intérieur - Registre National, statistiques officielles des électeurs, au 1/08/2012. Données par commune, sexe et nationalité, du nombre d'électeurs inscrits et potentiels. Available at: http://www.contact.rrn.fgov.be/fr/statelc/elec.php.
[46] Direction des Election du SPF Intérieur – Statistiques officielles extraites du Registre national le 11 avril 2009, Nombre de citoyens européens inscrits en qualité d'électeurs au 1er avril: statistiques par nationalité. Available at: http://elections.fgov.be/index.php?id=1182&no_cache=1&print=1.

During these elections, a young Polish man, Bartosz Lech ran as a candidate for the European Green party: he was the first Polish citizen to stand as a candidate in the European elections outside of Poland.[47] He gained 13,955 votes,[48] which is a respectively result, although it was not enough to be elected.

Apart from this formal participation, Polish people are not very active in Belgian civil society. Only a minority of Polish people (14% in Flanders) is active in Belgian associations. In most of these cases, they are mainly active in trade unions (some unions have even targeted Polish workers through a number of initiatives). This could indicate that economic motives are still very important to these patterns of migration.

The reasons for low participation

The unemployment rate is very low among the Polish community and most Polish people seem quite satisfied with their economic situation. This strong economic activity, as the motivation for their migration, partly explains their low level of participation: Polish people usually work a lot and consequently have little time to think about politics.

Furthermore, the creation of a Polish transnational community in Belgium clearly makes integration more difficult. Poles working in Belgium often have few incentives to learn French or Dutch as most of them work with other Polish workers or only need a basic knowledge of one of the national languages to do their jobs. However, without an appropriate knowledge of French or Dutch, integration – hence participation – will be very difficult to achieve, as Belgian society can be a complete mystery for some migrants, even after having lived in the kingdom for many years.[49]

This is made worse by the fact that many Polish people are not even aware of their right to vote in Belgium or fear that doing so would lead them to lose their right to vote in Poland. Language is again to blame here, but the fact that citizens prefer to vote for national lists is also important. Migration is seen as a temporary tool to earn money. As such, integration –

[47] Ydt Gazeta Wyborcza Polak kandyduje do Europarlamentu z Belgii, 23/03/2009, Available at: http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,6411313,Polak_kandyduje_do_Europarlamentu_z_Belgii.html
[48] Source: http://barteklech.wordpress.com/
[49] KUZMA, E. 'La communauté transnationale polonaise', in *Migrants de l'Est*, Agenda interculturel, no. 280, Brussels, February 2010.

hence participation – is not a priority. However, for most migrants this temporary stay becomes much longer than expected, if not definitive. Some Poles now find themselves in a good professional situation, live with most of their family in Belgium and their children are being educated in Belgian schools; as such it becomes harder to return to Poland. This situation is reinforced by the persistence of a high rate of unemployment and low incomes in Poland (especially in the countryside or in peripheral regions such as Podlasie). Although the economic situation is improving in Poland, Belgium and the living conditions it provides still seem preferable.

In other words, the creation of a transnational community, with strong, constant links to Poland, combined with temporary migration, has given rise to a transnational ethnic community whose culture and commitments are neither wholly oriented toward the new country nor toward the old; this is in opposition to both permanent settlement and the exclusive adoption of the citizenship of the country of destination.[50]

The idea of a stay in Belgium being little more than temporary, coupled with the opening of the labour market (allowing Polish people to work legally) are key advances towards the greater integration and participation of Polish people in Belgian society.

Democracy and civil society in Poland

Other factors that explain the low levels of participation by Polish migrants in Belgium can be found in the Polish tradition of democracy and civil society. In comparison with other member states, turnout in European elections is quite low in Poland.

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[50] LAMBRECHT, S. *Integration Patterns in urban contexts: the case of Polish immigration to Brussels.* A working paper presented at the First International Conference of Young Urban Researchers (FICYUrb), June 11—12, 2007.

Figure 6: Turnout in Poland — European elections[51]
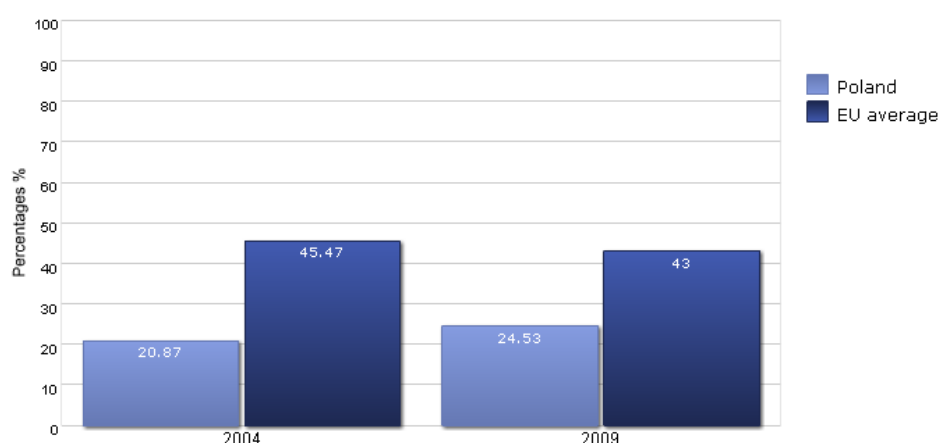
Election year	National turnout (%)	European turnout (%)
2004	20.87	45.47
2009	24.53	43

Concerning the dynamics of its civil society, Poland is near to the bottom in the European ranking of membership to non-political organisations and associations: only 5.5% of adults have worked in non-political organisations or associations over the last 12 months, whereas the EU average is 13.6%. Current membership in trades unions is also low at 14%.[52] However, modern Polish civil society is actually very new: over 90% of Polish NGOs have been established since 1989.[53] It seems that Poland suffers from a lack of democratic tradition, due to its historical context.[54] In other words, Polish people are not yet used to participating in elections.

Another important factor is trust, which is an important prerequisite for the creation of civil society and for participation. Here again, Poland scores quite low. If these data are the same for Polish migrants in Belgium, this can explain the strength and the importance of the community, and their low level of participation.

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[51] Source: European Parliament — Turnout per country, 2009, Poland. Available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/00082fcd21/2009results.html?tab=20#result_turnout

[52] EKIERT Grzegorzt, KUBIK Jan, WENZEL Michał, *Civil society in Poland — Case study*, paper prepared for international conference "The Logic of Civil Society in New Democracies: East Asia and East Europe", Taipei, June 5-7 2009.

[53] ANNA GĄSIOR-NIEMIEC et PIOTR GLIŃSKI *Europeanization of civil society in Poland* Rev. soc. polit., god. 14, br. 1, str 29—47, Zagreb 2007.

[54] ROSZKOWSKA, Joanna, *Creation of civil society in Poland in comparison with European experiences*, YouREC Conference Paper November 2004.

Figure 7: Levels of trust among Polish people[55]
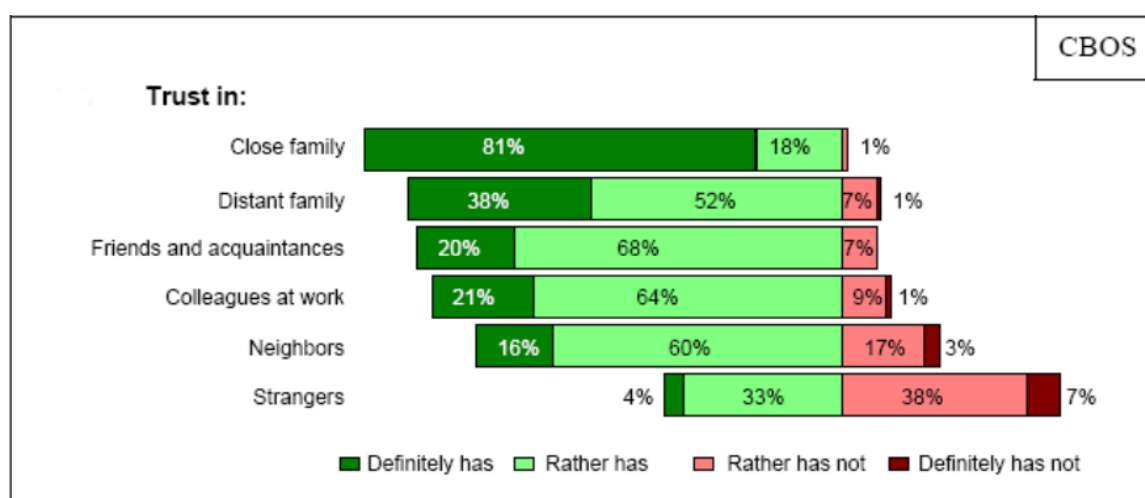
5. Good practices

In Belgium, the municipality of Saint-Gilles, which has the highest number of people from other member states (30%), set up the *Commission du dialogue sur l'Europe* (Commission of Dialogue on the European Union) in 2004 to organise debates on the Polish presence in Saint-Gilles and on the importance of Poland for the EU. In 2006, Polish people were able to vote for the first time in local elections as EU citizens. Consequently local authorities intensified their efforts to encourage the participation of non-Belgian EU citizens living in Belgium, together with the Brussels—Europe liaison Office. Awareness raising campaigns were set up to strengthen participation in local elections by non-Belgian EU citizens; attempts were made to reduce administrative burdens and formal obstacles to voting; and people were informed about their political rights. This was essential as some people were not aware of their right to vote in Belgium, whereas others were afraid of losing their right to vote in their country of origin if they did so. All this was explained in leaflets that were distributed to every registered non-Belgian EU citizen in their own language. Although these actions were aimed at every non-Belgian EU citizen living in Saint-Gilles, a special focus was also placed on Polish residents, and the local authorities organised 'Polish Days' (les Journées polonaises de Saint-Gilles) aimed at improving the image of Poland in

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[55] EKIERT Grzegorzt, KUBIK Jan, WENZEL Michał, *Civil society in Poland — Case study*, paper prepared for international conference "The Logic of Civil Society in New Democracies: East Asia and East Europe", Taipei, June 5—7 2009.

Belgium, helping people understand Polish culture and encouraging the 'shy' Polish community to participate more actively in local social and political life. More than 300 people participated in these activities. Following its success, a new event was organised in 2011.

During the Polish EU presidency, the municipality of Etterbeek also organised cultural events linked to the Polish community in the area, and one of the main events was a meeting to raise-awareness among non-Belgian EU citizens about participation in local elections, the main issues involved, their goals and how to participate. The Polish community is the second most important in Etterbeek.

6. <u>Recommendations: the needs of the community, and how to encourage participation</u>

- Disseminate information (through both formal and informal channels) on the importance of political participation. Use Polish media in Belgium to distribute information.
- Facilitate and promote language learning, but translate essential documents on social and political life.
- Mobilise Polish associations and organisations concerned with the promotion of the integration of migrants around participatory matters.
- Raise awareness among civil servants and representatives of public authorities about problems encountered by people from other countries who wish to participate. Strengthen the relationships of these representatives with the Polish community.
- Empower women and 'contact' persons by linking social life with political life, and encourage women to become more visible and a play a stronger role in their community.

II. The Portuguese community in France
(Arnaud Breuil)

1. An introduction to the Portuguese community

The historical approach of the Portuguese community in France [56]

Portuguese migration to France started with the First World War. Several highly contrasting periods of immigration can be distinguished in the period between 1916 and the late 1970s. There were times of mass arrivals concentrated over a short span of just a few years, followed by periods of significant departures or stagnation. Nevertheless, there were two major waves of Portuguese immigration during this time: in the 1920s and the 1960s. These periods can be contrasted with the significant declines in immigration during the 1930s and 1940s and the slow growth that has occurred since the mid-1970s.

The first wave of migration: 1916 — 1931

The First World War initiated a decisive phase in the history of Portuguese immigration in France. Up until this point, Portuguese arrivals had mainly been intellectuals and artists. France had also been a (more or less temporary) destination for Portuguese political exiles: in particular a number of Republicans arrived after 1891. In contrast, Portuguese migrant workers were mainly heading for Brazil at this time.

Portugal's entry into the war in 1916, along with France and Britain, led to a radical change: the Portuguese government sent an expeditionary force to France and 20,000 workers were hired as part of a labour agreement. A number of these workers did not return to Portugal after the war, despite the stipulated agreement, and they even brought some of their relatives to France. Their number increased with demobbed soldiers, and as such France became one of the main destinations for Portuguese migrants.

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[56] This section is based on Marie Christine Volovitch-Tavarès, *Les phases de l'immigration portugaise, des années vingt aux années soixante-dix,* Actes de l'histoire de l'immigration, mars 2001.

By the end of the war the number of Portuguese workers had grown quickly: 10,000 Portuguese workers, who were ranked for the first time as a specific social group, were registered in 1921. By 1931 there were nearly 50,000 Portuguese workers in France; they were employed extensively in chemicals, metallurgy, and forestry, with a small number working in agriculture. These workers were essentially permanent workers, more rarely seasonal. They were particularly numerous in the southern regions, the Paris region and the Nord-Pas de Calais. The vast majority were men, although a number of women did move to France soon afterwards and children were born. In the early years of significant immigration to France, many Portuguese workers worked illegally. Indeed, although the French had sought a labour agreement since 1919 similar to the one they had with other European governments, successive Portuguese governments had refused to sign an agreement that explicitly curbed departures. In doing so, the Portuguese leaders were pursuing a policy implemented at the beginning of the century through which restrictive guidelines encouraged the development of underground networks. Indeed, highly diverse illegal networks of migration developed during the 1920s that helped potential migrants reach France by land or sea.

The crisis during the 1930s led many workers to return to Portugal, but others decided to stay in France at all costs. Portuguese entries fell dramatically but did not completely stop. However, although this did not stop negotiations on a Franco-Portuguese labour agreement, the agreement that was finally signed by Salazar in 1940 was quickly made obsolete by the invasion and occupation of France just a few weeks later.

The military coup of May 1926 was the beginning of a long dictatorship in Portugal that lasted until 25 April 1974; it also led a number of Portuguese political exiles to move to France. This was the first large group of Portuguese political exiles to arrive in France. For some of these people, migration to France was a stepping stone that was to lead to Brazil, as was the case with the writer Aquilino Ribeiro. Others stayed longer, including Afonso Costa, the former minister and representative of Portugal to the peace conference, who later died in Paris in 1937. Republican exiles belonged to all tendencies, from the right to the far left and as such included liberals, socialists, trade unionists, communists and

anarchists. Similarly, their social and professional backgrounds varied greatly. In 1927 a number of these immigrants gathered under the banner of the *Liga de Paris* and for a short time during the Spanish Civil War constituted a *Frente Popular*. The defeat of the Spanish republicans brought Portuguese fighters to France who shared the same difficulties of integration as the Spanish fighters. Some stayed in France and participated in the resistance and the struggle for liberation, others departed for exile. Throughout this period, the relationship between the workers and fellow Portuguese political exiles was extremely weak, despite attempts to forge links by some migrant groups.

The mass returns between the 1930s and 1956

The crisis led both to a rapid slowdown in inflows of workers, and many returns to Portugal; not all were voluntary. However, a number of Portuguese workers chose to stay in France despite pressure from both governments. This period also constituted the first major phase of Portuguese naturalisations. On the eve of the Second World War, the combined number of departures and naturalisations meant that more than 28,000 Portuguese people were living in France.

To meet their labour needs, some French companies were legally recruiting Portuguese workers between 1940 and 1944. Furthermore, some Portuguese immigrants were subjected to *service du travail obligatoire* (compulsory labour service); due to the good relations between Lisbon and berlin, the Portuguese government did very little to support its citizens.

Alongside the history of Portuguese immigration, it is important to recall the work of the Portuguese consul in Bordeaux, Sousa Mendes, who issued numerous Portuguese passports against the advice of his government (and for which he was later sanctioned) and through which he managed to save the lives of many Jewish people during the war.

Emigration to France resumed at the end of the war, even if the country was a less desirable destination than South America. The French government resumed its steps to sign a labour agreement with the Portuguese government while the latter, still reluctant, refused

to follow the 1940 agreement. Consequently, illegal channels of migration rapidly resurfaced in France, although their actions were relatively limited for the next ten years. After 1947, the numbers of Portuguese immigrants to France began to fall, whereas the number of naturalisations steadily increased. Accordingly, the 1954 census recorded little more than 20,000 Portuguese people living in France.

During the war and occupation, some opponents of the Portuguese dictatorship had remained in France and formed part of the resistance. Other democrats had also joined the Portuguese after the Salazar dictatorship had disappointed their hopes. They formed small groups whose modest influence was rapidly reduced in the wake of tensions arising from the Cold War. Finally the ban in France (during the mid-1950s) of the Portuguese Communist Party and Portuguese associations linked to the party led to a further decline.

1956 — 1974: the Portuguese become the largest group of immigrants in France

During this period, France was the most important destination for Portuguese migrants. Four stages constitute this short but decisive period between 1956 and 1974. First, between 1956 and 1960 the number of Portuguese workers entering France became important again: the Portuguese were 3rd — behind Italian and Spanish immigrants — and the illegal channels of migration encouraged this. However, until the early 1960s, the number of entries of legal Portuguese workers, who arrived on passports issued by the *Junta de Emigração,* which was founded in 1947, remained greater than the number of illegal arrivals.

Second, between 1962 and 1966 there was spectacular growth in the numbers of Portuguese immigrants arriving in France, although this slowed down in 1967 and 1968. However, until the 1980s, France continued to be the most important destination for Portuguese emigrants, with less people now leaving for Brazil. During the next twenty years, none of the other numerous destinations of Portuguese emigrants was more important than France. Consequently, within ten years Portuguese people were the most numerous foreign group living in the country.

Third, by 1968 there were 500,000 Portuguese people living in France. In the six years from 1962 to 1968 their number had increased tenfold. The most dramatic numbers of Portuguese entries occurred in 1969 and 1970: 80,000 Portuguese workers (men and women) arrived in France – 120,000 including their family members. As such, within a decade, the number of Portuguese people living in France had risen from 50,000 to over 700,000!

Finally, from 1971 onwards the number of Portuguese entries declined significantly, although immigration did not disappear completely.

During this period, illegal entry was the rule

The French authorities remained divided on whether to open their doors to Portuguese workers. Although Portuguese workers were in demand by employers and viewed positively by government officials, concerns about the increasing number of illegal entries and the risk of this causing an unmanageable administrative situation and political instability as well as the human costs involved were viewed as unacceptable. This led the French authorities to intensify their demands to develop a new labour agreement: the Portuguese government finally agreed to do so in December 1963. However, for complex reasons of both internal politics and the social balance that constituted the Portuguese dictatorship, as well as the Portuguese colonial war between 1961 and 1974, the agreement was abused by the Portuguese government to curb legal immigration, and punish unlawful departures. However, the Portuguese government was unable to prevent illegal emigration, as it was more or less openly supported by the majority of Portuguese society, including bishops who publicly asserted the right to emigrate in the late 1960s.

Faced with this situation, the French government decided to change the status of Portuguese workers who carried some sort of identity document and at least had a vague promise of employment and accommodation. They opened a special link to police headquarters (the Seine) in 1965 from Crimea Street in Paris, and in 1966 in the slum of Champigny-sur-Marne, which was viewed as the hub of Portuguese immigration to France. In the late 1960s, branches of the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Labour were

set up in Hendaye and provided labour and work permits to thousands of Portuguese workers. After 1968 Portuguese immigration did not face the restrictive measures applied to other immigrants, and Algerians in particular. The number of illegal entries peaked in 1969/1970 with 120,000 Portuguese immigrants entering France.

Taking advantage of the contradictions between French and Portuguese government policy, hundreds of thousands of men, women and children left Portugal and crossed two borders illegally. If some of these trips were made in suitable conditions in the midst of peace and prosperity in Europe, many others were made under difficult and at times dramatic conditions; some journeys were even fatal. It would be excessive to speak in terms of smuggling networks that were lead thousands of illegal immigrants over nearly 2,000 km (although these activities were now often undertaken in place of previous forms of smuggling). However, these journeys were often expensive and risky. This situation also created networks of corruption between Portuguese officials, Portuguese, Spanish and French smugglers, landlords and people who supplied the documents and labour contracts.

The Portuguese government, torn between contradictory political, social and financial demands, closed its eyes to the numerous departures and return journeys, and did not even prosecute immigrants who they could prove had been registered immigrants in France! This relaxed legal situation began to change slowly from 1972 onwards (the Marcellin-Fontanet circulars), and in 1974 the cessation of immigration also affected Portuguese immigrants. On the Portuguese side, emigration policy changed after the death of Salazar, which had paved the way for a new agreement in 1971; this was to be the first of many other agreements between France and Portugal. However, the agreements came far too late, as the vast majority of Portuguese immigrants had already established themselves in France before 1972, outside of this new legal framework.

This placed hundreds of thousands of people in a difficult situation, and caused widespread distrust of both the French and the Portuguese authorities. In fact this feeling of distrust was so strong that a significant number of Portuguese immigrants decided not to apply to legalise their status, despite the services they would have been granted if they had done so. Thus the practice of illegal immigration continued after 1974; in 1982 Portuguese

immigrants still only accounted for 10% of legal migrants. The fall of the Portuguese dictatorship on 25 April 1974; the advancement of democracy in Portugal, and even Portugal's entry into the European Union, have not radically changed some of the features of Portuguese immigration to France, which is still marked by these early years of immigration.

The reasons behind migration: who were the first Portuguese immigrants?

1 – In an unprecedented rural exodus, workers emptied the countryside north of the Tagus

Portuguese immigrants – both men and women – mainly came from districts north of the Tagus. These Portuguese provinces have traditionally seen large amounts of emigration, and continue to do so. The people who left were overwhelmingly from peasant families without the means to provide enough to ensure their family's survival. These people were joined by agricultural labourers fleeing endemic unemployment, as well as village artisans with scarce resources. Very few of these emigrants were educated, and this was especially the case with those arriving in France. From the 1920s onwards, Portuguese immigrants are without doubt those with the lowest rate of literacy among all of the European immigrants who moved to France. During this time, Portugal saw an unprecedented level of emigration from rural areas, which was reinforced by the exodus of other workers to industrial and urban areas in Portugal. The phenomenon became so widespread that Portugal's population dropped significantly in many areas, despite the country's relatively high birth rate.

Only a minority of Portuguese migrants came from provincial cities or Lisbon. There was a notably limited number of immigrants from more affluent backgrounds such as merchants, artisans and employees. These people represented a small minority, and had very different reasons for leaving than hoping to get rich quick, or due to militant opposition to the regime.

2 - Immigrants were concentrated around a few regions, and were over-represented in certain professional sectors

The links between this new wave of Portuguese emigration and that of the 1920s were often indirect; the settlement regions in which the majority of immigrants moved to had few direct links with the situation before the Second World War. Until the mid-1970s, Portuguese immigrants were heavily concentrated around a few large industrial areas, mainly in the Paris region where about half of all Portuguese immigrants lived. The next most important areas were Lyon, Clermont Ferrand, Grenoble, and northern France.

Men mainly worked in the industrial sector, although some worked in agriculture and forestry, with its great demand for labour; however, most Portuguese migrants preferred the better-paid sectors as they rarely took on seasonal work such as agriculture, unless it was the first work they found in the new country. Similarly, they rarely worked in mines, but they did work in all other kinds of industry, especially the automotive industry and associated areas. These included the factories in the Paris region, Sochaux and Clermont-Ferrand. They were particularly numerous in construction and public works. In the 1960s they were the most common immigrant group in these sectors. Portuguese workers were employed in all great urban construction works in large numbers and in universities. In the Paris region, they provided the bulk of the workers who built the RER ring-road, the Montparnasse Tower and later Defense. In these areas they made up for their lack of qualifications, by working overtime in the hope of earning enough money to quickly improve their situation and return to Portugal with a far better economic situation.

By 1960, a significant number of women had arrived, and this trend continued. These were the wives, but also sisters or other relatives or neighbours of men who had already emigrated; wives were sometimes accompanied by children, but other children were left in the care of their family in Portugal. Many of these young women had children born in France, and some of them made the hard journey *a salto* without being accompanied by male relatives or their communities.

A lot of these women took up employment as domestic servants, cleaners and maids, often taking on the jobs of Spanish workers. Others began their new lives in France with hard agricultural labour, especially in the Ile-de-France region.

3 – Civil disobedience and colonial war

During the 1960s, and until the fall of the dictatorship and the end of the colonial war in Angola, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique (1961—1974), growing numbers of young men were leaving for other reasons. These young people, some of whom were only 16 years-of-age left for France to escape military service in a tired army and a war without a foreseeable outcome. Many of these young men arrived in France with the help of the widespread illegal immigration networks. They constituted a heterogeneous group with diverse social origins, opinions and motivation. The Portuguese army estimated that 150,000 young people escaped military service in all its forms. For many of these young people, who were helped by their parents, this choice was not the result of a clear opposition to the regime and its colonial war; they viewed the war as nothing to do with them, and preferred to focus on themselves and their families. At the same time, they were leaving a country that could not secure their future; a society dedicated to immobility governed by an old dictatorship and caught up in a war without a foreseeable end. For these young people, returning to Portugal would be impossible until after the fall of the dictatorship, the end of the colonial war and the amnesty of 1975.

4 – A new generation of political exiles

In Portugal opposition to the Salazar dictatorship grew stronger in 1958 and this led to a new generation of exiles. These people joined the small group of Portuguese exiles living in France that were associated with communist political parties. However, a large number of the new opposition, the vast majority of whom were students, left for exile shortly before military service and instead of joining the former exiles formed new groups especially Maoist ones, which were more or less opposed to the old communist parties.

Most of these exiles did not apply for political refugee status. They feared this would lead them to be identified by the French and Portuguese police, and as such preferred to blend

into the mass of illegal immigrants as workers with more chance of gaining a legal status. In fact, for the vast majority of these rebellious and refractory exiles, many of whom were deserters, refugee status would have been very difficult to obtain. However, in 1972 the situation changed due to the Marcellin-Fontanet circular. Although this led a number of these young exiles to apply for refugee status, it was a status they were unlikely to be granted.

Most of these exiles had fled the Portuguese political police, and had limited contact to Portuguese immigrant workers. Some chose to ignore them; this was the case with most of the socialists whose opposition to the Salazar dictatorship had little influence on the rural Portuguese immigrants living in France. Others established contacts in various ways with Portuguese immigrant workers, mainly through activities and associations with various militant practices. In particular these associations were linked to the French Communist Party (which provided a lot of support to the Portuguese Communist Party), and the federation of the AOP (Association of Natives of Portugal), but there were also Maoist groups, which were deeply divided and sought to influence Portuguese immigrants through other associative structures. Finally, there were a number of Portuguese Christians (priests and laity), who had opposed the Salazar dictatorship and its colonial war, as well as a number of active groups linked to a monthly magazine founded in 1965 called *Presença Portuguesa*, which was published by some members of the French clergy. Each of these groups was able to appeal to Portuguese economic immigrants who had been politicised in France.

These exiles had a hard time gaining a voice in France, which had forgotten that the Salazar regime and the Franco regime were the sole survivors of the pre-war dictatorships. It was not until the scandal of the Portuguese colonial war, which continued despite the independence of the other colonies, that opposition strengthened in France. From 1968, young rebellious deserters became more and more numerous and better organised. Dozens of often short-lived political publications crossed the French border, including *Proletariado O, A voz do Desertore, O Salto* and *Luta*. Some well-known intellectuals and activists in France agreed to take on the responsibility for some of these publications in order to protect their Portuguese leaders. The people who did so include J.P Sartre, Marguerite

Duras, Francois Chatelet and Father Cardonnel. In the 1970s, there were some parallels between Portuguese militants and activists from other immigrant communities living in France, among others through the House of the Migrant Workers and later citizens' demonstrations.

Portuguese immigrants as part of French Society

1 – The Isolation of Portuguese immigrants until the mid-1960s: life in the slums

During the ten years between 1956 and 1966, Portuguese immigrants had no strong networks or historical settlements in France that could have facilitated their integration. They had little knowledge of French society, and often arrived directly from their villages. They had no knowledge of the French language, knew nothing about French administrative practices, nor about their fundamental rights. Entry requirements into France locked them into networks of limited relations, while the hope of a quick return to Portugal encouraged large numbers to save excessively. This context, combined with the housing shortage in French urban areas (especially in the Paris area), led many of these people to live in precarious conditions; they were faced by poor housing, especially in the slums, and some even lived in caves.

Portuguese immigrants were most likely to live in a slum in the Paris area, mostly alongside other Spanish or Algerian immigrants. Although others lived in 'Portuguese' slums such as in Champigny-sur-Marne, Francs-Moisins (Seine-Saint-Denis), La Courneuve, Aubervilliers, Carrière/Seine, Massy, Villejuif and Villeneuve-le-Roi. An investigation made by the Prefecture de la Seine in 1965 on Portuguese people living in the slums of the Parisian region found that 15,000 out of the 40,000 Portuguese people living in this region were housed in one of the dozen slums in the area. The slum in Champigny-sur-Marne, was the biggest in France, and its population had grown from around 6,000 people in 1961 to over 12,000 by 1964.

2 – French society 'discovers' the Portuguese

Until the mid-1960s, administrators, elected officials and French society as a whole hadalmost totally ignored the existence of the thousands of new immigrants. However, from 1964 to 1965, the precariousness of their lives, their growing importance in some municipalities and areas, as well as their lack of knowledge of French society suddenly threw a light on a human phenomenon that had been largely ignored until this point. As the number of newspaper articles, and radio and television programmes about the lives of Portuguese people increased, and with the release of the film *O Salto* in 1967, the administration, municipalities, trades unions, associations and humanitarian activists sought to provide solutions to the problems faced by these new immigrants.

Note that during this time of 'discovery', some Portuguese migrants started to reorganise themselves using a number of administrative structures that were inherited from colonisation, such as FAS and SONACOTRA, and which provided care and supervision to immigrants. Meanwhile, new combinations of aid and political support for immigrants, such as that provided by ASTI, which was aggregated rapidly into FASTI, often reflected the dramatic situations faced by Portuguese immigrants.

The destruction of slums, which was brought about with the passage of the Debré Act in 1964, only began after the 1966 Nungesser Act. The removal of the slums continued until the mid-1970s, although there was a sharp acceleration in the destruction of slums between May and June 1968. Many Portuguese people had long resisted relocation, and often recreated 'micro-slums' outside of the administrative jurisdictions of the government bodies responsible for slum clearance: this especially occurred on the peripheries of the former Seine region. However, an exceptional case of open resistance occurred in relation to the destruction of the 'slum' in Portuguese Massy in 1971 and 1972. This movement, in conjunction with various political groups from the extreme, to the PSU and the Maoists, brought Portuguese immigration to the forefront of the new topic of immigration in France.

As for trade unions, in 1964 the CGT (*Confédération Générale du Travail*) became the first union to address Portuguese workers in their own language (*O Trabalhador*). Both the FO

(*Force Ouvrière*) and the CFDT (*Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail*) quickly followed. The Portuguese unions remained modest during most of the 1960s. However, from the general strike of 1968 onwards and despite a number of returns to Portugal (generated by fear, unemployment and encouraged by the Portuguese authorities), successes – particularly in terms of wages – enabled the major unions to organise and train more professionally in sectors closely oriented towards the Portuguese. They also took on union leaders from the new wave of immigration.

3 – The beginnings of the community life of Portuguese immigrants.

By the mid-sixties, a few Portuguese associations had emerged. They were very few, because at that time, the restrictions of the 1939 Act on the right of association of foreigners were still in force, which was, moreover, that few of them were legally registered, some with only a de facto existence. They were often related either to political groups (the PDO is the best example) or to Catholic groups (themselves deeply divided between supporters of the regime through the Mission of Portugal and Portuguese banks operating in France, or otherwise opposition groups, the most important cluster around Presença Portuguesa). Beside them, the first sports clubs (football clubs) and the first "friendly bars" were slowly organized, often informally. Let's not forget a few cultural groups which usually gathered around theatrical activities (religious or militant).

In 1971, there were about twenty associations, and their numbers grew quickly, as many Portuguese immigrants realized that their return would take time, and that their children would grow up - at least for a few years - in France. This is the beginning of associations similar to those we know today, friendly, family-like, allowing through the pace of their activities and their organization of "find the village" and "transmit" the culture and traditions to the children which adults remained attached to (hence the importance of folk groups), often with the organization of Portuguese language courses for young people. Thus in 1972 there were already about fifty Portuguese associations and, on the eve of the fall of the dictatorship, April 25, 1974, they were about eighty. The disappearance of the authoritarian regime in Portugal, the expansion of liberties, had a quick impact on the growth of Portuguese associations in France. The disappearance of the last constraints on

foreign associations in France in the early eighties, completed to strengthen the phenomenon.

2. The organization of the Portuguese community in France

There are a large number (hundreds) of Portuguese associations in France, but they are generally very small. The vast majority of them have indeed a very small number of members.

The Portuguese associations are generally restricted to a few small circle of friends or people with family links, having a center of common interest, and which give "body" to a specific activity, under the wording of Portuguese Association.

It is very difficult to group them or attempt to find a real unity among them because of their size, their isolation, their means, and their specificity.

Contrary to popular belief, a characteristic of Portuguese people living abroad is also that they have only little ability to come together outside of exceptional circumstances, such as sporting events of great magnitude in which Portugal participates.

However, it is noted that a small number of Portuguese associations established in France as well as in various foreign countries, are using a lot of energy to keep abroad vivid image, culture and Portuguese traditions.

- One of the best examples of these multiple associations Portuguese really structured is (among others) the Association of Portuguese cultural and recreational in Fontenay-sous-bois (ARCPF);

- There is also a federation of a number of Portuguese associations in France. This is the Portuguese Federation of France (FAPF)

- A report also Cap Magellan, a Portuguese association oriented dynamic young Luso-descendants, and between others, Are, a defense-oriented association of Portuguese emigrants.

3. Relations of the Portuguese community with French nationals and other communities living in France

Today, there is no significant trace of the commitment of the Portuguese community on issues of racism and struggle against discrimination.

The reasons appear to be multiple.

First, despite the difficult living conditions on arrival in France and the existence of slums, the majority of the migration took place in the 1960s at a time of strong economic growth. Economic integration in sectors where the Portuguese workforce was important (the building sector in particular and the industry) did not create any major problems. This resulted in a rapid economic and social integration.

On such issues, the answers and the feeling of those who participated in focus groups was quite uniform: the willingness to integrate work and "discretion" are the most striking characteristics of Portuguese migrants. The conclusion we can draw is that the commitment to create or to participate in an association is an opportunity to stay in touch with Portuguese culture and common origins, and not as a "political" statement of belonging to the community.

To the extent that the Portuguese associations are mainly present in the cultural, sporting or festive, they are little or no bearing societal demands. They then dissociate themselves from other associative movements of more recent migrations for which questions of integration and fight against discrimination are key determinants of their activities.

4. The participation of Portuguese immigrants in local and European elections

Of course, political participation (voting, to stand as candidate) is only one element of citizenship and the "invisibility" of the Portuguese community is weighted by mobilizations, which is often associative: it remains that European citizenship practiced by the Portuguese residents in France is now and at present time, limited in scope and in its uses.

For a long time, there were very few data on the political behaviour of Portuguese people living in France. Research into geographical mobility and social inclusion such as the work by Michele Tribalat *Faire France* from 1995 (but relating to 1992) was one of the first studies undertaken. These data demonstrated that Portuguese immigrants are often naturalised French citizens; this was the case with 83% of men and 76% of women. As for young people aged between 20 and 29 born in France as children of mixed parents, 72% of men and 55% of women had been naturalised. If both parents were born in Portugal (that is to say they were French by declaration, but had been naturalised according to section 44 of the former nationality code embedded in the Civil Code), the rate drops to 57% of men and 50% of women. If we look at the age group between 25 and 29 years-of-age (the top half of the age group considered above), the rate rises to 76% for men and 62% for women, which illustrates the fact that registration on the electoral rolls rises with age. It is interesting to compare these results with the national average for people in the same age group − 84% for men and 83% for women. The difference between young people of Portuguese descent born in France to mixed parents is large: 28% of women and 12% of men were registered. There is a similar level of enrolment for young people whose parents were born in Portugal: 27% for men and 24% for women.

In France, these issues are generally discussed in the context of young people of North African origin. However, young men of Algerian decent between 25 and 29 years of age also have one of the lowest rates of registration on the election rolls; only young people of Portuguese origin with two parents born in Portugal have a comparable rate (13%). This places them between the national average and that of young people of Algerian decent. Similarly, young Portuguese women with two parents born in Portugal have rates comparable to that of young people of Algerian origin (a difference of 3%).

The authors of a study conducted in the late 1980s vividly summed up the situation of Portuguese residents by referring to the community as 'resident non-citizens' in France, and as 'missing citizens' in Portugal.[57] Cordeiro was the first to view the issue of the "non-

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[57] CARREIRA Teresa Pires, TOME Maria-Alice, Portugais et Luso-Français, Tome1 Duble Culture et Identité, Paris, CIEMI/Collection Migrations et Changements, 1994, p.13.

participation of the Portuguese living abroad as a missed electoral act"[58] and criticised the "lack of surveys on the political behaviour of Portuguese residents".[59] Cordeiro argues that the situation is severe: the Portuguese population is "inherently suspicious of politics [...] The non-availability of the great mass of the Portuguese in basic democratic practices (voting, public debate) ensures that their participation in electoral processes will be systematically marginal".[60] Similarly, Strudel, using data from Portuguese voter registrations in European elections between 1994 and 1999, and in the municipal election of 2001, notes that "European citizenship CARRIED by the Portuguese residing in France is both limited in its scope and in its uses".[61]

This may be due to a similar lack of participation in elections in Portugal, which also generally rally very few Portuguese people living abroad. Despite this, the Portuguese community residing abroad has had the right to vote in legislative elections in Portugal since 1976. In 2000, this right was extended to include voting in Portuguese presidential elections. However, the low number of registered Portuguese voters has much to do with the policy of the Secretariat Technical Assistance Electoral Process (STAP) as "Portuguese people who do not collect the letter sent to them by STAP and containing their ballot papers are removed from the lists."[62] Despite this, and as noted by Cordeiro, this alone cannot explain the low rates of voter registration among Portuguese people settled in northern Europe. Indeed, in the wake of the Carnation Revolution, Portuguese people who remained in Portugal do participate in elections. Clearly, Portuguese people who left Portugal have an additional problem: once they settle abroad they are less connected to political issues in Portugal, but are also excluded from the political arena in their new country of residence; as such they are held in 'neutrality'. Consequently, Portuguese people residing abroad do not vote in Portuguese elections for two cumulative reasons: first, due to their lack of education and experiences of democracy; second, due to "their expulsion

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[58] CORDEIRO Albano, « Les Portugais résidents à l'étranger. Pourquoi ne votent-ils pas ? », *Latitudes*, n° 10, décembre 2000, pp.9-14. *Cordeiro, Albano* (2001), "*Portugueses de França* e as *eleições* autárquicas francesas", Latitudes(11), pp. 66. *Cordeiro, Albano, Comment interpréter* la faible participation civique des Portugais de France ? Exception ou conformisme ambiant ? Op.Cit, février, 2004, pp.55-68. CORDEIRO Albano, « Le non-exercice des droits politiques par les Portugais de France », Hommes & Migration, n° 1256, juillet-aout 2005, pp. 39-51.
[59] CORDEIRO Albano, op.cit. 2001.
[60] Ibidem, p.12
[61] STRUDEL Sylvie, La participation des Portugais aux élections européennes et municipales en France, Cahiers de l'Urmis: Portugais de France; immigrés et citoyens d'Europe, no. 9, February 2004.
[62] CORDEIRO Albano, Le non-exercice des droits politiques par les Portugais de France, op.cit., juillet- aout 2005, p. 43.

from the Portuguese political scene", and they cannot "make up for this by expressing their views on their observations through political exchange". This finding is reinforced by the low educational level of Portuguese immigrants. Moreover, political parties and French Portuguese people seem to ignore Portuguese citizens, who certainly need to be provided with more information. However, Cordeiro states that even when information is provided, the low educational level of most of the Portuguese population means they often have difficulties understanding it. However, this assumption is questionable due to advances in communication technology: links with Portugal are now possible via the internet and television.[63] However, do these new methods of communication encourage Portuguese interest and participation in Portuguese politics?

The second argument used to explain the lack of participation by Portuguese people is the devaluation of politics and the dispersion of the Portuguese population. Indeed, Cordeiro advanced two further arguments for the low politicisation of the Portuguese: on the one hand, politics is not seen as something essential, this is probably due to their experience of dictatorship: "All these farmers knew no other regime than the *Estado Novo* and for them democracy, civil rights, labour rights, had no social reality". Second, "the dispersion of many Portuguese people [...] does not promote the flow of information or exchanges that help form opinions".[64]

From this perspective, we can use the notion of 'social capital' to explain the low degree of Portuguese political participation. The low election turnouts do not only have political origins (political weariness, corruption etc.), they can also be explained by the weakening of social ties. We could assume that if the Portuguese do not vote, it is not because they are tired of politics, but because they are no longer linked to their own communities. However, this idea is questionable as the Portuguese network is highly developed in the context of migration and allows an efficient flow of political information. If we consider the Portuguese network to be a "micro-society parallel to the local society", the Portuguese associations

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[63] BOIS Paul, *Paysans de l'Ouest*, Paris, Flammarion, 1971
[64] Antunes da Cunha Manuel, 'Pour une étude de la réception de RTP Internacional par les Portugais de France, Cahiers de l'URMIS no. 9, Nice, Unité de recherche migrations et société, 2004, pp. 43 — 54.

provide a 'third space' between local society and the French place of residency and promote the construction of a Portuguese identity in France. Moreover, in some countries such as Belgium or Luxembourg, numerous Portuguese people live in the same areas: how then can political discussion be absent from the world of Portuguese people living abroad?

Finally, the third argument that has been advanced to explain the non-participation of the Portuguese is a strategy of discretion. According to Cordeiro, voting is merely one indicator that provides information on the degree of Portuguese political commitment. Still, Portuguese electoral political participation is minimal and this remains a reliable measure of the degree of a community's political participation. Cordeiro then argues that Portuguese political disaffection can also be explained by the desire for discreetness in society, as this is viewed as more likely to foster social mobility. Discretion is a means of avoiding confrontation with the host society. In this case, non-inclusion in the political space of the host society would be the result of a strategy. Thus, a phenomenon of political passivity, especially in a context of increased immigration, seems to characterise the Portuguese population. From this perspective, we can ask whether citizenship of the EU would provide an opportunity for political action to Portuguese nationals. However, their lack of participation should not be misconstrued as apolitical passivity. Even if the Portuguese can be politically passive, they are not necessarily apolitical: in some circumstances, passivity can be a form of resistance that is used until improvements are made to political structures.

Despite their low rate of participation, the large number of Portuguese citizens in France has led a number of Portuguese people to stand for election and to be elected. Figures provided by Civica (the Association of Elected Representatives of Portuguese Origin) demonstrate the importance of Portuguese people in local government, particularly in the Ile-de-France region (see annex I, II and III).

5. Good practices

From its inception, Civica has informed people about the new rights introduced in 1994 enabling European citizens without French nationality to participate in French politics; it has done so in a manner that reflects the local context, while aiming to involve itself in French culture and promote the advantages of dual citizenship. It organises activities in three main areas:

- it provides support to candidates, elected officials and municipalities
- organises activities related to the French and Portuguese governments
- runs a cultural program, information and training sessions for Portuguese politicians in France and future public actors.

However, its activities are aimed at strengthening the civic participation of Portuguese and non-French European citizens living in France. A such, Civica aims to raise awareness of the possibilities for participation among associations, families and government organisations in France and Portugal. The organisation has often worked with embassies and public and private organisations, and they have provided effective assistance for many projects. Civica was also associated with the implementation of the lunch debate. It has already taken action to promote voting among Portuguese citizens at municipal elections. Its experience with will be useful in particular as a means of encouraging Portuguese citizens to take part in training sessions.

6. Recommendations: the needs of the community, and what has to be improved to strengthen participation

- Provide information to the Portuguese community (often viewed as a model of integration) on the importance of participation in local and European elections.

- Engage Portuguese community media (like RadioAlpha) to participate in awareness-raising campaigns to increase participation in local and European elections.

- Enhance the visibility of the communities on social and cultural issues and establish relations with the communities to ensure their involvement in local political life. This could mean creating links between cultural organisations and the mobilisation of associations and organisations concerned with the promotion of the integration of migrants, especially around participatory matters.

- Empower women and 'contact' persons by linking social life with political life; encourage women to increase their visibility and have more influence in their community.

III. The Romanian community in Italy
(Bruno Amoroso, Arianna Cascelli, Pierluca Ghibelli and Chiara Maule)

1. An introduction to the Romanian community

Italy only became a country of immigration in the late 1970s after having been a country of emigration since the beginning of the 20th century. In 1974 the flow of incoming immigrants finally exceeded the flow of outgoing citizens, and since then the growth of the country's immigrant population has almost doubled every ten years. According to the yearly survey carried out by the ISMU foundation, there are around 5.3 million foreigners in Italy, of whom 500,000 are not (yet) included on the municipal registers and around 550,000 have no proper legal status; as such, there were 4,253 million legal immigrants in Italy as of 1 January 2010[65]. In contrast to northern European countries, which demanded a workforce from abroad to sustain their economic growth, immigration to Italy as a phenomenon was completely unplanned and followed different paths; most importantly, Italy differentiates itself from other European countries with respect to the origin of immigration flows as countries such as Britain, France, and Spain have consistently attracted steady flows from their former colonies, whereas immigration flows to Italy originate from a diverse range of countries. This leads to diversity and fragmentation among foreign communities living in Italy[66]. Additionally, during the 1990s the composition of the immigrant population changed remarkably with the majority of foreign residents arriving from North Africa (most notably Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal) and from the Philippines (most of these people were women employed in domestic labour). The collapse of the Soviet Bloc and former Yugoslavia gave rise to consistent flows of people from Eastern and South-Eastern European countries that grew progressively during the 2000s until they finally outnumbered the presence of North Africans and Asians[67]. In the late 2000s, Albanians and Romanians became the most numerous immigrant group, but migrants from Ukraine and Moldavia have also shown

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[65] Fondazione Ismu (Iniziative e studi sulla multietnicità), (2010), "XVI Rapporto nazionale sulle migrazioni", Milano

[66] Rusconi S. (2010), "Italy's Migration Experiences", Network Migration in Europe

[67] *Ibid.*

consistent and expanding patterns of migration to Italy. According to the latest data issued by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) in 2010, about half of the foreigners living in Italy came from Eastern Europe, this accounts for 2,086 million people – 49.3% of all immigrants living in Italy. Half of these people are nationals of new EU member states, whereas the other half come from other Eastern European countries. In this framework, immigration from Romania has always been a major issue, both before and after European enlargement in 2007, which led Romania and Bulgaria to become members of the EU. Romanian migration to Italy started in the early 1990s, and Romanian immigrants have quickly become the largest migrant community in Italy – 48.4% of the total influx of foreigners between 1990 and 2004 and 56.6% of the total number of foreign arrivals in 2005[68]. According to the yearly statistical report on immigration issued by Caritas, on 31 December 2009 there were 887,763 Romanians residing in Italy, this represents 21% of the total foreign population. [69]

At first, immigration from Romania mainly occurred due to reasons of personal safety: it has been estimated that around 70,000 Romanians fled from persecution during the presidency of Nicolae Ceauşescu. After 1994, a second stage of migration occurred during which permanent migration from Romania was much less important. During this period, temporary migration was more frequent, and it was often motivated by career opportunities and the chance of a higher income. This increase in emigration from Romania was made easier by the liberalisation of the movement of Romanians within the Schengen Area after Romania's accession to the EU.[70] This led to massive departures to Spain and Italy, which mostly occurred after 2003, and these two countries have now become the largest recipients of temporary Romanian migrants.

Many Romanian immigrants to Italy entered the country as tourists and found their first employment in the shadow economy. They stayed after their visa had expired, and remained in hope of finding an opportunity to legalise their residency. Successful

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[68] OECD, 2007

[69] Caritas Italiana - Fondazione Migrantes, (2010), "XX Rapporto, Dossier 1991-2010: per una cultura dell'altro", Caritas diocesana di Roma, Edizioni Idos.

[70] Pehoiu G., Costache A., "The Dynamics of Population Emigration from Romania - Contemporary and Future Trends", World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology 42 2010

integration of Romanian immigrants in Italy is closely related to the position of family members already residing in Italy; they provide the new arrivals with accommodation and the necessary support and contacts within the job market.

Historically, Romanian immigrants to Italy have mainly moved to the metropolitan areas of Rome, Turin and Milan; the industrial districts of northern Italy, as well as agricultural areas with a strong demand for seasonal workers.[71] Data from the XIVth general census held in 2001 shows that about 42,000 Romanian citizens lived in Italy at this time, and that they were mainly employed in industry (51% of industrial workers were Romanian), followed by the service industries (29%) and trade (15%). Romanian workers do not appear on the census in larger numbers as many are seasonal agricultural workers, which means that the data are partial and highly underestimate Romanian workers in this sector.[72] Despite these data, in recent years the countries of destination have become less attractive to Romanian migrants due to the economic crisis, which has particularly affected the construction sector, a traditional focus of Romanian migrant workers. At the same time, the campaign against Romanian immigrants in Italy has also led many Romanians to reconsider their decision to emigrate or remain in Italy.[73]

In recent times discrimination and social exclusion, often enhanced by public discourse, have been two of the main problems suffered by the Romanian community in Italy. Generally, the media tend to distribute news on criminality and emphasize crimes committed by immigrants: according to research recently conducted by the University of Rome, out of a total of 5,684 migration-related television news reports broadcast over the last 20 years, only 26 did not treat migration as a crime or a security issue.[74] As a consequence, immigrants, and in some cases specific nationalities (Albanians, Roma and Romanians) are particularly stigmatised by the media, and public opinion assumes that

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[71] Stocchiero A., (2002), "Migration Flows and Small and Medium Sized Enterprise Internationalisation Between Romania and the Italian Veneto Region", in Romania on the Path to the EU: Labour Markets, Migration and Minorities, Europa-Kolleg Hamburg, Institute for Integration Research, Discussion Paper 1/2002, Hamburg.

[72] Bertazzon L. (2007), "*Gli Immigrati Rumeni In Italia e In Veneto*" , Veneto Lavoro.

[73] Pehoiu and Costache, 2010, *op.cit.*

[74] Binotto M., Bruno M. e Lai V. (2009), "*Ricerca Nazionale Su Immigrazione E Asilo Nei Media Italiani*", Roma, 20 dicembre.

these groups are the main cause of crime and insecurity. Concerning Romanians, this has been particularly the case since October 2007, when the violent murder of an Italian woman in Rome, which was allegedly committed by a Romanian Rom living in one of the informal camps in the capital, received such a strong echo in the media and political debate that it became nationally important. After this event, the government proposed several legal instruments aimed at facilitating the removal of EU citizens if they are perceived as a threat to public and national security. These instruments have not yet come into force; but since the so-called 'Mailat case' political discourse has focused more on security issues and the Italian perception of Romanian immigrants, whether ethnic Romanians or Roma, is particularly negative, as some in-depth studies have demonstrated.[75] In general terms, most Italians believe there are too many foreigners in the country and following the political discourse, which has linked immigration to (in)security, they equate immigrants with criminals and illegal immigrants.[76]

In the case of Romanian immigrants, this perception has been worsened by the fact that Roma people are often assumed to be Romanian, even if they actually come from quite diverse countries. Roma and Sinti people settled in informal camps in densely populated areas have always been perceived as problematic for security and social order. In Rome, where 2009 estimates put the population at between 6,000 to 8,000[77], and despite some interventions aimed at providing schooling and social integration, local authorities, particularly in recent times, have backed the destruction of informal camps. Alternative accommodation for these people was only organised in a limited number of cases. Furthermore, in 2007 measures were set up to identify the individuals living in both informal and authorised camps, such as through fingerprinting[78]; however, these interventions have not been followed up by any specific measures aimed at managing the distribution of the Roma population or improving their living conditions. In contrast, the measures of control that were put in place have only increased the stigmatisation of the

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[75] Popescu T., (2008), *"IMMIGRATION DISCOURSES: THE CASE OF ROMANIAN IMMIGRANTS IN ITALY"*, University of Alba Iulia, Romania.

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] Osservatorio Romano sulle Migrazioni (2010), Sesto Rapporto. Roma, Casa editrice: Idos.

[78] European Migration Network, (2009), *"Organisation of Asylum and Migration Policies in the EU Member States"*, European Migration Network.

Roma population. It should then come as no surprise that some recent publications still report high levels of discrimination against Roma and Sinti who live in precarious conditions, and that the European Council's European Committee of Social Rights has condemned Italy's discrimination against Roma communities in terms of housing, access to justice and social and economic life.[79]

The growing hostility towards Romanian immigrants quickly caught the attention of the Romanian government and the economic sector; especially as along with the growth in immigration economic relations between the two countries have become increasingly strong. For example, on 31 December 2006, Italy was the 7th most important country for Romanian foreign direct investment (FDI), with 2322 million Euro in investments, which represents 6.7% of the total Romanian FDI.[80] Raduta Matache, the Romanian Secretary of State for European Affairs, has argued that economic ties binding Romania and Italy are undoubtedly more intense than those between any other European partner.[81] Clearly, both countries have strong interests in finding common ground in order to avoid escalating the conflict concerning Romanian immigrants in Italy. This requires working together to find real solutions to the problems of integration between the two social groups.

2. The organisation of the Romanian community in Italy

The Romanian community in Italy is highly active and keen to organise itself in various associations. As such, the best way to offer a consistent picture of its situation is to concentrate on a local case study. In the following we focus on Rome and its crucial role in the national framework concerning immigration policy. To make this choice, on one hand, the overall number of foreign citizens residing in the capital and the high incidence of the Romanian population have been taken into account. According to data issued by the municipal registers, on 31 December 2009, 320,409 foreigners were residing in Rome; the percentage of foreign residents is then 11.2%, a value that means Rome is one of the

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[79] Human Rights Watch, (2011), "*Rapport 2011*" di Human Rights Watch (HRW).
[80] Popescu, 2008, *op.cit.*
[81] Torre A.R., (2008), Romania, in A.A. V.V., "Migrazione come questione sociale. Mutamento sociale, politiche e rappresentazioni in Ecuador, Romania e Ucraina", CeSPI Working Paper n. 57/2009

municipalities with the highest number of foreigners.[82] In the Italian capital, Romanians represent the largest community of foreign residents and account for 65,099 people, according to data available from the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT, 2009). On the other hand, the relatively high number of immigrant associations or associations working for the integration of the Romanian population, which have been set up over the years and are active in Rome, have also been considered.

Reflecting on the situation at the national level, the Romanian community residing in Rome is composed of people who arrived in Italy alone or followed family or friends in search of employment and better living conditions. The majority of men work in the construction sector and women are generally employed as domestics or care workers, but they are also often employed in shops, hotels, restaurants, health care and social services.

There are currently more than 10 Romanian associations or associations that work with the Romanian population in Rome, all of which are legal entities. Some of these associations are also part of national and international federations, such as the Romanian League, or the International League of Romanian Women, and take part in public consultative fora in Italy, such as the local prefecture's territorial council on immigration. Most of these organisations aim to promote Romanian culture in Italy, but also promote the civil rights of Romanians residing in Italy, cultural and professional training of young people, and the creation of partnerships between Italy and Romania.

3. The Romanian community's relations with Italian nationals and other communities living in Italy

Two of the main problems faced by the Romanian community are social exclusion and stigmatisation. According to the most recent statistics on immigration issued by Caritas on the period between 2008 and 2010, strong accusations continued to be meted out against Romanians, despite the fact that statistics demonstrate a continued reduction of immigrant involvement in crime. As stated above, Roma are often assumed to be Romanian and are linked to crime in public discourse. Roma have been, and probably will continue to be, the

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[82] Osservatorio Romano 2010, *op.cit.*

most discussed community and are frequently accused of abducting children, despite the fact that their alleged involvement in such crimes has never been proven.[83] According to data issued by the National Observatory on Racism (UNAR), discrimination in work environments (but not exclusively) particularly affects Africans, Romanians, Chinese, Moroccans, and Bangladeshis. It is noteworthy in this respect that some insurance companies raise car insurance premiums because of so-called 'ethnic risk'.[84]

4. The participation of Romanian immigrants in local and European elections

The participation of non-national EU citizens in local and European elections is a delicate issue. On the one hand, while electoral rights for EU citizens in EU countries other than their own has been regulated both by the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties, the right to vote for non-EU citizens still depends on the law of individual EU member states.[85]

At the EU level, The Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level, promoted by the Council of Europe, came into force in 1997 and grants every foreign resident the right to vote in local elections after five years of lawful and habitual residence in their host country, and to stand for election. However, only eight states have ratified this convention, and as such it still remains a weak policy instrument.

This is certainly an issue on the path towards integration. The number of non-national EU citizens who are regularly resident within European countries is actually quite consistent. In 2009, non-national EU residents accounted for 32.5 million people, or 86.5% of the overall population. Around 14.8 million people have been naturalised by their host country, which means almost one tenth of the European population was not born in an EU country.[86]

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[83] Caritas Italiana - Fondazione Migrantes, (2010), "*XX Rapporto, Dossier 1991-2010: per una cultura dell'altro*", Caritas diocesana di Roma, Edizioni Idos.
[84] *Ibid.*
[85] Mantovan C., (2007), "*Immigrazione E Cittadinanza. Auto Organizzazione E Partecipazione Dei Migranti In Italia*", Milano, Franco Angeli.
[86] Caritas Italiana - Fondazione Migrantes, (2011), "*XXI Rapporto, Dossier Statistico Immigrazione Oltre la crisi insieme*", Caritas diocesana di Roma, Edizioni Idos.

Over the past few years immigration to Italy has been characterised by a non-transitional aspect, which is surprising considering the increase in immigration. On 1 January 2009, non-EU citizens regularly resident in Italy numbered less than 3 million; they were evenly distributed in terms of gender and 24% of these people were children. Most of the migrants came from Albania, Morocco, China, Ukraine and the Philippines (ISTAT). Accordingly, several political parties and civil organisation began lobbying the government to undertake serious steps to enable non-EU citizens to vote and stand for election when specific criteria (such as having been resident for at least five years in the respective country) have been fulfilled. None of these proposals have been successful.

In Italy, the right to vote for non-EU citizens remains a controversial issue, and is strictly linked to the principle of citizenship rights: despite having signed and ratified the Strasbourg Convention, Italy has in fact maintained reservations about Part C of the Convention, which refers to the right to vote in local authority elections. Citizenship rights in Italy still depend on the principles of *jus sanguinis* while in many other European countries it is now linked to *jus soli*. Despite this, there is no clause in the Italian constitution that would prevent non-EU citizens from voting. According to Article 48 of the Italian constitution "all citizens who have reached the age of 18... are eligible to vote". The only exception could be participation in the election to the legislature: Article 1 of the constitution stipulates that sovereignty belongs to the Italian people. However, it is also important to remember that there should be no taxation without representation, and this principle is certainly not being respected.

Romanians have been EU citizens since 2007. Romanian accession to the EU has widely enriched the rights of the Romanian community in Italy. In 2009, Romanians voted in the European parliamentary elections for the first time. They were able to participate in three ways: by voting for candidates at a Romanian embassy or consulate, by returning to Romania to vote, or by voting in their city of residence for an Italian candidate. The latter possibility is regulated by Directive 93/109/CE, but in Italy in 2009 only 2% of the 800,000 Romanians in Italy opted to do so.

In Rome, 2,597 of 122,310 Rumanians were registered to vote in the European elections. In the province of Turin, with its 85,817 Rumanian residents, only 2,285 were eligible to participate in the election; in Milan, out of 40,742 Romanian residents only 735 were registered to vote. These low rates of participation could be interpreted as a lack of trust in the Italian candidates for the European Parliament; however, Romanians also showed little interest in the European elections in Romania itself.

Romanians are EU citizens; as such, from 18 years-of-age Romanians residents in Italy can participate in the mayoral elections and the election of their local council. Furthermore, they can also stand for election to the local council. In order to do so they have to fill in a form and present it at least 90 days before consultancies take place; if they wish to vote in the elections they need to ensure they are registered on the electoral role. Even in the case of the local elections, participation by Romanian citizens is not particularly high, even though the number of Romanians living in Italy is increasing and the phenomenon of migration appears to have become more stable than expected.

In 2009 Rumanians had the chance to vote in a number of administrative elections but even in these cases the participation of the Romanian community in Italy was quite low. Only 438 Rumanians registered to vote in Cremona out of 3,311 Romanian residents; the number was 407 in Bologna out of 5,047; 283 in Florence out of 5,846 people; and 773 in Padua, out of 7,165 potential Romanian voters. This could be partly due to the young age of a large percentage of the community, which is more interested in Rumanian than Italian politics. It should also be stated that many Romanian immigrants expect to return to their country of origin and that this might explain their scarce interest in Italian political life. At the same time, Romanian participation in Italy is made more difficult by a lack of tolerance, and the hostility towards migrants that has been present in Italy over the past few years.[87]

The trend towards low participation by Romanian migrants does not seem to have changed much in the 2011 administrative elections. According to the Caritas/Migrantes Dossier 2010, there are almost 4.9 million foreigners living in Italy; 1.2 million are new EU citizens,

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[87] Tarantino F. (2010), "*Il voto dei Romeni in Italia*" in dossier Come votano gli immigranti", Torino, FIERI.

and 887,000 are Romanian (21%). Despite non-Italian EU citizens representing 2% of the population, only 37,000 people were registered to vote in Italian cities during the last administrative elections in 2011; 24,000 of whom were Romanian.

Lombardy has the highest numbers of foreign residents with 983,000 people; 128,000 are Romanian. In Milan, out of 407,000 foreigners 22,000 are EU citizens (and as such, have the right to vote); 12,000 of these are Romanian. Out of the 22,000 foreign EU citizens who reside in Milan, only 3,700 were registered to vote and voted in the past 2011 administrative elections; only 754 were Romanian. In Turin, Rumanian voting trends are more consistent, and participation has been higher with almost 2,663 people registered to vote.

There are a number of reasons that could explain the low participation of Romanians in these elections: first, participation in Romania itself has sunk to almost 50% since 1990; as such, a negative trend in participation seems to be shared by the entire population. Second, the majority of Romanian residents arrived relatively recently (8 to 10 years ago) and these people are therefore still very much linked to Romanian culture. Over the past few years immigration in Italy has been characterised by a non-transitional aspect; this comes as a surprise considering the increase in migration. Third, due to corruption and bad government in Romania over the past few years, Romanians have become less and less interested in politics. Finally, scarce information about their rights means many Romanians do not know they are able to vote. Some of these reasons were discussed during the focus group.

5. Good practices

According to academics, civic participation is influenced by the opportunities provided by political structures, and is strictly linked to migration policy, public debate, and the social and political rights of immigrants. Participation should not be considered apart from structures and organisations that represent the rights of individual people. Immigrant organisations are generally based on multicultural values; although some are also based around transversal values such as gender. The literature appears to suggest that there is a

vicious circle between integration policy, developments towards a structured movement of associations, and the reinforcement of relational networks and networks based around social capital, which are basic elements of civil participation.[88]

During the focus group that took place in Rome, Anna Stanescu presented a social project for young Romanians run by the cooperative, and set out some of the results it had already achieved. The problems mentioned above meant that one of the projects' main difficulties during its initial stage was gaining the confidence and interest of the community; however, these problems were overcome with the help of a priest who was held in great regard by the young people and their families. As such, the most important means of strengthening the social and political participation of the Romanian community was gaining the community's confidence.

6. <u>Recommendations: the community's needs and what has to be improved to increase participation:</u>

- Governments need to develop and strengthen initiatives that support the political participation of immigrant minorities.
- Immigrants should always be taken into account when developing policy.
- Political participation should be considered a priority.

A good start would be to identify community representatives, not among association leaders, but among interpreters providing local employment services; these people are important community members who interact with immigrants on a day to day basis. Contact with the community should also be as intercultural as possible, and take advantage of the links with informal union centres, people trusted by the community, and interpreters etc. This could be a good start for projects aiming to raise awareness about the importance of social and political participation, along with the promotion of social enterprise, which can provide real services and space for social and economic growth in a collective and multicultural environment.

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[88] Mantovan, 2007, *op.cit.*

IV: The Romanian community in Spain
(David Dueñas, Juan Pedregosa and Emese Molnár)

1. An introduction to the Romanian community in Spain

Romania, a country of emigration in the late 19th and early 20th century, experienced severe restrictions on the free movement of persons during communism. After the fall of the regime, passport administration was liberalised, although the authorities maintained restrictive boarder regulation during the 1990s (for example taxes were imposed). In the harsh economic situation between 1990 and 2002 employment declined by 44% and more than 3.5 million jobs vanished; the most dramatic reductions in employment were registered in industry. During this period – the first few years of Romania's transition to democracy – highly qualified, young people obtained long-term, legal residence in various European countries; at the same time, more and more unskilled and poorly qualified people from rural areas began seeking (mainly temporary) migratory arrangements.[89] Horváth describes three phases of Romanian emigration before the country's accession to the European Union in 2007.

In the first phase, which lasted from 1990 to 1995, a period during which entry to various Western European countries was severely limited, Romanian workers mainly left for Hungary (most of these migrants were ethnic Hungarians), Israel, Turkey and Germany. In the second phase, from 1996 to 2002, westward migration prevailed, with large numbers of workers leaving for Italy and increasing numbers moving to Spain. The third phase of labour migration was symbolically inaugurated on 1 January 2002, when the Schengen countries removed visa requirements for Romanian citizens; a valid passport was all that was needed to enter these countries. Since this change, major destinations for Romanian migrants have included Italy, Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom (even though the latter is not in the Schengen Area).

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[89] Country profile: Romania, Horváth, 2007

As Romania moved towards becoming a country of emigration, Spain, which had historically being a country of emigration itself, experienced rapid exponential growth in the number of arrivals; consequently, it found itself at the centre of a fast transition into a country of immigration. According to Calavita (2005)[90], after the North-Western European countries in the 1970 and 1980´s started to close their borders to immigrants, Spain and Italy became the central focus of South—North and East—West migratory flows. After five hundred years of Spain being a major provider of migrant labour, the 1970s were marked with high returns to the country: between 1974 and 1980 around 400,000 migrants came back to Spain, while outgoing migration rapidly decreased[91]. It was not until 2001, that outgoing and incoming migratory flows were equally balanced: the number of foreign residents registered in Spain on the census on 1 May 2001 was 1,572,000, while there were approximately 1,431,000 Spaniards living abroad. However, over the last ten years this has changed dramatically: the number of immigrants has increased exponentially and Spain is now the EU country with the second highest number of foreign residents.[92] The following chapter provides an in-depth statistical analysis of this phenomenon. On 1 January 2010, 5.7 million foreigners were living in Spain; this constitutes 12.2% of the country's total population. As Bernat and Viruela put it, "Spain has achieved what has taken over forty years in other countries. Arrivals of immigrants 'in masses'[93] began in 2001 and continued through to 2008 [...] Another basic feature of this migration pattern is that it is clearly economic migration, since 76% of the new citizens come from countries with a significantly lower per capita income than that of Spain".

The first Romanian citizens started to arrive in Spain in the beginning of the 1990s, and have been described as "isolated individual projects of international migration"[94]. The evolution of Romanian migration to Spain grew continuously until 2006 (with 211,325

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[90] Calavita, Kitty, <u>Immigrants at the Margins, Law, Race, and Exclusion in Southern Europe</u>, University of California, Irvine, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

[91] Carreras and Tafunell, 2005 cited in Bernat, Joan Serafí & Viruela, Rafael, *The Economic Crisis and Immigration. Romanian Citizens in the Ceramic Tile District of Castelló* In Journal of Urban and Regional Analysis, vol. III, 1, 2011, pp. 45-65: 2011

[92] Bernat and Viruela, 2011, *op.cit.*

[93] Martinello and Kazin argue that the concept of migration is described in terms of 'invasions' and 'massive flows' in public discourse due to the specific pattern of migration that is centred on certain locations such as large cities, where immigrants are more visible (Martinello and Kazin, 1991).

[94] Sandu, Dumitru, et al. *A country report on romanian migration abroad: Stocks and flows after 1989.* Migrationonline.cz, Multicultural Centre Prague.

Romanian migrants), and exponentially after Romania signed the Schengen Agreement, reaching 751,668 migrants in 2009.

Sandu et al. provide a number of basic factors that explain recent Romanian migration to Spain. First, there are factors related to Romania, such as the need for economic growth and differences in lifestyle between Romania and Western European countries, the latter clearly providing broader (economic) possibilities. Second, there are also factors related to Spain, these include the economic growth the country experienced between 1992 and 2008, and Spain's recent position as a country of destination for international migrants. Spain's recent switch from a country of emigration to one of immigration has marked the attitude of the state and society towards immigrants. Finally, international factors also play a role, the most important of which are the establishment of the Schengen Area, which regulates the free movement of people.

Several studies on Romanian migration have also emphasised that Romanian "migrants preferred locations where the native population was perceived as more understanding, allowing foreign workers to 'live in normal conditions'"[95]. It is also important to note that in 1999 50% of the Spanish population was in favour of Romania's accession to the EU, in contrast to only 26% of the French population. Moreover, in Spain 40% believed that immigration would be limited and expected no negative consequences[96]. It should then come as little surprise that after experiencing such a hostile attitude on the part of the French state and society, Romanian immigrants preferred to search for employment in Spain (Ibid.). Moreover, the economic growth Spain experienced during the beginning of the 2000s led to a demand for workers in different sectors of the labour market; consequently, Spain and Romania signed a bilateral labour agreement in 2002. Out of 15,319 persons contracted, 14,808 were contracted for seasonal, mainly agricultural work.[97] The year 2002

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[95] Hiris, Liliana: *The Social Context of European East-West Migration* In Silasi, Grigore and Simina, Ovidiu Laurian eds. (2008): *Migration, Mobility and Human Rights at the Eastern Border of the European Union - Space of Freedom and Security*, Editura Universitatii de Vest, Ti misoara: 2008.
[96] *Ibid.*
[97] Martin In Silasi, Grigore and Simina, Ovidiu Laurian eds. (2008): *Migration, Mobility and Human Rights at the Eastern Border of the European Union - Space of Freedom and Security*, Editura Universitatii de Vest, Timisoara: 2008

marked an important turning point in the history of Romanian immigration to Spain, as Romania was finally exempted from EU visa regulations. In 2003, Italy and Spain were among the most favoured destinations for Romanian (temporal) migrants; in 2007 – with Romania's accession to the European Union – Spain attracted the highest number of Romanian immigrants (ibid.). In 2007, 11 EU countries granted full and unrestricted access for Romanians to their labour markets, Spain being one of them. As Ciornei[98] puts it, the first studies on Romanian migration reported that the majority planned to return[99] (; a survey undertaken in mid-2008 also revealed that 74% of the Romanian community resident in the province of Castelló intended to return[100]. In the following we provide a concise analysis of the recent statistical data available concerning trends in immigration to Spain, while reflecting on the common socio-economic characteristics of Romanian immigrants and general patterns of Romanian immigration to Spain.

The Romanian community has become one of the most important communities in Spain, not only in terms of absolute numbers, but also due to its spatial distribution: it is one of the three largest communities in 39 of Spain's 51 provinces, and the largest immigrant community in 24 of them. Moreover, in Ciudad Real, Cuenca and Castelló Romanian migrants constitute nearly 50% of the migrant population, and there are many other provinces in which it represents at least 30% of the immigrant population.

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[98] Ciornei, Irina, *Citizenship practices and transnationalism in Spanish cities. The case of Romanian migrants*, Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona: 2009.
[99] Potot in Ciornei, Irina, *Citizenship practices and transnationalism in Spanish cities. The case of Romanian migrants*, Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona: 2009.
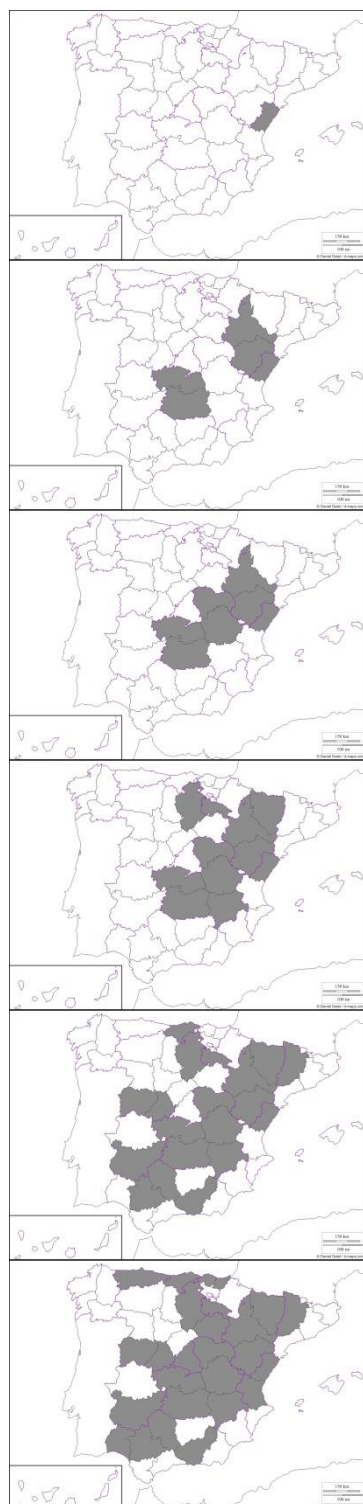[100] Bernat et al. in Ciornei, 2009, *op.cit.*

Figure 8: The presence of migrants by province (2009).

	Total	Most abundant nationality			Second most abundant nationality			Third most abundant nationality		
		Nationality	N	%	Nationality	N	%	Nationality	N	%
TOTAL	4791232	Marruecos	767784	16,02	Rumanía	751688	15,69	Ecuador	440304	9,19
Andalucia	597243	Marruecos	110761	18,55	Rumanía	102974	17,24	Reino Unido	67874	11,36
Almería	134865	Marruecos	41383	30,68	Rumanía	31320	23,22	Reino Unido	11734	8,70
Cádiz	40720	Marruecos	7214	17,72	Reino Unido	6209	15,25	Rumanía	3270	8,03
Córdoba	24515	Rumanía	9273	37,83	Marruecos	2792	11,39	Ecuador	2327	9,49
Granada	64596	Rumanía	13367	20,69	Marruecos	11216	17,36	Reino Unido	5736	8,88
Huelva	39702	Rumanía	13027	32,81	Marruecos	7370	18,56	Polonia	4620	11,64
Jaén	21211	Marruecos	6586	31,05	Rumanía	4325	20,39	Ecuador	1373	6,47
Málaga	201385	Reino Unido	40463	20,09	Marruecos	26256	13,04	Rumanía	13232	6,57
Sevilla	70249	Rumanía	15160	21,58	Marruecos	7944	11,31	Colombia	4332	6,17
ARAGÓN	170273	Rumanía	58707	34,48	Marruecos	20586	12,09	Ecuador	13554	7,96
Huesca	27595	Rumanía	8594	31,14	Marruecos	3725	13,50	Bulgaria	2355	8,53
Teruel	17600	Rumanía	6357	36,12	Marruecos	4768	27,09	Colombia	1195	6,79
Zaragoza	125078	Rumanía	43756	34,98	Marruecos	12093	9,67	Ecuador	12005	9,60
ASTURIAS	40749	Rumanía	6835	16,77	Ecuador	4279	10,50	Colombia	3398	8,34
BALEARES	202365	Marruecos	27588	13,63	Alemania	21073	10,41	Reino Unido	17969	8,88
CANARIAS	239312	Alemania	25734	10,75	Reino Unido	23408	9,78	Colombia	22653	9,47
Las Palmas	134951	Colombia	15859	11,75	Marruecos	14590	10,81	Alemania	13307	9,86
Sta. Cruz de T	104361	Alemania	12427	11,91	Reino Unido	11911	11,41	Italia	11244	10,77
CANTABRIA	36161	Rumanía	6197	17,14	Colombia	4574	12,65	Perú	3231	8,94
CASTILLA-LA	204517	Rumanía	86104	42,10	Marruecos	34608	16,92	Ecuador	15118	7,39
Albacete	33872	Rumanía	11166	32,97	Marruecos	4406	13,01	Colombia	2779	8,20
Ciudad Real	39880	Rumanía	21286	53,38	Marruecos	5270	13,21	Ecuador	2700	6,77
Cuenca	24326	Rumanía	11937	49,07	Marruecos	3306	13,59	Ecuador	1813	7,45
Guadalajara	34679	Rumanía	12846	37,04	Marruecos	5391	15,55	Ecuador	2451	7,07
Toledo	71760	Rumanía	28869	40,23	Marruecos	16235	22,62	Ecuador	5704	7,95
CASTILLA Y l	175516	Rumanía	32404	18,46	Bulgaria	28065	15,99	Marruecos	22470	12,80
Ávila	15288	Marruecos	4169	27,27	Rumanía	3725	24,37	Colombia	1313	8,59
Burgos	34995	Rumanía	8665	24,76	Bulgaria	5175	14,79	Portugal	4822	13,78
León	25054	Portugal	3998	15,96	Marruecos	3283	13,10	Colombia	2824	11,27
Palencia	7560	Marruecos	1383	18,29	Bulgaria	1033	13,66	Rumanía	991	13,11
Salamanca	16578	Rumanía	2142	12,92	Portugal	2075	12,52	Marruecos	1692	10,21
Segovia	24434	Bulgaria	7361	30,13	Rumanía	4638	18,98	Marruecos	3595	14,71
Soria	9612	Rumanía	1475	15,35	Marruecos	1405	14,62	Ecuador	1354	14,09
Valladolid	32874	Bulgaria	7454	22,67	Rumanía	6475	19,70	Marruecos	3062	9,31
Zamora	9121	Portugal	2285	25,05	Rumanía	1743	19,11	Bulgaria	1627	17,84
CATALUNYA	1061079	Marruecos	246921	23,27	Rumanía	95502	9,00	Ecuador	87216	8,22
Barcelona	714604	Marruecos	147722	20,67	Ecuador	77308	10,82	China	38790	5,43
Girona	144793	Marruecos	44106	30,46	Rumanía	13880	9,59	Gambia	9819	6,78
Lleida	71174	Rumanía	20163	28,33	Marruecos	15639	21,97	Colombia	3296	4,63
Tarragona	130508	Rumanía	39454	30,23	Marruecos	27148	20,80	Colombia	6836	5,24
COM. VALEN	610279	Rumanía	112432	18,42	Marruecos	70091	11,49	Reino Unido	69038	11,31
Alicante	282465	Reino Unido	62086	21,98	Marruecos	31073	11,00	Rumanía	24426	8,65
Castellón	93618	Rumanía	44191	47,20	Marruecos	18383	19,64	Colombia	4770	5,10
Valencia	234196	Rumanía	43815	18,71	Ecuador	26191	11,18	Marruecos	20635	8,81
EXTREMADU	41846	Marruecos	11180	26,72	Rumanía	10795	25,80	Portugal	5868	14,02
Badajoz	26022	Rumanía	8901	34,21	Portugal	4768	18,32	Marruecos	3505	13,47
Cáceres	15824	Marruecos	7675	48,50	Rumanía	1894	11,97	Portugal	1100	6,95
GALICIA	90738	Portugal	17917	19,75	Colombia	9106	10,04	Marruecos	6498	7,16
A Coruña	34676	Portugal	5125	14,78	Colombia	3440	9,92	Brasil	2429	7,00
Lugo	11872	Portugal	1716	14,45	Rumanía	1585	13,35	Colombia	1456	12,26
Ourense	13359	Portugal	5561	41,63	Colombia	1172	8,77	Brasil	986	7,38
Pontevedra	30831	Portugal	5515	17,89	Colombia	3038	9,85	Marruecos	2798	9,08
MADRID	880613	Rumanía	169865	19,29	Ecuador	132451	15,04	Marruecos	84365	9,58
MURCIA	210103	Marruecos	71272	33,92	Ecuador	49371	23,50	Reino Unido	12528	5,96
NAVARRA	64687	Ecuador	12058	18,64	Marruecos	8769	13,56	Rumanía	6378	9,86
EUSKADI	106658	Rumanía	15863	14,87	Colombia	12551	11,77	Marruecos	11473	10,76
Álava	23036	Marruecos	3692	16,03	Colombia	3252	14,12	Portugal	2101	9,12
Guipúzcoa	31197	Rumanía	4457	14,29	Marruecos	3381	10,84	Ecuador	3194	10,24
Vizcaya	52425	Rumanía	9380	17,89	Colombia	6544	12,48	Marruecos	4400	8,39
LA RIOJA	46211	Rumanía	11623	25,15	Marruecos	8905	19,27	Portugal	3621	7,84
CEUTA	4492	Marruecos	3681	81,95	China	113	2,52	Portugal	83	1,85
MELILLA	7395	Marruecos	5882	79,54	Alemania	260	3,52	Países Bajos	220	2,97

Source: Instituto Nacional Estadística, 2011.

Figure 9:
Developments in provinces where Romanian migrants are the largest community (2002—2009)

Source: Viruela Rafael, Población rumana y búlgara en España: Evolución, distribución geográfica y flujos migratorios. Cuadernos de geografía, un,m. 84: 2008 (p. 169-194) and Instituto Nacional Estadística, 2011

Political & social integration of migrant communities: a comparative study

After updating Viruela's[101] analysis, it is clear that until 2009, Romanian migrants consolidated their presence in many Spanish provinces. If we analyse changes in the provinces in which Romanians constituted the largest migrant community, it is clear that Romanians were predominant in half of the country, except for the zones that already had traditional migrant communities. The Balearic and Canary islands hosted significant migrant populations that occupied the tourist market before the expansion in Romanian migration; similar situations can be found in Galicia – due to its proximity to Portugal – and in Catalonia, where immigrants from North Africa and South America are represented in large numbers.

There is a masculine gender bias among migrants with a ratio of 0.87 women to every man; but there are differences depending on the place of origin and the labour opportunities available in the host country. Accordingly, South American migration tends to be feminised[102] and concentrated in urban areas where care sector employment is more readily available. On the other hand, Pakistani and Indian migrant flows tend to be strongly masculine[103], urban, and employed in the third sector, especially in communication services, shops and energy providers. As such, migration contributes to the international distribution of labour that is reproduced elsewhere and that encourages the formation of stereotypes and expectations related to the possibilities of individual and collective development.

If the data on the gendered flows of migratory patterns is combined with the data on the age distribution of Romanian migrants as well as the large number of migrants, it is clear that interpretations of the effects of migration need to be oriented both towards the host country and to the country of origin. In this case, Spain receives a large number of migrants of childbearing age, which is causing demographic changes in the country and generates new temporary demands on sanitation and education service providers. At the same time, massive emigration from Romania could lead to new demographic changes. If emigration

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[101] Viruela, Rafael, *Población rumana y búlgara en España: Evolución, distribución geográfica y flujos migratorios.* Cuadernos de geografía, un,m. 84: 2008 (p. 169-194).

[102] Gomez, Juan David, *La emigración latinoamericana: contexto global y asentamiento en España.* Acciones e Investigaciones Sociales, num. 24 – 2005 (p.157-184).

[103] Alarcón, Amado, et al., *Joves d'origen immigrant a Catalunya, Necessitats i Demandes: Una aproximació sociològica.* Secretaria de Joventut, Generalitat de Catalunya. Col·lecció Estudis, 27, Barcelona: 2010.

from the country becomes permanent or continues, Romania will also have to deal with a rapidly aging population.

The geographically disaggregated data displays a pattern of heterogeneous gender distribution. Some migratory flows are highly masculine, such as those in central and southern Spain; rural businesses are more attractive to men as are those in the north-west due to the opportunities provided by fishing. On the other hand, in Madrid and its surroundings the gender ratio tends to be more equal: this is probably due to the higher tendency for families to migrate together to the city, or due to the large market offering similar employment prospects for men and women. In Huelva the migratory flow is highly feminine, due to the demands of the agricultural sector and strawberry picking in particular.

Migration and remigration

One of the main differences between Romanian and Bulgarian migrants and other groups in this analysis was the means of transport they used to come to Spain. Even though the stereotypes surrounding migration processes to Spain have created the idea that migrants arrive in *Cayucos* in the Straits of Gibraltar (due to the spectacular and painful images shown on television over many years), this form of transport is rarely used, and the vast majority of immigrants arrive by plane. However, although there are plenty of flights linking Spain and Romania, buses are the most used means of transport, by Romanian immigrants, probably because it is the cheapest option and goods can be transported without extra taxes.

Figure 10: Internal migration by Romanian migrants between 2002 and 2006

LEYENDA
Movimientos

300 - 399
400 - 499
500 - 999
1000 o más

Kilòmetros
0 25 50 100 150 200
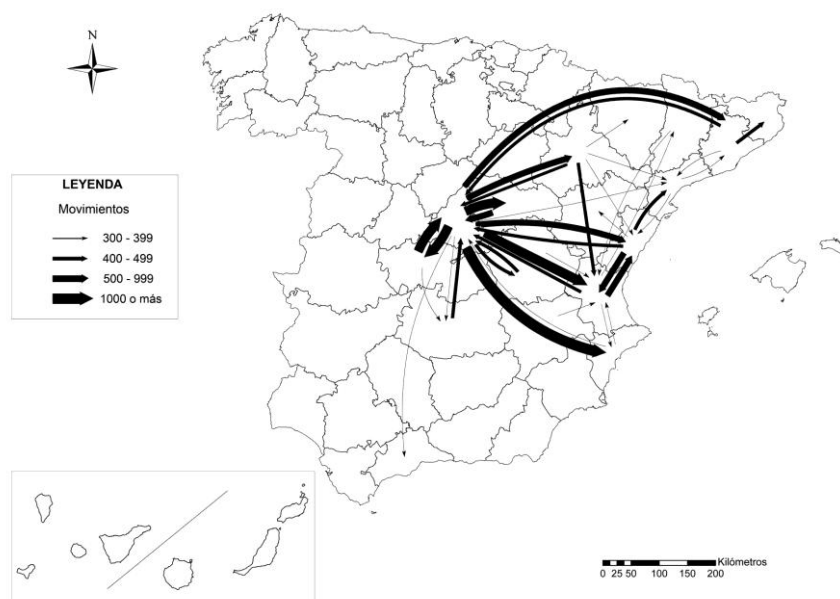
Source: Viruela, 2008 (op.cit).

Although we have emphasised a pattern of migration involving families, the data demonstrates that less Romanian and Bulgarian citizens state that they wish to bring their families to Spain (20.33%) than is the case with the average migrant population (24.765%).

The second general characteristic of patterns of Romanian migration is temporality; furthermore most Romanians wish to return to Romania, and these two aspects combine to reduce the need for families to migrate. Moreover, the strong transportation links and communication flows with Romania, along with the legal status of Romanian citizens facilitates the (expected) contact between migrants and their families, which reduces the symbolic distance between migrants and their families. Finally, if the economy of a country of origin provides acceptable living conditions for those who remain at home, these people are then less dependent on family members who have migrated.

The political participation of Romanian citizens living in Spain is constituted by a lack of interest in local politics, which leads to an almost entire lack of political participation. This seems to contradict the idea that local policy is closest to citizens and as a result is the most likely to encourage participation. It may seem logical that electoral participation indicates the level of social integration (integration is defined here as having a job, speaking Spanish, speaking or, at least, understanding Catalan, having Catalan friends, etc.). However, some migrants, and this includes representatives of migrant associations, affirmed a different attitude. Just two of the participants of the focus groups and the interviews had voted in the last local elections (22 May, 2011), but both had also stood as candidates in the election, one for a general party, the other for a migrant party that will be analysed later. Some of the following hypotheses should be useful for conducting a future analysis of this topic, as they help explain the general lack of electoral participation among migrant populations. First, it could be a matter of time: Romanian migration is quite recent, and it is possible that there has not been enough time to develop political interest. If Romanians establish permanent communities in Spain, second generation migrants are likely to have similar political attitudes to their Spanish neighbours.[104] Second, it could be a matter of cultural status: the status of being or not being a migrant influences the first stages of the migration process. However, after migrants arrive in their host country electoral behaviour is determined by processes of (re)socialisation[105]. Third, it could be a matter of efficiency: in general, social transformation leads towards a society of indifference, in which ideology loses power in the face of management and its efficiency. Importantly, the role of politicians is also related to management, and an election can be viewed as an evaluation of the work politicians have carried out to date.[106] As a result, migrant electors only vote in cases where they wish to pass judgement on local politics.

However, in the case of Romanian Roma, participation is more dependent on social factors that derive from their marginal social status and the stigmatisation they face as an ethnic group, both in their host country and in their country of origin. The fear of being expelled from a country basically makes it impossible to deal with local authorities. Similarly, every

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[104] Alarcón et al., *op. cit.*

[105] *Ibid.*

[106] Sørensen, E. and Torfing, J. *Theories of democratic network governance*. Palgrave MacMillan, Hampshir: 2007

time we even slightly suggested that they should get in touch with local or national authorities or publically defend their rights, they deployed a self-defence mechanism leading to silence or an immediate switch to Romani language during the focus-groups. Most Roma do not want to meet state authorities due to language difficulties but also due to their perceived status as illegal immigrants. Furthermore, any link with the authorities is interpreted as a threat connected to the possibility of being expelled from the host country.[107] As Cosescu argues in her paper *Migration, gender and citizenship. The case of the Romanian immigrants in Spain and Italy – the theoretical approach*[108], it is important to note that immigrants "assume their illegal status as a personal option (accepting the abuses they had been through in order to gain money)", they "perceive their problems as private and also have private answers to these problems"[109]. Questions relevant to the structural and political level are perceived as personal, but Cosescu argues that the personal is also political in another sense: that of responsibilities. Although an immigrant's actions are his or her personal responsibility, they are politically exploited by nationalists and xenophobes. The crimes committed by immigrants are their personal responsibility as they are in the case of any other citizen; nevertheless, nationalists politicise these crimes as the common responsibility of immigrant communities"[110].

Although most Romanian legal immigrants do not face this problem, their level of participation in local institutions and local policy-making decisions is extremely low. As the study by Ciornei[111] reveals, Romanians have developed a similar pattern to Romanian Roma: they do not get involved in local life because they "do not want any problems with the authorities". As one politician interviewed in her study argues, "for Romanians and all other migrants in the city, civic involvement is equated with causing problems for the administration". Being thankful for the fact that "we can stay in this country", and "we did not have to go to jail" (or in the case of Roma: "we did not have to leave the country", "we

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[107] As will be explained below, participation in local elections requires a person to hand in a request to local institutions and fill out a number of forms.

[108] Cosescu, Mihaela, *Migration, gender and citizenship. The case of the Romanian immigrants in Spain and Italy - the theoretical approach*, working paper, 2008.

[109] *Ibid.*

[110] *Ibid.*

[111] Ciornei, Irina, *Citizenship practices and transnationalism in Spanish cities. The case of Romanian migrants*, Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona: 2009.

have not been expelled") is a basic understanding that defines them as citizens; therefore, no other contact with local authorities is needed, or desired. Although this opinion was not expressed by other interviewees (at least, not on these extreme terms), similar positions were expressed during the interviews, including the wish to be "invisible" to local authorities and the administration.

Over the last 10 years, local administrations, conscious of this situation, have made great efforts to cope with migration and have begun seeking contact with newcomers and developing networks with local associations to help migrants integrate into society. On the other hand, they have had to balance the situation by managing the stereotypes and false information disseminated by xenophobes, which is generally based on nationalist, welfare-chauvinist positions.[112] Focus groups with people responsible for social participation in medium-sized cities confirmed that local institutions face important practical problems in attempting to establish contact with individual migrants. Generally, contact with migrants is made through migrant associations, which in many cases do not have the skills or abilities to manage the information needed, or to use it fruitfully.

In addition, local institutions in Catalonia face a further problem related to the management of migration: the cultural predominance of Spanish in Spain. This is due to the larger number of Spanish speakers, the language's larger geographical presence and its international projection. However, the minority position of Catalan within the country as a whole and its strong cultural defence by Catalan nationalists has resulted in an institutionalised cultural defence of the Catalan language. The autonomous regulation of Catalonia has established Catalan and Spanish as the official languages of Catalonia, but Catalan is the only language that can be used in Catalan administrations and in the educational system (linguistic immersion). This legal situation, even though it is supported by linguistic evidence[113], generates practical problems in interactions with migrants within the context of mass migration. The linguistic immersion system, and the policies developed to promote the learning and use of Catalan by migrants, will eventually lead to results, but

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[112] For instance, the network Barcelona anti-rumors (www.bcnantirumors.cat) used data to highlight the false ideas that were shown during the electoral period for the local elections.

[113] Myhill, J. *Identity, territoriality and minority language survival*. Journal of multilingual & multicultural development, Vol. 20, num. 1: 1999 (p. 34-50).

the speedy arrival of large numbers of migrants means that such future results will neither develop fast enough to satisfy the needs of migrants nor of the administration.[114]

Partly due to their country's history of communism, Romanian immigrants in particular tend to avoid forming and acting in the name of a 'Romanian community'. The majority of Romanian immigrants do not even consider demanding rights due to their 'belonging' to a certain community. As such, they prefer to solve problems among themselves, and not by demonstrating in public problems they perceive as personal. Despite this, the majority of Romanian immigrants face the same problems. Cosescu (2008) applied Hannah Arendt's concept on closed communities to this situation, and stated that "the private sphere is considered very valuable among Romanian immigrants who have emigrated to the West, as it served as an anti-communist fortress during the Ceauşescu regime".

Moreover, as several studies have revealed[115] the specific characteristics of Romanian immigration to South-West European countries such as Italy and Spain, but also to France is that immigration is network-based. Importantly, this enables Romanian immigrants to solve and act upon their 'personal' problems through kinship ties and family relations, instead of turning towards public institutions. In addition, Romanian 'institution-phobia', which is based on the ideas that public institutions are extremely bureaucratic, slow and inefficient, was also clear from the interviews we conducted. These interviews were held with association leaders and members of the Romanian immigrant community in Spain; the people highlighted their discriminatory treatment both on the part of the Spanish authorities ("they always ask for more and more papers, and if they realise you are from Romania, they always check your NIE several times, just to make sure"). They also stated that they were treated similarly by Romanian consulates in Spain. Prospective Romanian immigrants follow these networks[116] from their country of origin. Romanian immigrants to Spain mostly live together with people from similar areas of Romania. This enables them to differentiate between each other depending on the (Romanian) region they come from;

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[114] Alarcón et al. *op. cit*

[115] See: Anghel, Remus Gabriel, *Changing Statuses: Freedom of Movement, Locality and Transnationality of Irregular Romanian Migrants in Milan*, 2008

[116] Through the migratory networks, those who want to temporarily migrate abroad receive help and support from the previous migrants. In areas where others have left before, more will leave, in places where other migrants have succeeded and where the signs of success are apparent, migration will be higher (Constantin et al. 2004 in Mirces&Pristavu(2008).

they are then aware of regional differences, and in some cases these are even emphasised. However, this is better understood in terms of ethnicity and not regional difference, and this is especially true in the case of Romanians and Romanian Roma, who regularly draw lines of demarcation between themselves. Perceptions of difference are also used as a form of defence against the majority of Romanians, who according to popular discourse, 'seek to protect the image of their country and their nation' from 'Gypsies who are here to engage in criminality'. This is articulated in the lines of demarcation they draw between 'us' (Romanians) and 'them' (Roma). This prevents Roma from acting in the name of or participating in the 'Romanian community'. Not surprisingly, associations that are run by Romanians living in Spain are concerned with re-establishing a good image of Romania and preserving the cultural traditions of Romanians living abroad; but they do not even consider contributing to the eradication of the roots of these problems that help feed the negative image of Romania in Spain and the numerous negative stereotypes associated with (Romanian) immigrants in general.

In the following we discuss the level of political participation of Romanian immigrants living in Spain by examining whether they exercise their rights to vote as members of a local community and as citizens of a united Europe, and whether they are affiliated with existing associations. We then go on to present the initiatives and main ideas behind PIRUM, the Iberian Party of Romanians.

2. The organisation of the Romanian community

Social participation must be understood more widely than political participation; as such, social participation needs to be interpreted as going beyond political participation, and as also including aspects related to the social links between individuals that help configure social relations. In this section, we analyse the role that social networks play in the configuration of migration processes, and relations with other migrants and local citizens; we also examine some of the specific characteristics of Romanian immigrants that enable them to conduct their everyday lives within 'closed communities'.

Ritchey[117] examined social participation related to kinship and friendship ties that influenced the decision to migrate. His arguments were based on the following three hypotheses:

- Affinity hypotheses: migrants with the largest networks in their home country are least likely to migrate;

- Information hypotheses: adopting a circular pattern of migration generates an informational flux that further encourages migration and makes it more attractive;

- Ease hypotheses: network-based circular migration makes it easier for new migrants to adapt to their new situation.

It is important to consider these ideas when explaining how the Romanian migrant population underwent a fast process of adaption and quickly conformed to their new reality. Moreover, as the current labour situation only requires migrants to adapt and not fully integrate, Romanian migrants tend to easily answer this necessity, which makes it even less likely that they will become integrated into society. The existing networks in the host country do not facilitate their integration, and this makes it difficult to live up to a host society's expectations.

The role of networks in migration

Many studies have found that networks of immigrants played an extremely important role in the evolution of Romanian immigration to South-West European countries, and Spain is no exception. In the context of globalisation, new models of immigration emerged that have led to a rise in the number of illegal immigrants[118]. In the context of illegality, social networks are incredibly important.

According to the transnational perspective on migration, immigrants are viewed as possessing a social network that stands above borders and outside of the framework of the

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[117] Ritchey P. Neal, *Explanations of Migration*, Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. 2, pp. 363-404: 1976.-

[118] Ghosh in Anghel, 2006, *op.cit*.

nation state[119]. If we analyse Romanian migration using the concept of institutionalised networks, the migrants who left the country in the beginning of the 1990s and successfully integrated themselves into the job market of their host country played a key role in the evolution of Romanian immigration to Spain. These people were 'pioneers', the first 'explorers' who lessened the risks faced by those who followed by providing material help, and taking on the role of host families.[120] Emigration from Romania "escalated especially when the mining industry was radically restructured in 1997 and people lost their jobs on a massive scale. They eventually received financial compensation, which was used in many cases to finance migration".[121]

According to Arango, "social networks help to strengthen already existing concentrations and are a key element in the composition and channelling of flows"[122]. In Spain, in the beginning of the trend towards immigration and at a time of high demand for labour, the Adventist Church played a particularly important role in the establishment of networks of Romanian migrants.[123]. The migrants' social profile also follows network logic: whereas the first arrivals were able to accumulate relatively greater social and financial capital, subsequent migrants came from all of the group's sub-layers.[124]

The exemption of Romanian citizens from visa obligations in 2002, combined with Romania's accession to the EU in 2007, led to changes in the status of immigrants and contributed to the partial deconstruction of these networks. The changing status of immigrants from 'illegal' to 'legal', meant it was no longer necessary to seek help from these networks, and this led to changes in migrant flows and to a rise of illegal activities; as anyone could now travel, including delinquents and criminals. Whereas in the beginning of the 1990s, Romanian immigration was strictly network-based, from 2002 onwards this

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[119] Glick and Schiller in Anghel, 2006, *op.cit.*
[120] Barry in Bauböck, Reiner, International Migration and Liberal Democracies – The Challenge of Integration, IWE Working Paper Series, Wien: 2001
[121] Anghel, 2008, *op.cit.*
[122] Arango 2006 in Bernat and Viruela, 2011, *op.cit.*
[123] Bernat and Viruela, 2011, *op.cit.*
[124] Nacu, Alexandra, *The Politics of Roma Migration: Framing Identity Struggles among Romanian and Bulgarian Roma in the Paris region*, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, November 2010

model of migration slowly started to disintegrate [125]and went through numerous changes. As Anghel puts it, migration from Romania "did not reach its moment of saturation nor did mass migration occur solely on the basis of the network's development; rather, mass migration occurred because the EU policy of free movement also applied to Romanian citizens"[126].

Our research demonstrates that people who rely upon migratory networks belong to a micro-community that is able to exercise some control over these networks and implement their own norms among members. These networks, and the concentration of people around them, make it possible to remain part of a closed community. Kinship ties and family relations based on such networks stand in opposition to the idea of contacting locals or the Spanish authorities, and this is particularly the case with Romanian Roma communities. For example, the concentration of Romanian Roma coming from the region of Vaslui in Santa Coloma provides these people with a stronger feeling of security as transnational migrants; however, it also reinforces the roles and norms of their traditional patriarchal social structure. This makes it extremely difficult or almost impossible for them to escape both the negative stereotype of the 'lazy' immigrant, who 'lives in a closed community', with 'no relationship to local people', but also from the precarious, marginal situation in which they are trapped; this is especially the case for immigrant women.

Romanian immigrants do generally wish to confront negative stereotypes and labels as part of their everyday social reality, and this is not just the case for Romanian Roma. These people undergo a permanent process of socialisation and re-socialisation associated with their migratory situation, which results in a dual, cultural discourse and a combination of patterns, norms and attitudes that were learned both in their country of origin, and are renewed in their host country. According to Robins[127] EU integration has generated new expressions of cultural nationalism that is manifested through collective action. The Romanian associations that we interviewed stated that resolving these newly negotiated national characteristics was of essential importance. Even though the formal objective of

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[125] Anghel, 2006, *op.cit.*
[126] Anghel, 2008, *op.cit.*
[127] Robins, K., *The Challenge of Transcultural Diversities. Cultural policy and cultural diversity*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg: 2006.

these associations is to contribute towards the integration of Romanian migrants, their everyday practices concentrate on preserving cultural aspects (language, traditions) and re-establishing the image of Romanian immigrants in Spain.

This constant renegotiation in the host country of what it means to be Romanian does not only affect the associations, it also affects individuals. In the study mentioned above on Romanian immigrants living in Milan, Anghel[128] describes the situation of a Transylvanian village (Borsa) that experienced massive emigration starting in the year 2000. Although immigrants coming from Borsa may not consider themselves part of a larger family, they are certainly conscious of the kinship ties that link them and act accordingly along certain lines of demarcation that enable them to differentiate between 'us' and 'them'. These lines then differentiate between themselves, and nationals of the host country and other Romanian immigrants who are not from Borsa and are therefore not part of their community. Clearly, in a non-migratory context, these inter-individual borders would be set differently and communitarian relations would probably be wider.

3. Relations of the Romanian community with Spanish nationals and other communities living in Spain

Our research has shown that class differences, which are actually perceived as ethnic differences by the majority society (whether Romanian or Spanish), do not foster social participation when it comes to establishing relations with locals. In the case of the Roma women we interviewed, establishing a relationship – a communicational situation in partnership with locals – was perceived in practical, material terms: Spanish or Catalan people are viewed as having jobs, and more material belongings than Romanian immigrants, which makes communication between the two groups unimaginable for Romanian immigrants.

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[128] Anghel (2008), *op.cit.*

Relations between the two communities are defined strictly in material terms and constituted around material goods. If Romanians are seen begging on the street, Spanish people provide them with money, clothes or other material goods. In fact, as one association member who worked with Romanians for a long time put it: this is the only relationship these groups have with each other.

We also observed a slight difference based on age, which affected a person's willingness to open up towards locals or other immigrants outside of their own community. Younger Romanians seemed to be more open and had more contacts with their neighbours, whether these were Spanish nationals or other immigrants living in the neighbourhood. However, all of the Romanians questioned stated that they had never participated in an event organised by Spanish nationals; as such their participation in local civic life is almost non-existent.

Roma not only find themselves in the middle of racist (political) discourses, they also adopted racist discourse when talking about possible links to other immigrants. Many Roma stated that white people were nice and kept repeating how nice Spanish people were – there argued that there was no-one who would not give them money, who had not shown them compassion.[129] This situation was particularly contrasted with immigrants from Morocco,[130] who were generally perceived as people to be feared, who caused problems on the streets and were drug users or violent. However, this racist discourse did change when it came to the personal level, such as in a case in which Roma girls actually knew a Chinese immigrant or had neighbours from Morocco.

Although it is true that Romanian immigrants in general are better integrated in Spanish society than the Romanian Roma living in Spain, in both cases we can talk about closed communities. The Romanian community tends to be better adapted to the needs of Spanish society than other migrant communities due to its access to the labour market and

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[129] The way of speaking about their hosts – the people who 'allow them to live on their territory' was pretty much defined and influenced by adopted discourses, including a politically correct discourse presented to 'us' as 'outsiders', as people who are not part of their community and do not share their struggles. The perceived unequal and hierarchical situation of 'us', as 'white, rich people' and 'them' as a marginal ethnic group with no possibilities to break out of this bubble, lessened our opportunities to communicate openly. However, some girls from the younger group (especially those with an education) were more willing to express their real thoughts and ideas; yet their willingness 'to tell the truth' immediately caused controversy and dispute among the group.

[130] They adopt the general public discourse in the host country and act accordingly.

language skills. Even though this potential exists, Pajares[131] states that the Romanian community still has a similarly low level of integration as Chinese, Ecuadorian and Moroccan immigrants, and a lower level than the Senegalese community.

Their strategy of integration tended to lead them to navigate the surface of society; this meant they remained as close as necessary to the life of locals, without actually becoming part of local life. They were always able to find a reason to uphold the demarcation lines between 'us' and 'them', but also sought to remain silent and not cause problems. As transnational migrants, both Romanians and Romanian Roma "use the possibilities of dual home bases, both 'here and there' and 'us and them' affiliations to help keep economic, cultural, and political options open"[132] and chose adaption instead of integration.

Transnationalism – Romanians as transnational migrants

Picking up the thread of transnationalism, as Bernat and Viruela argue in their recent study conducted in the region of Castelló, Spain, most Romanian immigrants in the region "see their migration experience as a period in their life that may be longer or shorter, according to their objectives and the circumstances"[133]. The latest reports on immigration and the employment market in Spain[134] conclude that the number of returning Romanians is highly significant and that "it is probably the nationality with the largest return rate", although no data are provided to support this hypothesis.[135]

The interviews we conducted with members of the Roma community from the region of Vaslui also demonstrated that their migrational situation was perceived as temporal and circular. Our interviewees seemed to live more in the present, in the sense that they survived from one day to the other. Future always referred to the near future; the following few months or "until it's not cold any more". As they put it, "We'll stay as long as God wants us to stay", although they did not further clarify this. A further example suggesting that

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[131] Pajares, Alonso & José, Miguel, *Procesos migratorios e integración socio-laboral de los inmigrantes rumanos en Cataluña*, Universitat de Barcelona: 2006, http://hdl.handle.net/10803/707.
[132] Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002 in Bailey, 2009, *op.cit.*
[133] Bernat and Viruela, 2011, *op.cit.*
[134] Pajares, 2009; 2010, *op.cit.*
[135] Bernat and Viruela, 2011 *op.cit.*

they perceived their situation as temporal and circular was also found in their first reactions to questions about the date of their arrival in Spain: they tended to reply by telling us when they had arrived this time, and not the date of their very first arrival. Romanian Roma regularly travel between the two worlds constituted by their home country and their country of residence. Yet, for most of them Romania is 'home' and the majority would go back to the country, if the situation there were better.

Living on the very margins of society makes it difficult for Romanian Roma to plan for the future and act accordingly, but then again this does not only apply to Romanian Roma: most Romanian immigrants keep both options open, although they were not usually able to specify when or whether they would be returning to Romania. As the study of Ciornei[136] reveals, local Spanish authorities generally view Romanian immigrants as temporary migrants and assume they will return to Romania 'as did the Poles', but we should not forget that not all of these people actually put their plans into practice. Despite this, migrants and political actors both assume that Romanian migration is temporary; this influences the political dynamics between this collective and its forms of incorporation. However, almost one third of Romanians believe that their life projects will develop in Spain, and this figure is similar to the results provided by the 2009 OSF study.

A study conducted by the Romanian Open Society Foundation (from now on referred to as the OSF study) in four communities in the autonomous region of Madrid in June 2008 questioned 832 Romanian adult immigrants over 17 years-of-age. They were asked about their perceptions of home and their future plans. The research described four different categories of Romanian immigrants according to their willingness to stay or return to their home country.

In autumn 2008, almost three quarters (71%) declared that they would like to move back to Romania. However, when the questionnaire introduced specific conditions about their return, this high percentage dropped. For example, only 47% declared that they would be returning to Romania within the following five years. Furthermore, only 39% of the

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[136] Ciornei, Irina, *Citizenship practices and transnationalism in Spanish cities. The case of Romanian migrants*, Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona: 2009.

Romanian immigrants in Madrid were actually certain that they would be returning within the next five years. The people who were most certain that they would be returning to Romania had usually already devised a proper plan to do so. The study divided the immigrants into four groups depending on their intentions to return to Romania:

- People intending to return in the following year (14%);

- People intending to return within 2 to 5 years (33%, the largest numerous group);

- People intending to return in the long-term (in more than 5 years) (15%);

- People not planning to return to Romania (29%).

The role of resources in plans to return to Romania

Romanian immigrants on relatively good wages in Spain (above the average of €1,400 per month in 2008) and have good material conditions in Romania but also a relatively low level of education and little knowledge of Spanish are those who are most likely to return to Romania. The tendency to return to Romania is highest among people who have accumulated more money than most other Romanian immigrants; have a relatively good economic situation in Spain, but have been unable to integrate themselves well in the sense of mastering the language.

Approximately 30% of those interviewed stated they had a very good knowledge of Spanish; one third of these people were certain about returning to Romania. In contrast, 64% of people who considered they were having difficulties with the language, intended to return to Romania.

The study also examined the relation between the frequency of attending mass and other religious services, and intentions of returning to Romania. The results showed a higher likelihood of wishing to return among people who at least regularly participated in religious services. Romanian immigrants with a more conservative worldview were also more likely to return to the country, and we will come back to the role of the church in patterns of Romanian immigration in the next section.

It is important to note that back in September 2008, almost 60% of Romanians who were interviewed as part of the OSF study, believed that the Romanian labour market would improve over the following three years, and that only 23% of them thought the same about Spain. As such, the majority was more optimistic about the performance of the Romanian economy than that of Spain. However, the situation of the Romanian labour market has actually considerably worsened since 2008, and this put the question of returning to Romania back on the table. As a 2010 report[137] on world-wide migration patterns and adapting to the local situation points out, migrants may adopt an attitude of 'wait and see what happens', and instead search for new employment opportunities such as those in the hidden economy.

Interestingly, among those who declared a definite wish to stay in Spain, 25% would still like to run a business in Romania. This sign of a transnationalist perception of their migrational situation underlines the fact emphasised by the PIRUM politician we interviewed: that Romanian immigrants do not stop being Romanian, nor do they stop thinking about their country and of voting in their country of origin. In the future, EU policy will need to take this pattern of migration into account.

The study also showed that certain immigrants prefer to return home than to continue to be associated as belonging to a larger group of immigrants and people who commit crimes, which is quite similar to the opinion expressed by the politician from PIRUM.

The study found that 45% of those who declared that they would like to return to Romania, also stated that they imagined the future of their children as divided between both Spain and Romania. Although it is not possible to know what will actually occur in the future, it is still clear that these immigrants have started adopting a different perspective, that of transnationalism, in the sense that they imagine their future 'neither here, nor in Romania' but also 'here and in Romania as well'. Accordingly, "illegal migrants do not have clear plans to settle [...] If something goes wrong, they hope to get a second chance in their community of origin".[138]

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[137] Informe Sobre las Migraciones en el Mundo 2010. El futuro la Migracion: Creacion de Capacidades para el cambio – OIM
[138] Anghel, 2008, *op.cit.*

In contrast, patterns of migration among Romanian Roma are highly dependent on seasonal changes as these people face more severe winter weather conditions in Spain than in Romania. However, seasonal changes also influence the majority of Romanian migrants, as people who work in the agricultural sector rely on seasonal opportunities, not to mention the fact that current Spanish legislation, which entered into force in the summer of 2011, also strengthens this trend by issuing work permits mainly for three months at a time and for seasonal work in agriculture in particular.

The economic situation that most immigrants experience forces them to maintain their transnational status and attempt to gain the best resources from both countries. However, this situation may encourage the systematic circulation of vulnerabilities, and deepen inequalities.[139] As Romanian immigration to Spain is mainly based on economic reasons, the ultimate goal of most immigrants is to use the money they earn in their home country. Although a member of one of the associations we interviewed called the fact that Roma continue to talk about building a big house in Romania as 'childish' and claimed that whenever they attend art classes "they always draw big houses". If we look at the reasons for Romanian migration we also find the same ideas. These are the desires of the working class and the poor, who articulate their thoughts differently, but who are basically motivated to emigrate due to the same factors. Although it might be 'childish', this dream is not a helpful means of differentiating between Romanian migrants. As studies such as the OSF study or the one written by Anghel have shown, most Romanian immigrants spend their money on material goods, such as on a car or house, and do not think about investing it in order to develop a business – at least those who actually plan to invest the money they earn are in the minority.

The role of the church in patterns of migration and the life of immigrants
Several studies have emphasised the important role the church has played and keeps playing in patterns of migration and network-building strategies by Romanian immigrants

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[139]   J. Bailey, Adrian, *Viewpoint On Transnational Migration, Deepening Vulnerabilities, and the Challenge of Membership*, In Migration Letters, Volume 6, Number 1, April, Migration Letters & The London Publishers: 2009

who choose Spain as their country of destination. In the following we discuss the relevant aspects related to the role of the church both in immigration and in the life of the migrants that came up during the quantitative study.

In her study on the transnationalist practices of Romanian migrants in Spain, Irina Ciornei highlights the important role the Adventist Church played in establishing the first patterns of immigration by building up networks of immigration from Romania to Spain. She considers the Adventist Church as sowing the seeds of Romanian migration in Spain; most of the pioneers that migrated at the end of the 1990s belonged to this church. The tendency and potential to migrate among members of neo-protestant churches has been confirmed by several studies.[140] Daniela states that "a series of hypotheses regarding the selective migration flows, according to which the minority ethnic or religious groups show a higher mobility level than the one of the majority Orthodox Romanian population". Ciornei elaborated by arguing that it was not only the Adventist Church that played a strong role in establishing networks of immigration in Spain, but that churches in general, whether catholic, orthodox or neo-protestant, play a very important role as mediators between immigrants and other local people, and as political mediators between immigrants and their country of origin. The field research conducted by the author mentioned above, during 2008 and the beginning of 2009, revealed the multiple roles played by churches in Romanian migration to Spain:

- it is one of the few spaces where Romanians meet and speak with each other;
- the construction of churches is one of the most important requests on the lists advanced by the associations;
- priests (both orthodox and neo-protestants) are very important partners for the Spanish authorities, as they are considered by many to be 'voices of the people';
- most Romanian politicians that campaigned in Spain also attended a church service in order to speak with other attendees.

While Romania remains a religious, conservative country, not everyone who lives in the country or leaves it, is religious or attends Sunday mass (a place that strengthens ties

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[140] Sandu, 2000; Diminescu and Lăzăroiu, 2002 in Daniela, 2008, *op.cit.*

between community members). This is particularly interesting in the context of our study and from the perspective of citizenship and integration. Romanians are perceived by Spanish society as a very religious, "closed community with strict gender hierarchies who will return home" (interview with a local leader by Irina Ciornei in 2009). On the other hand, Romanian politics finds its way to the migrants through the church, and one study has found that people who more frequency attend mass and those most likely to return home. This situation then leads to the question whether religion, integration, citizenship and the likelihood of immigrants returning to their country of origin are interrelated, and how they influence the self-perception of immigrants as constituents of their host country's society.

Although the framework of this study does not enable us to make broader generalisations, it does point to some interesting areas for future research. One of which is the role that the church plays in the configuration of migration, especially in relation to the creation of politically correct discourses or patterns of interaction with local people. In the focus group conducted with Roma migrants we detected different attitudes between religious and nonreligious members of the community, but further research would be necessary to determine whether these differences are mainly influenced by religion, socialisation or derive from the hierarchical situation between interviewer and interviewee. Further studies could then reveal interesting connections between religion and citizen participation.

As described by Ciornei, it is clear that the church plays an important role in relations with local authorities, as in some cases a pastor is the only link between Spanish authorities and Romanian immigrants. However, the church also seems to play a role in maintaining relations with the country of origin. As Ciornei puts it, Romanian politicians visiting Spain regularly attend mass and hold political speeches in churches frequented by Romanian migrants. In this way the church contributes to transnationalism, with the result of reducing political participation in the host country and encouraging voting and participation in Romania. This might seem more relevant if we take into consideration the recent study[141] done by the Open Society Institute, which found that 81% of the Romanian population believes that religious leaders, priests and other members of the church should advise

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[141] http://soros.ro/ro/program_articol.php?articol=305

people on how to vote. The church plays an important role in structuring social and communitarian relations and its power remains important in the context of immigration. It should then not come as a surprise that our interviewees were not able to clearly differentiate between state and religious authorities and kept mixing the two. When asked about information relating to local or national politics in Spain they often spoke about the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to La Sagrada Familia, although they were not catholic.

Politics and religion are not only intertwined in the perceptions of the people we interviewed; we also found more concrete, practical implications of this expressed by political leaders. The ideological leader of PIRUM, the only existing Romanian political party in Spain, is a catholic religious intellectual, and the president of this party – who we were unable to interview as he was in Romania at the time – is an orthodox priest. Ciornei also noticed a similar pattern of linkages, pointing out that in Castellón many presidents of associations belong to or are former members of the Adventist Church.

Women and citizenship

From a gender perspective, citizen participation continues to reflect the patriarchal construction found in the country of origin. From a legal point of view, or from the point of view of the state, only men are considered citizens in Mihaela Cosescu's terms[142], because they have the right to participate in local elections, the right to vote in Spain, and as such are most likely to be registered with local authorities. As such, men are interpreted as citizens whereas women are not. Although this is still applicable to the Romanian Roma we talked to, the differences stemming from official registration with local authorities might not be so strong in the case of Romanians who are successfully integrated into the Spanish labour market. Nonetheless, as Roma communities are generally more closed, and have more strict gender hierarchies, the women we interviewed claimed that men had more contact with the authorities, public institutions and other immigrants and that men 'know more about politics'. However, it is very important to mention that although men claim to have closer connections with the authorities, this is more on the level of discourse than in reality, as in practical terms women may have more connections to local institutions as they

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[142] see Cosescu, 2008, *op.cit.*

are the ones who visit the doctor and bring the children to school. The legal differences between men and women reflect a traditional, patriarchal family structure, which affects both genders. Men, as the head of the family and in keeping with the traditional masculine father figure, cannot be seen as weak, and this includes having health problems. According to this logic, as men do not get ill, they do not need medical insurance; therefore, men are not usually registered for health care, as there is no need to do so. On the other hand, as the head of the family, this status has to be formally recognised; as such, they do register with some state authorities, where their status of partial illegality still enables contact with public authorities or to figure in official statistics. Still, such formal recognition does not mean that they maintain any kind of relationship with public authorities.

As men are the ones in employment they enter into more relations with other immigrants, but women probably still have more relations with public institutions, due to their contact with schools and hospitals. Even women who stay at home have more chances of developing relations with their neighbours and making bonds outside of the Romanian community than men. As we argued before in relation to the possible connections maintained with people from outside of the immigrant community, we noticed a difference between the two groups we interviewed according to their age: the younger ones, whose children do not yet attend school had less contact with state institutions, but on the other hand they have more contact with locals and a more vivid social life with their Spanish neighbours (or at least some connection). This may also be due to their possibility of communicating more easily as younger immigrants have a better knowledge of Spanish (although this possibility is still limited, as mentioned at the beginning of this analysis). The specific context is important when interpreting the situation under the surface of politically correct discourses, and in this case it depicts a somewhat contradictory situation: from the viewpoint of the state, women are not citizens (they are not registered and do not appear on official statistics), but on the other hand they maintain links with local institutions and as such, partly act as citizens.

Gender and citizenship are also intertwined in the case of men whose role in the family makes it necessary to be registered with local authorities. In the case of women, obtaining a health card is also linked to their gender and the traditional role of the mother that

derives from it. Women define their roles as mothers, which explains their need for health care. As they put it, 'we are mothers, we get pregnant, so we also get ill more often'. When applying for a health card, women present themselves primarily as women, as mothers and not as citizens. As such, we argue that obtaining a health card is not part of a well-planned action exercised by a citizen with rights, but is more or less linked to an individualised experience of the world as a woman and more importantly, as a mother.

This study has shown that women perceive themselves as different from the rest of society (whether Romanian or Spanish) in two ways: first, in terms of employment, and second due to motherhood. As mentioned above, employment and unemployment are a differentiating factor between Roma migrants on the one hand, and Spanish people and Romanian migrants on the other. We now look at perceived differences related to motherhood.

In their self-definition as mothers who have many children ('because that is the Gypsy way', 'that is the tradition of Gypsies', or 'that is what God wants us to do'), the very fact of having or not having (many) children becomes a factor of differentiation between 'us' and 'them'. Such mothers would also lack the image of the 'working woman', as they are pretty much obliged to stay at home and take care of their children, something that is considered to be 'doing your duties as a woman'. Consequently, these women have never tried to find employment (our aim is not to analyse their actual chances on the labour market, but to analyse their self-perception as citizens and as women, and the relation between this in a traditional community). At the same time, as female members of a closed community they certainly lack the models and skills to become working women. Moreover, as one association member working with Romanian Roma immigrants pointed out during an interview, as these women have a number of children and are always with them, they do not have a single moment during the day when it would be possible to leave their children behind. This very much complicates the time they have to search for employment and basically means they have no possibility of accessing the labour market.

We also noticed generational differences in this context, because while elder women thought it would be impossible for them to leave the home in order to find work (because they had to take care of their children), some of the younger girls kept emphasising that

they would find a solution such as by sending their children to nursery. Beyond the difficulties of how to escape the community, the traps of patriarchal discourses and the fixed image of a woman as nothing but a mother; entering the labour market, or finding employment would only be possible if it were also linked to acculturalisation. This problem was also mentioned during the interviews we conducted with members of an association, who emphasised that Roma women would have to undergo a certain process of acculturalisation in the sense of changing their traditional clothing – the Gypsy skirt – if they were ever to have a chance on the labour market.

In conclusion, we argue that these women are pretty much trapped in patriarchal discourses about who is responsible for sustaining the family, who has to earn the most money or who knows more about politics and life in generally; however, these discourses are translated into slightly different practices during daily life. Elder women whose husbands do not work, or those who do not have a husband, have to live off their own means. Even among younger women, there are several cases of women travelling to Spain by themselves (who did not follow male family members) and are trying to survive on their own. However, a very strong belief in 'men being in charge' still persists. Meanwhile, we should not forget that there are not only hierarchies between men and women, but also between older women and younger women, and older women tend to reproduce similar patriarchal values and exercise absolute control over their daughters.

Moreover, we argue that alongside the trap of conservatory discourses that emphasise men's role as breadwinners, along with many other Romanian immigrants, they too are "trapped in the myth, that here they live better"[143] (OSF study). Some of these immigrants certainly do, but many others are still struggling to survive, searching for *chatarra*, collecting iron and other scrap on the streets and dreaming of a better life for their children, although without the certainty of knowing whether this will occur in Spain or in Romania.

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[143] The OSF study tells the story of a Romanian immigrant in Italy, who loaned money from a friend, bought a lot of goods, filled his fridge with all kind of products, before taking a picture to send home to demonstrate how well he was doing in his new situation.

Furthermore, our research has shown that the Spanish labour market provides different job opportunities to Romanian men and women, which generally reflects the gendered division of labour. For example, women mostly work in the domestic sector. This is further strengthened by local women in Spain who transfer the inequalities they previously faced to migrant women.[144] This establishes hierarchical relations between women from local societies and migrant communities. In addition, the network-based strategy of finding employment constructs a trap for most migrant women, making it impossible for them to escape traditional female sectors such as family care, and agriculture. Whereas network migration can be useful for the community as a whole, and in economic terms, it does not always contribute to women's empowerment.

Considering the recent situation of Romanian migrants living in Spain, a community in which job losses have mainly affected men[145], it would be interesting to examine how this has influenced traditional gender-based family roles. As the demand for family care remains high, women who have been able to keep their jobs are now their family's main breadwinners. Although this could lead to a renegotiation of family roles, it is still not clear whether this is actually happening or whether it will just place a further burden on women, while maintaining current gender-based hierarchies. Consequently, it would be interesting to analyse whether this model equally contributes to the development of the lives of all family members or merely promotes the maintenance of traditional patriarchal relations.

Suarez and Crespo[146] distinguish between four types of migration related to the family and the role of migrant women in decision making. Individual migration is understood as migration based on a woman's free choice. Presumed individual migration is a form of migration understood as a choice, but motivated by the economical necessities of the family. Presumed family migration is migration as an attempt to escape an unequal situation between partners. Finally, family migration is migration based on a collective choice made by all family members.

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[144] Parella, 2003, *op.cit.*
[145] Castelló, 2009, *op.cit.*
[146] Suarez, Liliana and Crespo, Paloma. *Families in motion. The case of romanian women in Spain.* Migraciones, num. 21 – 2007 (p. 235-257)

These categories highlight certain family realities that remain hidden when analysing statistical data. The role that women play in decisions to emigrate seems to be different from the one assumed by quantitative data, for example, a woman's decision to migrate could also be a way of escaping patriarchal family structures and renegotiating her position in society. In contrast, market labour opportunities and patriarchal traditions of migrant networks make this transition to equality almost impossible.

4. The participation of Romanian immigrants in local and European elections

Voting – the lack of participation

The very act of voting and participating in local and European elections is linked to whether immigrants feel like members of their local community, and whether they perceive themselves as members of a united Europe, and as European citizens. It can be argued that voting, as a manifestation of a person's understanding of self – as a citizen with rights – very much depends on that person's level of integration. This argument follows the logic of 'higher integration equates with higher electoral participation'. As we will see, this logic is not applicable to Romanian immigrants living in Spain.

The missing act of voting – the lack of participation by Romanian immigrants both in local and European elections – in their host country is due to the model of the political system they experienced during communism and the scepticism and apathy that generally characterises Romanian public opinion about politicians who are perceived as 'unable to change the country'. In the words of many of our interviewees, on the other hand, as transnational migrants they do not stop 'being Romanians', nor do they 'stop thinking about their country of origin'. As such, it should not come as a surprise when they display little interest in voting in a country in which they consider their presence to be transitional, despite the fact that in many cases an intended short stay turns into a lifetime project, as revealed by the 2009 OSF study.

But what happens in the case of immigrants who are in Spain for a long period of time and have a high level of integration, and who are visible members of the Romanian community (such as association leaders or journalists working for Romanian newspapers present in Spain) who actually should be able to defend themselves when their rights are not respected? The framework of this study does not enable us to make broader generalisations about all Romanian immigrants living in Spain, but based on the interviews and focus-groups we conducted, especially on the interviews conducted with one Romanian association leader, and one who works for a refugee support organisation, we argue that levels of integration are not actually connected to levels of political participation manifested through the act of voting. The reason for this is that people with a high level of integration are not used to voting and participating in local elections in their host country, even though they do have jobs, speak local languages (both of them spoke Spanish and Catalan), and their personal networks include migrants and locals – all of which are considered indicative of a high level of integration.

This leads us to the question of how we understand integration in the general context of migration. We argue that immigrants tend to reproduce and conform to the idea of integration that is current at the level of national politics and in the context of the nation state. As mentioned above, this idea of integration is mainly based around the individual and not on collective integration, which would consist of being employed, learning and speaking the language of the host country (and of the region in some cases), and being a 'good member of the local (national) community' in the sense of not causing problems, but mainly remaining passive and not exercising their rights to vote as citizens. Finally, this form of integration would entail avoiding new demands for more rights as a member of an integrated immigrant community. In this context, we can draw a difference between practical integration (employment, language) and civil integration (rights, defence, voting). Whereas the first form develops out of individual necessity, the second develops out of collective necessity. However, the current legal status and general rights situation of Romanian migrants living in Spain is strong enough to avoid collective action with this purpose. Despite this, there are some examples of collective action aimed at improving the social perception of Romanians in Spain. As such, the fact that (Romanian) immigrants do

not participate in local elections might indicate a lack of interest in local policy, but it should not be considered as indicative of a lack of political activity or participation.[147]

Participation in local elections implies the existence of legal arrangements with a local council and as described above, many Romanian immigrants avoid contacting local or state authorities. Several interviewees mentioned that the problem might also be rooted in the voting tradition of the Romanian community, the majority of whom are working class. In many cases, voting is not perceived as an individual act based on personal choice, but something that is controlled from above to meet the needs of certain authorities and politicians. In Romania, one interviewee claimed that it is very common that the votes of the poor (including Roma)[148] are bought by certain political parties, and 'forced' voting does not facilitate the perception of a democratic system in which a 'vote really counts'. As such, many Romanian immigrants do not consider voting important, nor do they see it as facilitating social change; instead, voting is viewed as something necessary to maintain good relations with the authorities. However, all of our interviewees regularly participate in local and national elections, and this returns us to the question of transnationalism.

Participation in European elections

There are a number of causes of non-participation in European elections but there is a general pattern of low participation in European elections on the part of Romanians living in Spain. The advantage of being part of a united Europe manifests itself through the practical attitude of the immigrants we spoke to, and mainly the satisfaction of travelling freely within the EU. However, throughout our discussions they continually emphasised the advantages that came with Romania's accession to the EU in the context of 'necessity' and not of 'enjoyment': "We came here out of necessity, but we would go back if we could make a living in our country".

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[147] Makarovic, M. et al., *Social and political participation; Is there an European Convergence?*. In Adam, F., *Social capital and governance: Old and New members of the EU in Comparison*. Transaction publishers, London: 2007.

[148] Roma are complete outsiders in the Spanish local elections; as such, they find themselves in the middle of a political battlefield constituted by xenophobic political discourses.

As one of the interviewees put it, they see themselves as Romanian citizens in the EU living in Spain, but most importantly, they view themselves as Romanian citizens. The members of an association who work with Roma women argued that Romanian Roma are generally very poorly educated, and have no sense of Europe or what it means to be a European citizen; consequently, they act accordingly. On the other hand, it should also be noted that Romanian citizens are yet to gain full European citizenship, and Romanians are still classed A2 citizens in Europe. This leads them to face labour market controls in many countries, above all Spain, which recently reintroduced labour market restrictions.

Makarovic et al.[149] analysed electoral participation and its characteristics in EU countries and distinguished a number of general attitudes towards democracy; Romania was categorised as a 'passive democracy'. The other countries that were similarly categorised were Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal. These countries are characterised by a lack of active participation, late modernisation; and experienced authoritarian regimes during the 20th century. As such they have little in the way of a democratic tradition. By comparing passive democracies with the data on the levels of participation in European elections, it becomes clear that all of the countries that are part of the group, with the exception of Latvia, have very low rates of participation in EU elections. The rate of participation in Romania is 27.7%; this is the fourth lowest rate in the EU and demonstrates that the problem with low participation in European elections has no relation to migration processes, and instead is more to do with the situations in the migrants' countries of origin. Moreover, the data related to the 2008 parliamentary elections in Romania also show a low level of participation (39.26%). This increased at the 2009 presidential elections (56.99%), which coincided with a referendum on changing the size of the country's parliament. This probably explains the increased participation. Most of the opinions expressed during the focus groups and interviews presented a negative impression of how democracy works in Romania, and this factor has been shown to influence citizens' attitudes towards the other political systems in which they are involved. Consequently, the past political socialisation of migrants in their country of origin seems to greatly influence migrants' social life and the priorities they hold in their host countries.

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[149] Makarovic et al., *op.cit.*

Finally, Romanian nationals have clearly benefited from Romanian accession to the EU, and this opinion was also expressed during the focus groups and interviews. However, these benefits remain at the individual level and have not yet been expressed or manifested through collective action; although we will analyse a number of exceptions to this below. As such, there are still numerous aspects that must be changed if we are to promote a sense of Europeanness among many EU nationals; this is a process that would logically bring about an increase in participation rates in European elections. Despite this, there is also a division between practical aspects related to EU migration and host country integration on the one hand, and symbolical involvement with European or local ideals on the other. EU migration and host country integration can occur on an individual basis; in cases where it does not occur, migrants can still return to their country of origin. In contrast, it is more difficult to achieve symbolic involvement with European or local ideals due to the economic focus of current migratory processes, and the transnational reality of migrants that leads them to live between two countries at the same time; in such cases there is no symbolic involvement with 'Europe'.

The role of associations

Associations represent a secondary stage of political participation in which individuals involve themselves in a collective project to satisfy their demands or interests; these may be related to various topics, political influence on the community being just one. According to Putnam (2009), migrant associations function according to two basic mechanisms: bonding and bridging. The bonding process consists of efforts developed by the association to strengthen internal links in the migrant community by encouraging the growth of networks, strengthening a feeling of belonging within the community, and visualising the cohesive role of the association. In contrast, the bridging process consists of reinforcing the association's connections with the host society and its institutions. In this regard, Dueñas[150] states that the expectancies of local public institutions about the work that migrant associations should develop do not coincide with those of migrant associations. The focus

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[150] Dueñas, D. *Jóvenes extranjeros y participación social: ¿Diferentes procesos migratorios conducen a diferentes modelos de participación?*. Revista Internacional de Organizaciones, num. 6: 2011 (p.81 - 107).

groups suggest that public institutions generally expect migrant associations to be strongly involved in intensive bridging activities aimed at facilitating migrant integration, such as creating mixed networks, or developing the skills needed to foster integration. In contrast, associations also tend to develop intense bonding activities, and work to preserve cultural aspects or improve the image of the community with which they are associated.

The interviews and focus groups tended to confirm this, and associations seem to concentrate on improving the image of Romania and Romanian immigrants in Spain, but are unable to consolidate or establish strong community formations. Their solutions to this problem are mainly related to image improvement, and not the eradication of the causes that produced negative images. Moreover, the associations themselves contribute to the articulation of differences between 'normal Romanian immigrants' and Romanian Roma. In so doing, they deploy a racist discourse and constitute Roma as an ethnic group; as a community that is scapegoated for illegal and criminal acts committed by certain Romanian immigrants who may or may not be Roma. A clear example of this is the 'Mailat case' in Italy and its repercussions.

As one Romanian association leader mentioned, there are many 'dead' associations that are no longer running, and have nothing but a formal presence in the Romanian immigrant community. This is another reflection of the role of Romanian associations in Spain; they focus on preserving culture and tradition or in providing legal advice and support, but not enough attention is paid to building communities.

On the other hand, local associations who work with Romanian Roma migrants work differently: they do try to establish links with the host community, and favour empowerment (or at least demarginalisation) over simple integration. The specificities of the collective with which they work leads them to face difficulties in their daily work, such as gaining trust, and consequently they tend to emphasise the importance of informal relations in generating confidence. Regardless of these efforts, the majority of Roma immigrants, do not view associations as fora for advice or places that facilitate access to rights. Instead, the majority view associations more or less in material terms, as providing help in the form of clothes or money, and this also makes it difficult for associations to

develop their objectives. However, some Roma did mention that they viewed associations as places which provide important information or help with legal matters.

Normally, advice provided by people who are not from the Roma community is treated with scepticism and it may even cause conflicts as the patriarchal Roma family model means husbands are rarely happy with outsiders providing advice to their wives.[151]

Neither of the two types of associations mentioned above (Romanian migrant's associations and local associations that work with migrants) seem to be achieving their objectives. Still, there is an important difference between their objectives. Romanian associations generally focus on bonding activities, improving the image of Romanian migrants, eradicating false stereotypes that affect their community, and creating a positive image of Romanians. At the same time, they tend to leave the creation of individual mixed networks and the processes associated with integration in the hands of individual immigrants. In contrast, local associations that work with Romanian Roma, tend to focus on bridging activities, but they do not encourage bonding procedures that could reduce the distance between Roma and other Romanians.

PIRUM – a transnational perspective?

A Romanian political party stood for the first time in the 2011 Spanish local elections. The results were poor and the party only gained a total of 97 votes in the four villages in which it had candidates. Despite this, the fact that the party stood in the election at all was an innovative experience resulting from the possibilities offered by EU legislation in the context of Romanian migration. We now analyse the specific case of this political initiative in the context of the Spanish local elections.

Migration had an impact on the 2011 Spanish local elections, not only because many of the immigrants had the chance to vote (even if their participation is assumed to have been low),[152] but also because they were able to stand as candidates in the elections. Estimates

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[151] One example of this was the fact that during the focus groups, women were worried that their husbands would be angry if they stayed out too late.
[152] No official data is given.

show that more than one thousand foreigners campaigned on local political lists. There were two possibilities of running in the elections for non-Spanish (EU) nationals: candidates could campaign as a member of a Spanish political party (the Socialist Party had 586 foreigners on its list, while the People's Party had almost 500); or create a new party, with immigrants at its focus (besides PIRUM, other migrant parties also stood in the elections including PRUNE, an Islamic party, and Pdex, the Party of Foreigners). Moreover, in previous local elections, two foreigners were elected as village mayors, and 85 more were elected as city councillors (the final count for 2011 was not available in time for this study).

PIRUM (The Iberian Party of Romanians) is based on an understanding of political participation that can be considered as halfway between individual political participation, and collective configurations of migrant realities. The idea is that immigrants who stand for election take individual decisions that have collective implications, and it uses the legal possibilities that EU legislation offers to achieve social representation. Consequently, PIRUM, is an example of how Romanians imagine or fight against the negative stereotypes they face during life in Spain. It also allows us to reflect on the causes of why these initiatives or certain associations fail to attract members of the Romanian community, or fail to create a community. We conducted two interviews with members of the party: a candidate in the local elections, and the so-called father of the party's ideology.

As an initiative, PIRUM seeks 'unity in diversity'; according to its leader, who presents himself both as a Romanian politician and as "a normal guy, just like any Spanish person", PIRUM fights the negative stereotypes that are applied to Romanians. On the other hand, party discourse depicts a singular image of the country, and reproduces[153] these same negative stereotypes and prejudices that are generally applied to Romania as a country, and to Romanian immigrants living abroad. This includes disassociating themselves from Romanian Roma. Furthermore, their discourse reproduces the same racist ideas that other political parties use against Roma, such as blurring ethnicity with crimes committed by individuals, and scapegoating an entire community based on its ethnicity.

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[153] In the interview, the 'spiritual leader' of the country kept repeating the negative things that he, as someone who has never lived in Romania, sees as the major deficits of the country. He listed several aspects including corruption, undemocratic institutions, the resistance of the former communist elite in the current political parties, etc.

The 'spiritual leader' of the party explained that PIRUM has two objectives: to work in Spain to improve the living conditions of Romanians, without excluding other citizens ("we are not only a party for Romanians"), and to influence Romanian society. They described the Romanian electoral system as highly restrictive and full of difficulties that prevented the creation of new political parties, and made political influence outside of the main political parties almost impossible. He also accused existing Romanian parties of corruption and promoting non-democratic structures. There is a clear dual discourse in relation with the objectives of the party; on the one hand, they use electoral lists in the host country to defend Romanian interests; on the other hand, they deploy a transnational strategy that can only be understood if we take into account the situation in Romania.

This second point is related to the transnational situation in which many immigrants find themselves: living between two worlds, and constantly travelling between two countries. Moreover, 'their' political party, or at least the one that understands itself as their legal representative, considers its ultimate goal as taking part in the Romanian national elections and "bringing democratic change to the country from the outside". Even during the Spanish general elections they presented themselves as a party that aims to work for the local community as a whole and consciously avoided stating that their aim was to defend the civil rights of the Romanian community. No wonder then, that support was extremely low among Romanians, who certainly did not feel interested, represented or even have the desire to be represented by a Romanian party that does not even seek to defend their rights in Spain; and with its ultimate goal of participating in European parliamentary elections and entering Romanian national politics. However, this was the first time that the party stood for election, and this needs to be taken into account; it will be interesting to follow the party in the future, and to see how they develop their transnational project.

As an alternative, PIRUM does open a wide range of possibilities to Romanian migrants in future elections. If we assume that migratory processes will continue to be important in a European context, and that Romanian migrants will become more integrated, future political participation will depend on what they take into account when deciding for whom they wish to vote. Will they vote locally, reproducing previous left—right political positions,

based on their experience in Romania? Will they vote locally, trying to understand the problems of their host country and taking into consideration local, nationalist positions besides the left—right political axis? Or will they vote locally according to their migrant status and strengthen the political model proposed by PIRUM?

5. Good practices

The following good practices have been developed by representative associations and are meant to empower the people they represent and encourage them to take part in the democratic life of their host country and/or the EU.

There are several activities and practices that could be considered good practices in trying to improve the idea of citizenship in the European context. During the development of the national study, we discussed the various practices set out in the following. We consider these ideas good practices as they are an effective and useful means of promoting the full application of European civil rights with the aim of improving the living conditions of EU (and other) citizens who move to a new (EU) country.

The implementation of activities by supporting organisations at different levels: the focus was placed on Romanian migrants as a collective, and on Romanian Roma immigrants as a specific collective with specific demands and needs.

Several organisations and associations have been set up by Romanians for Romanians in Spain that develop activities related to the improvement of Romanian migrants' living conditions. These associations raise awareness of the problems faced by migrants among policy makers, or promote the image of Romanian citizens to facilitate acceptance of migration. The association that focused on Roma issues aims to link Roma migrants to local society to facilitate their integration in local communities and promote their social, cultural and economic development.

Strong points: there are a variety of activities provided by various organisations; the indicator of Romanian migrants' dynamism; activities are related to migrants' needs.

Weak points: they have little real impact on Romanians' daily lives; economic dependency and high rate of dissolution among associations due to this dependency; there is little interaction with the demands of local authorities.

The foundation of a Romanian political party: PIRUM, stood for the first time in the 2011 Spanish local elections. Although foreigners have previously stood in local elections as individuals, this was the first case of an EU-migrants' party. This makes PIRUM's experience particularly interesting and an example of EU transnational civil rights. On the other hand, their results were poor and a number of social issues must be taken into account when evaluating the party's activities.

Strong points: an individual initiative that promotes collective rights; an indicator of the consolidation of civil rights in an EU context; the aim of political participation.

Weak points: it had very low impact in local elections; lack of agreement between the people who were interviewed about their project.

Cooperation between foreign and local institutions or organisations: we found that different activities linked institutions or organisations from Romania with Spain. These included cooperation between the Catholic and Orthodox Church to provide mass to their followers; collaboration between Romanian associations and the local UNESCO Center; cooperation between town halls and migrants' associations.

Strong points: there were diverse forms of cooperation; social movements' demands were institutionalised; they result from real social demands; cooperation between organisations with similar objectives.

Weak points: large differences in the results they achieved due to diversity among the institutions and organisations. More interest was placed on the institutional effects of collaboration than on practical outcomes.

6. Recommendations: the needs of the community, and what will have to be improved to encourage participation

Transnationalism: promote the idea of transnationalism in local political contexts. Previous policies implemented in relation to the integration of migrants into local or national cultures should be redefined to reflect the non-permanent flows of contemporary migration. These policies are understandable from the point of view of local management (especially to prevent racist discourses and mitigate the impact of extreme right-wing social movements), but they are confronted by several practical difficulties when viewed in a broader European context. The practical outcomes of temporal and circular migration do not coincide with local and national interests aimed at integrating immigrants; as such, they collide on a daily basis with the policies being developed in local or national contexts.

Language: Information needs to be provided in the most frequently used languages by migrants to provide them with information they understand. The way internet search engines function also needs to be taken into account to ensure migrants receive the information they need. Local language skills need to be promoted as a path to social integration.

Political and social participation: Help migrants understand the administrative mechanisms of participation in elections and political parties, and promote their involvement in politics. Promote new experiences of political participation and governance at the local and national level. These provide minority groups with wider possibilities to influence public and political structures. Promote groups such as migrant associations, trades unions and political parties at the associative level. Continue promoting the idea of European citizenship to help increase participation rates in EU elections, and focus on the practical benefits that citizenship involves.

Social perception: promote the social acceptance of Romanian migrants by fighting against xenophobic discourses and stereotypes particularly in politics in host countries and

recognise the internal diversity of the country of origin. Remember that migrant associations may not be representative of their country of origin. Provide minorities with more visibility by developing other means of participating in society.

Using these recommendations as a practical basis, associations can involve themselves in many other activities, including:

- The comparison of different national and regional realities according to the general situation of different groups of migrants; their access to civil rights; as well as providing possible solutions and activities;
- practical solutions, tools or possibilities that improve migrants' situations such as national and international tools, self-managed projects, support institutions;
- presenting good practices.

V: The Bulgarian community in Greece
(Dimitris Micharikopoulos and Maya Stoyanova)

1. An introduction to the Bulgarian community

Up until the 1980s, Greece was a country that had traditionally 'exported' immigrants. After the collapse of social realism, the country became the destination for huge numbers of immigrants, mainly from former Soviet Bloc countries. Thus, rapidly and with no particular immigrant policy, over the course of the last twenty years, Greece has become a country of immigration.

The presence of Bulgarian immigrants in Greece first became noticeable immediately after the fall of the regime in Bulgaria in 1989. The situation escalated between 1997 and 1998.[154] A second major wave of Bulgarian immigration was recorded around 2001;[155] the third and final wave was recorded between 2007 and 2009.[156] The massive and long-term presence of Bulgarian immigrants in Greece was the main reason for the focus of this research on the Bulgarian community; since Bulgaria, along with Romania, has been a full member of the European Union since 2007. Consequently, Bulgarians are now EU citizens, and are entitled to move freely and have equal access to economic and social rights in other EU member states. This study has been conducted within the framework of the project 'Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for All', which is co-financed by the EU. It aims to investigate and support the exercise of political and social rights by EU immigrants resident in five EU countries (nationals of one EU member state living as immigrants in another EU country). More precisely, we investigated the extent to which Bulgarian immigrants living in Greece feel equal to other European citizens; analysed their social characteristics, the extent of their social inclusion, their position in the labour market, their participation in the country's political life and democratic institutions, as well as the level and manner of their representation by organisations within the Bulgarian community.

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[154] The first institutional endeavour for the legalization of illegal immigrants in Greece took place during that period.
[155] The second legalization of illegal immigrants in Greece.
[156] On 1 January 2007, Bulgaria became a full member of the EU; however, exceptions were in place until 1 January 2009 in regard to the free movement of persons from the new EU members, i.e. Bulgaria and Romania, to a number of countries, including Greece.

History

After the fall of the communist regime (November 1989), Bulgaria became a country that exported workers to the United States, Canada and to other European countries. As was often the case during that period, Bulgaria faced a financial crisis during its transitional period, which was accompanied by a rapid increase in unemployment and inflation. It was during this time that Bulgarian citizens were given the right to freely exit the country for the first time. Germany proved to be the most attractive country for Bulgarian emigrants and 20.6% of the total exported population arrived in the country. Germany was followed by the United States, with 12.6% of the Bulgarian immigrant population, and Canada with 8.2%.[157] These three countries have a historically significant experience of immigration, and an organised migration policy. It is quite difficult for immigrants to enter these countries and their institutional frameworks and control mechanisms make illegal residence and labour even harder.

One of the first destinations for Bulgarian immigrants was Greece: the country was relatively easy to access and a 'cheaper' destination for Bulgarian immigrants than other countries; as such, the country received 7.1% of all Bulgarian immigrants. The main reason for this was the shorter distance compared to other destinations. Consequently, transport expenses were much lower and returning was much safer; these were important factors for migrants who were leaving young children, and other family members behind.

The first mass entry of Bulgarian immigrants into Greece took place illegally through tourism agencies. Bulgarian 'tourists' would enter Greece legally, mainly on group visas as part of a pre-paid tourist package. However, these buses would return half-empty, as many

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[157] Data from the Bulgarian Statistical Service, 1994. See also Markova, E., *The Economic Performance of Bulgarian illegal and legalized immigrants in the Greek Labor market,* PhD thesis, Dep. Of Economics, Univ. of Athens, 2001, p. 246, as well as The World Bank, Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011, (http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTDECPROSPECTS/0,,contentMDK:21352016~pagePK:64165401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:476883,00.html)

of the 'tourists' had remained in Greece. As such, there were already 7,000 Bulgarians[158] in Greece by 1993, with a steady trend towards a continued influx.

A massive wave of Bulgarian immigration occurred a few years later between 1997 and 1998,[159] when under specific conditions Greece legalised the status of individuals who had otherwise been illegally residing in the country. Greece adopted the associated law in November 1997 and it entered into force on 1 January 1998. The period of public consultation about immigrant legislation, and the subsequent period between the adoption of the new law and its entry into force, were long enough for prospective Bulgarian immigrants to receive information and encouragement to enter the country from friends and acquaintances already working in Greece. Furthermore, this period coincided with the Bulgarian banking crash (1996—1997), during which millions of Bulgarians lost their savings.[160] A third reason for this massive wave of immigration was that Bulgaria had signed a loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund aimed at 'saving' the country, which led the government to privatise several enterprises; this caused a massive increase in unemployment.

The second wave of Bulgarian immigrants occurred in 2001 during the second endeavour to legalise illegal immigrants in Greece. According to the official census of that year,[161] there were approximately 35,000 Bulgarians[162] living in Greece. On the basis of these statistical data, Bulgarians represented the second largest nationality of immigrants in Greece after Albanians, despite the huge difference in size between both populations: 55.67% of all immigrants were Albanians, while 4.67% were Bulgarians.

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[158] There are no accurate data in Greece regarding the actual number of foreign citizens living in the country. According to the official data of the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED), 1,062 Bulgarians have acquired a green card; this number in no way reflects the actual number of Bulgarians living in the country at that time. For related numbers, see Markova, E., ibid.

[159] For numbers during that period, see Kavounidis, T., *Characteristics of immigrants: the Greek legalization programme of 1998*, Sakkoulas publications, Athens-Thessaloniki 2002, p. 349.

[160] In 1996, inflation in Bulgaria was approximately 600%. During this period, the monthly salary of a civil engineer in Bulgaria with 30 years of experience was approximately 10 USD, i.e. approximately half of the daily wages of an unskilled cleaner in Greece.

[161] The results of the 2001 census were disputed in regard to the number of immigrants living in Greece, since, according to other estimates, Bulgarians – and other immigrants – were double in number than those that finally arrived/agreed to participate in the census.

[162] See EL.STAT., 2001 Census Available at: http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-themes?p_param=A1602&r_param=SAM07&y_param=2001_00&mytabs=0, as well as Pavlou, Miltos, "Greece of Migration in numbers", in Pavlou, M. & D. Christopoulos (ed), *Greece of Migration: Social participation, rights and citizenship*, KRITIKI publishing, Athens 2004, and Tzortzopoulou, M., M. Stoyanova, "Immigration in Greece: Issues and approaches to the study of the phenomenon" in Kallas, J. (ed), *The Node for Secondary Processing*, EKKE publishing, Athens 2005, pp. 171—181.

The third and final wave was recorded during the period of accession of Bulgaria to the EU. According to data from the Ministry of the Interior, between 2007 and 2009, 132,935 residence and labour permits were issued to Bulgarian and Romanian citizens in Greece (compared to 314,460 to Albanians).[163] Based on this fact, one could reasonably estimate that Bulgarian immigrants legally residing in Greece during that period numbered approximately 77,000, while their total number (including those without an official residence permit) must have been double this number: approximately 150,000 people. In 2011, unofficial estimates, which lack data on Bulgarian citizens as immigrants from third countries, put the total number of Bulgarians residing in Greece at over 150,000 people.[164]

The social characteristics of Bulgarian immigrants[165]

Gender

Since the very beginning, Bulgarian migration to Greece has been markedly female, as it is harder for Bulgarian men to find work in Greece. Construction and farming work have been dominated since the mid-1990s by Albanian immigrants, who entered and settled in Greece in massive numbers during the early 1990s. At the same time, there was a need for carers for the elderly as well as child carers in Greece, which enabled Bulgarian immigrant women to easily find employment. Thus, after 20 years of migration from Bulgaria, women still constitute the main group of migrants in this community.[166]

Age

The majority of Bulgarian female immigrants in Greece are between 40 and 60 years of age; a large percentage are divorced or widows and have left young children and/or elderly parents behind. Male immigrants in Greece are younger (mostly between 25 and 45 years of age) and the majority live in Greece with their wives and children.

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[163] See also Kontiadis, X. and Th. Papatheodorou, *The reform of migration policy*, Papazissis publishing, Athens 2007, pp. 195 — 200.
[164] Data from the 2011 census will be published during the second half of 2012.
[165] The conclusions in this section are mainly based on the associated literature (see Kavounidis, T., ibid; Markova, ibid; 2001 Census, ibid; Markova, E. "The presence of Bulgarian immigrants in the Greek labour market and Greek society" in Marvakis, Ath. & D. Parsanoglou, M. Pavlou (ed), *Immigrants in Greece*, Ellinika Grammata publishing, Athens 2001, pp. 247 — 276; Tzortzopoulou, M., M. Stoyanova, ibid), and the field research, particularly in regard to developments after 2007.
[166] However, there are indications in recent years that this is changing, particularly with the presence of younger Bulgarian male immigrants in Greece.

Educational level

Most Bulgarian immigrants in Greece – men and women – are graduates of secondary or technical schools, while a small percentage holds higher education degrees.

Residence

The majority of Bulgarian migrants have settled in the large urban centres of Greece, and 30% are located in Athens and the nearby areas. There are also relatively large numbers of Bulgarian immigrants in Thessaloniki, Crete, Messenia and Laconia. With regards to Athens, in particular, their spatial concentration matches that of immigrants in general; as such, most live in the districts of Metaxourgion, Vathis Square, Kypseli and in Acharnon Street.

Vocational status

In Greece, as is the case in other Mediterranean EU countries, where unemployment to a great extent has structural characteristics, high unemployment rates often co-exist with a large number of vacant positions of a mainly manual or 'low status' nature; this was particularly the case before the recent economic crisis. In researching the vocational status of Bulgarians, we examined their employment system and their position in the labour market, as well as their occupation before migrating to Greece.[167]

We identified differences between immigrants settling in Greece with long-term prospects and those migrating with short-term prospects. People who came to Greece with long-term prospects of residence,[168] were faced with great changes compared to their previous vocational status in Bulgaria. Whereas in Bulgaria they had worked as skilled employees or in the public or private sector,[169] in Greece they were employed as unskilled personnel, in most cases at the private premises of their employer. However, a gradual change in their vocational status is occurring. By learning Greek, having their degrees and other qualifications officially recognised, and primarily through becoming legal residents of Greece, they have acquired the necessary qualifications to enter the labour market on a relatively equal basis and seek better positions. Thus, after acquiring residency and work

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[167] We compared the vocational status of Bulgarians in Greece to that in their home country, not simply to record data, but in an effort to better understand their adaptation to Greece.
[168] These people arrived between 1997 and 1998. They are essentially female immigrants who on arrival in Greece were employed in domestic work, and mainly provided care to the elderly.
[169] These are female immigrants who came to Greece before 1997; almost all of these women had worked in the Bulgarian public sector.

permits, a number of female immigrants who initially worked in domestic labour are currently working as skilled employees in the service sector in particular. There has also been a relative increase in the number of self-employed Bulgarian immigrants, mainly in the food trade and transportation sectors.

There was a smaller change in the employment status of the second group of Bulgarian immigrants to Greece – those with relatively short-term prospects of residence. Most were employed in the private sector and, upon coming to Greece, found positions as unskilled or skilled labour, similar to those they held in Bulgaria. Over the last four to five years, this group has also seen a relative increase in the number of self-employed Bulgarian immigrants, particularly in the food and transportation sectors.

Duration of residence in Greece

The average duration of residence of Bulgarian immigrants in Greece in our sample was approximately 10 years. The majority had lived in Greece for a number of years, but this time was split into different periods: they generally work for a number of years (or even months) in Greece, before returning to Bulgaria due to various family obligations ("to take care of my mother who suffered a stroke", "to attend my father's funeral and settle his affairs", "to organise my son's ball", "to organise my daughter's wedding"). They then return to Greece after a few months or, at most, after a year.

This mobility was initially made feasible by two cycles of legalisation for illegal immigrants in Greece (1998 and 2001). However, it was strengthened after the accession of Bulgaria to the EU in 2007, and particularly after 2009 and the end of the two-year transitional period. The nature of the work of many Bulgarian immigrants in Greece also plays an important role. On the one hand, the majority of female immigrants are employed in the elderly care sector, where there is frequent employer turnover, and on the other hand, a large number of male immigrants are employed in seasonal work.

Incentives to migrate

As previous sections have presented demographic characteristics, this section focuses on factors that preceded the migration process, i.e. the incentives that led to the decision of Bulgarians to migrate to Greece.

During the field research, the overwhelming majority of participants cited either general economic and labour factors as the reasons behind their migration, these included: "finding work" as their "overall family income was not enough to secure our bare necessities", and "to make more money". They also cited other, more specific financial reasons for leaving Bulgaria: "to secure my children's education", "to pay off our debts", "to buy our own house". Personal growth was only cited by Bulgarian immigrants who had graduated from Greek universities. Pupils or graduates of Greek secondary schools cited reasons of family reunion, such as "my mother was here and was no longer working as a domestic worker", and "when I reached school age, my parents took me here with them".

The research also showed that in most cases, the decision to migrate to Greece had not been a personal matter. Several immigrants cited a conscious decision by their entire family, i.e. the reasons were voluntary, but also included a degree of necessity: "either my husband or I had to come. Who would have taken care of the children?" "Who else could have come, my elderly parents? They had to take care of my child". Thus, usually one family member came to Greece and was responsible for covering the financial obligations of those who remained in Bulgaria. In the cases of those participating in the research, the family member who migrated was usually a woman; this was due to divorce, death or the disability of a husband, or "because we knew that it was easier for women to find work in Greece".

Younger Bulgarian immigrants cited different reasons behind their decision to migrate. Younger immigrants in the study were either the children of older female immigrants, who had either continued their education in Greece, or sought employment in Greece close to their mothers after completing their studies in Bulgaria (usually secondary education). In these cases, their mother was already permanently settled in Greece.

Second generation immigrants

In Greece, there is no numerically remarkable second generation of Bulgarian immigrants in the classical sense of the term. Very few children have been born in Greece to Bulgarian immigrants, as the arrival of the first Bulgarians is still somewhat recent (early 1990s). However, after the recent processes of legalisation, a number of female immigrants from Bulgaria have found steady work and subsequently brought their young children to Greece. Some of these children were born in Bulgaria, where they spent the first few years of their lives, perhaps even their first school years, but they now continue their primary or secondary education in Greek public schools. Some of these children have already completed secondary education in Greece and either remain in Greece as workers or higher education students, or return to Bulgaria to continue their studies at Bulgarian universities.

Bulgarian immigrants and the Greek labour market

Immigrants from the first wave of Bulgarian migration to Greece mostly found positions in domestic and elderly care, and later in the farming sector and tourism. As previously noted,[170] a relatively large change was observed in the vocational status of the first wave of Bulgarian immigrants in comparison to their vocational status in Bulgaria. This was not the case with subsequent waves of immigration. With the first wave of Bulgarian immigration, a mostly female population with a relatively high level of education − at least secondary and technical secondary education − came to Greece and mainly worked in domestic positions, providing care to the elderly. This may explain the harder and more painful processes of integration faced by the first wave of Bulgarian immigrants. Characteristic responses included "suddenly, I went from being the first lady of my small town to changing the diapers of an 80-year-old man", "I was ashamed to say that I was providing care to the elderly", "I used to supervise the organisation of the production of an entire factory and I suddenly became a servant". Their adaption to their new society was neither facilitated by their legal status in Greece (illegal residence and employment) nor the fact that they worked on the private premises of their employers. Other difficulties included their complete lack of knowledge of Greek and the lack of organisation of the Bulgarian community, apart from employment agencies formed to serve the needs of transporting

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[170] See the section entitled 'Vocational Status'.

illegal workers (with the participation of Bulgarians in their establishment and operation) and – as was expected – the ferocious exploitation of immigrants. The departure of women from their families was particularly painful, as they left underage children and elderly parents behind.

The processes associated with the legalisation of illegal immigrants in Greece greatly helped the adaption and labour incorporation of Bulgarian workers, enabling them to enjoy or at least assert the same labour and social rights enjoyed by Greek workers (social insurance, labour conditions, minimum wage, etc.). The action of various immigrant organisations, which were extremely active during the periods of legalisation, also contributed towards this situation.

The position of the Bulgarian community in the Greek labour market is becoming stronger; this is particularly the case with female immigrants from the first generation who were initially employed as domestic staff to a great extent. After becoming legal citizens, learning Greek and joining social networks, several of these women have changed vocation and are currently employed as workers or employees, mainly in cleaning and tourism. Several have managed to bring their children from Bulgaria to Greece, where they attended or are attending primary or secondary school. Bulgarian immigrants who arrived with the second wave during the early 2000s have experienced fewer changes in their labour conditions as in most cases these people had relatively little education, and had previously worked in unskilled positions. This situation, combined with the existing immigrant networks developed by the previous wave of Bulgarian immigrants to Greece, has contributed towards their smoother incorporation into the Greek labour market.

In the third and final wave of immigration (the people who came to Greece after the accession of Bulgaria to the EU and mainly after 2009), we noted a relative drop in the age of the incoming Bulgarian population and an increase in the number of men arriving in Greece. Although we had no accurate statistical data at our disposal, the field research suggests that men from this wave of immigration tend to be employed as technical labourers, in shops that sell Bulgarian products and in transportation; whereas female immigrants tend to be employed by enterprises providing cleaning services and in tourism.

Despite the changes to the legal status of Bulgarian citizens due to the opening of the Greek labour market on 1 January 2009, Bulgarian citizens are still exploited in Greece, mainly through undeclared employment (and the consequent lack of social insurance) and earnings that are lower than the legally established minimum wage. A characteristic finding from the field research was the acceptance of this exploitation by Bulgarian immigrants: "Despite these laws you mention, I don't have the luxury to make demands. If I don't agree, I will have to leave. Who knows if I'll find another job during this crisis? Back home in Bulgaria, my two children are students, and they expect support from me", "it'll be the same no matter where I go", "even if I make less than the legal minimum, it's still good pay. In Bulgaria, I've done tougher work for less money". In several cases, Bulgarian immigrants did not consider undeclared labour as exploitation, instead they viewed it as based on their own conscious choice: "why should my money go to the Social Insurance Institute (IKA)? If I need a doctor, under the IKA system I'd have to wait for months for my appointment and lose wages by going from office to office to collect signatures", "even insured Greeks end up paying private doctors, what are we left to do?". However, these opinions could be counted as indicating adaption to the Greek economy and social reality.[171]

The findings concerning the acceptance of exploitation by Greek employers, or at the very least, a lack of enjoyment of their rights in relation to the absence of a political culture of collective assertion, could partially explain the absence of Bulgarians from the trades union movement in Greece. An exception can be found in the case of Konstantina Kuneva, whose case became known in December 2008. Kuneva was the secretary general of the Pan-Attican Union of Cleaners and Domestic Workers. Due to her trade union activity, she was assaulted and her case received a large amount of media attention and was the focus of a Greek criminal investigation.

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[171] As noted by Petrakou, "Tax evasion and the large extent of the 'parallel' economy (estimated at 30—40% of the GDP) in Greece shows that informal economic activity permeates all social strata. The above, combined with other expressions of financial behavior, such as resistance to salaried labour (showing preference to self-employment and public sector employment) and the preference or need for multiple employment (Tsoukalas, C., 'Free Riders in Wonderland', *Greek Political Science Review*, Issue 1, Athens 1993, pp. 5—39), lead to people having different positions and interests in social stratification without having a class conscience. This financial behavior and practice is shaping the framework within which immigration to Greece will be incorporated", Petrakou, I., "The construction of immigration in Greek society" in Marvakis, Ath., D. Parsanoglou & M. Pavlou (ed.), *Immigrants in Greece*, Ellinika Grammata publishing, Athens 2001, pp. 31—56.

2. The organisation of the Bulgarian community in Greece

Bulgarian associations in Greece

Although Bulgarian associations in Greece could play a major role in efforts to encourage the social inclusion of immigrants, in practice they are neither important in this context, nor are they exemplary of effective collective representation. As Schubert notes:

"the establishment of immigrant organisations is a phenomenon closely linked to modern migration and is desirable, to the extent that it is an example not only of healthy behaviour of immigrants seeking structures for the collectivization of their needs and problems, but also of the quality of democracy as a framework for state organisation that does not deny anyone the right of expression and representation of their interests. The role of immigrant organisations cannot in any case be unreasonably and uncritically considered as positive. Their impact can be deemed beneficial for the process of incorporation of their members into the society receiving them with the existence of certain conditions."[172]

The issue of Bulgarian immigrant organisations in Greece was approached in this context. Our research question was whether Bulgarian immigrant associations in Athens actually function as bridges of social and political inclusion or whether they work as 'parallel societies'. In other words, we examined whether these organisations make a positive contribution to inclusion in Greek society or whether they serve as channels of communication with the home country and as a means to enable the smooth re-entry into Bulgarian society after the return of immigrants to Bulgaria.

We also studied newspapers published in Athens (or abroad) that address Bulgarian immigrants in Greece. This is because immigrant newspapers respond to the actual needs of immigrants, as do their organisations, and often work in a manner and with an influence similar to that of immigrant organisations.

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[172] See Schubert, L., "Immigrant organisations: Parallel societies or bridges of inclusion?", paper presented during the colloquium titled *Civil Society and Immigration* organised by the Laboratory for the Study of Migration and Diaspora, University of Athens, Athens 2007. See also Schubert, L., *Immigrant organisations: Self-help groups or interest groups*, dissertation, Post-graduate programme in European and International Studies, Faculty of Political Science and Public Administration, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 2004. See also Varouxi, H., *Migration Policy and Public Administration. A human rights approach to social agencies and organisations of Civil Society. Conclusions of field research*, Working Papers 2008/17 within the framework of the research project titled "Athens and Immigration: Us and Others, Others and Us 2005-2007", EPAN/3RD CSF. Available at: http://arxeio.gsdb.gr/wp/wp_varouxi.pdf.

History

Newspapers

In terms of time and quality, the newspapers published in Athens that address Bulgarian immigrants are comparable to immigrant organisations.[173] First, they provide services such as information regarding the administrative residency process, insurance, retirement, pensions, and on finding employment etc. Second, they provide contact with the national centre and contribute towards preserving the national identity. This is particularly the case with publications on the history of Bulgaria, the presentation of immigrant work, and the organisation of visits by prominent Bulgarians, mainly from the field of culture, etc. Finally, they represent the interests of the immigrant community: each editor or director[174] of an immigrant newspaper usually forms an association after the newspaper has been established.

The first newspaper, *Svetlina*, was published a few months after the creation of the first association of Bulgarian immigrants in early 1998. It quickly closed under unknown conditions. In the following year, two other newspapers that still exist were published for the first time: *Bulgaria Today*[175] and *Bulgarian Voice*.[176] During the next few years, a number of other efforts were made to publish Bulgarian newspapers for immigrants living in Greece, but these newspapers quickly closed down. Today, one paper is still being published called *KONTAKTI*. A fourth newspaper, *Bulgarian News*, is prepared and published in Bulgaria and distributed in Greece and Cyprus.

The features that characterise Bulgarian associations in Greece are also reflected in the structure of these newspapers: they are intensely focused on their editor or director and there is great competition between them, which at times borders on rivalry. In most cases, the editors and directors also participate in the management of Bulgarian organisations.

Bulgarian immigrant associations in Greece

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[173] Or vice versa. It is a case of the well-known question of 'which came first the chicken or the egg?'

[174] Just as migration from Bulgaria was primarily female, the same is the case for its representation of interests through newspapers and associations.

[175] Its editor is the president of the Bulgarian Cultural Centre, which after two and a half years of operation, was burnt down in 2008.

[176] Its editor is the president of the Greek—Bulgarian Association of Friendship, which like other associations, is essentially inactive or is only formally active. She was a candidate for the Arma Politon (Panhellenic Citizen Chariot) party in Attica during the 2010 regional and local Elections.

In contrast to newspapers, researching Bulgarian immigrant associations in Greece is not particularly easy. Apart from the lack of databases containing NGO data, there does not appear to be consensus on what actually constitutes an immigrant association. Thus, apart from the formally established, historical Bulgarian associations in Greece, many people consider Bulgarian immigrant associations and organisations as including groups such as informal cultural choirs, societies for adult training (such as IT training), Bulgarian language schools for young Bulgarian children, ad hoc initiatives by immigrant newspapers such as the organisation of celebratory and other events, and even informal offices providing services to Bulgarians who are seeking employment or wish to settle their legal affairs, such as pensions and transfer their work experience.

The study found that the first Bulgarian association in Greece was established in 1991 under the name of *Paisii Chilendarski*. Its members included Bulgarians who had entered into mixed marriages and Greeks born in Bulgaria who had returned to Greece. The incentive behind the association was maintaining contact with Bulgarian culture. Today, this association does not seem to conduct any substantial activity, apart from preserving social ties and groups of friends. We should be able to assume that after living in Greece for 20 years, the founding members of this association will have been fully integrated, if not outright assimilated, into Greek society.

In 1997, during the first round of legalisation of illegal immigrants in Greece, and the subsequent wave of migration from Bulgaria to Greece, Bulgarian immigrants arriving in Greece had a great need for information in their own language. This need led to the creation of the first organised association of Bulgarian immigrants in Greece in late 1997 under the name *Vasil Levski* (the name of a Bulgarian national hero). A few years later, after its president[177] left the association, it stopped operating.

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[177] Evgenia Markova, then a PhD student at the Department of Economics of the University of Athens, carried out field research during that period on the contribution of Bulgarian immigrants to the Greek labour market. See Markova, E., *The Economic Performance of Bulgarian illegal and legalized immigrants in the Greek Labor market,* PhD thesis, Dep. of Economics, Univ. of Athens.

In 1999, the editor of the *Bulgarian Voice* founded an association named the Greek—Bulgarian Association of Friendship. This association conducted no significant activities outside of the field of culture and at the present time is essentially inactive.

At roughly the same time, the needs of the Bulgarian community in Athens for an association were met by an association called Bulgarian Community, which was founded in 2001 and is still active. The association — at least initially — received significant support from the Greek Communist Party, which also provided the association with a meeting place.[178] The Communist Party supported the association's activities by providing its immigrant members with services such as information on the requirements for legalisation by a specialised attorney from the party; networking to find employment; the organisation of cultural and recreational events, including excursions to various Greek locations; the organisation of a poetry club, a painting club, a choir, and events with prominent Bulgarian guests. This association is still a member of the Immigrant Forum (the most representative secondary organisation of immigrants in Greece, with widespread recognition) and is the only association of the Bulgarian community that is properly recognised by other immigrant communities in Greece. Its recognition by other immigrant organisations is mainly due to its participation in anti-racist festivals and events organised by the Immigrant Forum. Nevertheless, the participants in this study did not refer to partnerships between this organisation and similar immigrant organisations or other agencies in Greece. There was also no mention of involvement in collective mobilisation on broader social and political issues, such as demonstrations by the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE) or anti-war demonstrations, etc.

In 2008, 'Bulgarian Community' began operating a Sunday school that taught Bulgarian to the children of Bulgarian immigrants. Initially the school operated informally; later it was formally included as part of another organisation specifically established for this purpose. Over time, the administration of the association often changed, due to major differences between its leaders, and it gradually became independent of the Communist Party. Today, although it still formally operates, its activities are limited compared to those of its past and

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[178] Some of the interviewees insinuated that financial support may have been provided to the party, but there is no evidence of this.

the organisation now mainly focuses on providing help to Bulgarian immigrants seeking employment.

In 2005, the Bulgarian Cultural Centre was founded with the aim of covering the cultural needs of the Bulgarian community in Greece. Essentially, this centre is an extension of the activities of one of the Bulgarian newspapers published in Athens addressed at Bulgarian immigrants.[179] The cultural centre is a space to express and host artistic and cultural activities by the Bulgarian community. As was the case with the two previous organisations, the centre was the scene of intense frictions between the members of the Bulgarian community. Two and a half years after its establishment, its offices were burned down.

In 2007, when the number of children of Bulgarian female immigrants living in Greece had increased significantly, the first (weekend) schools that taught Bulgarian appeared. These schools flourished in Greece after 2009, when the Bulgarian Ministry of Education began financing the operation of such schools abroad. As Bulgarian legislation requires that each foreign school must operate as part of Bulgarian immigrant organisation, four more organisations were founded: one in 2009, one in 2010 and two in 2011.

Forms of organisation

In the previous cases, Bulgarian immigrant organisations were established in a formal manner[180] in accordance with Greek law. The necessary legal procedures for establishment and recognition by Greek and Bulgarian authorities were followed. Thus, the organisations were recognised by the immigrant community, in Greek public discourse and by civil society.[181]

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[179] In reference to the newspaper *Bulgaria Today*.

[180] An exception is the women's group of Bulgarian folk singers.

[181] Between 2003 and 2009 in particular, numerous NGOs participated in European co-financed programmes providing support to immigrants in Greece. These programmes required or encouraged cooperation with immigrant organisations, and this provided a financial incentive for Bulgarian immigrants to set up such organisations.

Community representation and the participation of Bulgarian immigrants in organisations

According to the field research sample and data from the member records of these organisations (the extraction of quantitative results was impossible), the participation of Bulgarian immigrants in existing organisations is quite limited. Bulgarian immigrants generally do not collectively organise with their compatriots and seek to maintain distance from political life in general; similarly, Bulgarian community organisations do not appear to have any notable activities other than the issue of schools. However, the interest of organisations and of Bulgarian immigrants themselves in social and labour inclusion increased during the period before the accession of Bulgaria to the EU, when the issues of safeguarding and enjoying social rights were intensely discussed.

The offices of Bulgarian Community (*Bulgarska Obshtost*) are only open on weekends at certain times and mainly attract job seekers. The second association (*Buditeli*) exclusively focuses on the operation of a Bulgarian school, which was the main reason for founding the association. The three other associations (two with same name, Greek—Bulgarian Cultural Association *PAISII CHILENDARSKI* – one is an association, the other a civil, non-profitmaking organisation) also mainly focus on organising and running schools for the children of immigrants. At the same time, the bulk of the information provided to their members and to members of the Bulgarian community in Greece mainly concerns information on the schools run by these associations. This may justify the established belief among numerous Bulgarian immigrants, particularly those with children, that these associations and their schools are one and the same; whereas many Bulgarian immigrants without children are not even aware of the existence of these organisations.

For this reason, immigrants' awareness of these organisations and the prestige of the five existing Bulgarian immigrant organisations in Athens are often disputed – even among representatives of Bulgarian organisations. Similarly, their recognition among Bulgarian immigrants is often limited, and in several cases our interviewees were completely unaware of the existence of Bulgarian immigrant organisations in Athens. As these organisations intensely focus on one individual, the withdrawal of their president or some of their members can cause the organisation to fragment or even cease to operate. Today, at least

three of these organisations mainly operate as social networking centres with Bulgarian language schools that are financed by the Bulgarian state and facilitate contact with the language and culture of Bulgaria and, for children that wish to be repatriated, provide all that is necessary for a smooth return to Bulgaria.[182] These schools compete intensively for new students, as larger numbers mean greater financing from the Bulgarian Ministry of Education.

Bulgarian immigrants' low rates of participation in existing Bulgarian community organisations in Greece should not be ascribed to personal reasons concerning the popularity of their representatives and leaders. Instead, the actual causes can be found in the perceptions of the immigrants themselves, the shortcomings of these organisations, as well as in the inadequacies of Greek immigration policy. The Bulgarian community in Greece has a relatively high educational standard, and its elite are exceptionally active and hold higher education degrees. Older Bulgarian immigrants, who have lived in Greece for a long time, brought with them some of the characteristics and experiences of the former communist regime including inertia, and a lack of organisational skills. In contrast, younger Bulgarians brought with them experiences of rampant capitalism (individualism, and the absolute priority of economic benefits) that has dominated Bulgaria in recent years, and which essentially forced them to migrate. Thus, the Bulgarian community in Greece is characterised to a great extent by a lack of collective assertion and political organisation. Furthermore, there is an absence of common goals among the Bulgarian community in Greece. This is due to the high mobility of the Bulgarian population, which despite its long-term residence in Greece, often seeks to return to Bulgaria even if only temporarily. At the same time, the Bulgarian community in Greece also lack common goals due to the fact that many members of the community consider their presence in Greece to be temporary. Moreover, they do not perceive the role of their community as a factor of economic and social life in Greece (for example, regarding employment, the economy, social activity, and trades unionism, etc.). This conclusion emerged both from responses to the question 'Where do you see yourself in ten years?' and from the large numbers of children of

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[182] By attending the three classes taught at these schools (Bulgarian language, literature and history), these pupils receive certificates that when combined with the school leaving certificate they acquire from Greek primary and secondary schools are recognised as equivalent to Bulgarian school leaving certificates. This enables children of Bulgarian immigrants who have attended Greek primary and secondary education schools to continue their education in Bulgaria without repeating a year.

immigrants enrolling in Bulgarian schools operating in Athens, who aim to return to Bulgaria at some point in the future.[183]

Another important finding of our research is the widespread perception of the non-equivalent position of economic immigrants, despite the accession of Bulgaria to the EU. A large number of Bulgarian immigrants (mainly from the first generation) agreed with the statement that 'you cannot be an equal citizen in a foreign country, even if that country belongs to the European Union'.

At the same time, there is an absence of organised and systematic processes for consultation and cooperation between the Greek authorities, which are responsible for designing and implementing immigration policy, and immigrant organisations in Greece. This reduces the incentives for immigrants to participate in organisations and the likelihood that these organisations will be recognised as 'mediators' or agencies that advocate immigrant rights and assist in shaping immigration policy. In other words, immigrants' lack of institutional representation in various initiatives weakens incentives for collective organisation and participation. Yet this is essential if they are to participate collectively in institutional processes and mechanisms. Finally, there are isolated incidents where public authorities treat Bulgarians as immigrants from third countries rather than as EU citizens; a fact that reinforces the belief among immigrants of the (in)effectiveness of their mechanisms of collective representation.

Relations with the Bulgarian and Greek authorities

Synergies between immigrant organisations and other organisations in a host country that are stronger and have a better legal basis in the perception of public opinion and support from the authorities are the most important means of increasing the socio-political recognition of immigrant organisations.[184] Consequently, during their inception Bulgarian

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[183] According to statements made by the schools' principals, approximately 300 children of all ages were enrolled for the 2011/2012 academic year.
[184] See Schubert, L., "Immigrant organisations: Parallel societies or bridges of inclusion?", a paper presented during the colloquium *Civil Society and Immigration* organised by the Laboratory for the Study of Migration and Diaspora, University of Athens, Athens 2007.

immigrant organisations in Greece sought support either from political parties or from the Bulgarian embassy; in at least one case, there was cooperation with and support from the Immigrant Forum.

Some of the participants involved in the research stated that Greek political parties were generally interested in approaching these organisations in order to gain information on their views regarding the issues of immigration; this was primarily the case during election campaigns. Nevertheless, when asked about their relations with political parties and agencies, the participants stated that Bulgarian immigrant organisations do function as launching pads for members who seeking opportunities to participate in the social and political life of the host country. The field research demonstrated that relations between organisations and Bulgarian authorities have grown stronger in recent years due to the possibility of gaining funding for schools dedicated to the children of Bulgarian immigrants residing in Greece.

3. <u>The Bulgarian community's relations with Greek nationals and other communities living in Greece</u>

First of all, it should be noted that neither the data analysis nor the field research demonstrated cases of particular difficulties in the co-existence of Bulgarian immigrants in Greece either with Greeks or with other national groups. The spatial concentration of Bulgarians in Athens is aligned with that of other immigrants. However, first generation Bulgarians had almost no relations at all to people from other nationalities at both the collective and the personal level. In contrast, the children of Bulgarian immigrants often stated that they had Greek friends, but also friends from other countries, and Albania, Poland and Ukraine in particular.

Relations between Bulgarian immigrants and Greeks were examined on two levels. On the first level, relations with Greeks as individuals/private citizens were examined. This relationship could be characterised as ambiguous. Despite choosing a consciously

dichotomous question 'Name some adjectives that characterise Greeks and Bulgarians', the majority of interviewees avoided this dichotomy. In several cases, (former) Greek employers were cited as the first port of call when help was needed. However, we would characterise the relationship between Bulgarians and Greek individuals as ambiguous, due to the usual Greek perception of Bulgarians as people with a lower status than their own. There were a number of cases of women choosing to work for less pay, but for employers who would address them as 'Mrs' or would speak to them in the plural form, as the Bulgarian women did to them.

On the second level, we examined relations between Bulgarians and Greeks in public spaces.[185] At this level, examples of racism were cited, not towards their specific nationality, but towards foreigners in general.[186] In this case, interviewees both with and without experience of the Greek education system found it easier to provide a dichotomous description of 'anonymous' Greeks, either in the sense of an anonymous public administration or in the sense of unknown 'anonymous' Greeks. The statements provided by children of Bulgarian immigrants are particularly noteworthy, as they would not let their parents visit administrative service providers by themselves as, the administration "immediately realised from their [the parents] accent that they were foreigners and tried to trick them and not provide them with services; the administration wanted to make sure they left their office quickly". They also made a number of other noteworthy comments such as "my mother and I try not to speak Bulgarian outside the house, as they immediately realise we are foreigners. My mum doesn't speak Greek as well as I do". A typical response was, "no, everyone treats me well, as they can't tell that I'm not Greek from my accent".

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[185] By 'public spaces', we mean on the street, in shops, in the workplace, etc., as well as interactions with the public administration.

[186] For non-Greeks, i.e. for *heterophilia* and *heterophobia*, see Pavlou, M., "Migrants 'like us': aspects of the response to the migration phenomenon in Greece and Europe" in Pavlou, M. & D. Christopoulos (ed), *Greece of Migration: Social participation, rights and citizenship*, KRITIKI publishing, Athens 2004, pp. 39—87, as well as Marvakis, Ath., "Social inclusion or social apartheid" in Pavlou, M. & D. Christopoulos (ed), *Greece of Migration: Social participation, rights and citizenship*, KRITIKI publishing, Athens 2004, pp. 88—120. For the operation of Public Administration vis-à-vis immigrants, see Varouxi, H., *Migration Policy and Public Administration. A human rights approach to social agencies and organisations of Civil Society. Conclusions of field research*, Working Papers 2008/17 within the framework of the research project titled "Athens and Immigration: Us and Others, Others and Us 2005-2007", EPAN / 3RD CSF. Available at: http://arxeio.gsdb.gr/wp/wp_varouxi.pdf. For testimonies by Bulgarian immigrants, see Кадийска, Н. (ред.), *Български емигранти в Гърция разказват, книга първа*, Н. Кадийска publishing, Athens 2002 and Кадийска, Н. (ред.), *Български емигранти в Гърция разказват, книга втора*, Н. Кадийска publishing, Athens 2006.

4. The participation of Bulgarian immigrants in local and European elections

The participation of Bulgarian immigrants in Greek political life was examined from the perspective of the participation of immigrants as candidates and voters in the 2009 European elections and the 2010 local government elections. The representation of the Bulgarian community in terms of candidates appears impressive, as during the two elections conducted in Greece that followed the accession of Bulgaria to the EU (the 2009 European elections and the 2010 municipal and regional elections), three Bulgarian immigrants[187] stood for election as candidates for Greek political parties and coalitions. However, although this was highly commendable and portrays an excellent picture of the Bulgarian community as a whole, no non-Greek EU citizen stood for the PASOK party, which won the 2009 European elections, other than Ms Filevska. The fact that three Bulgarians stood for election should not be taken as a reflection of the general participation of Bulgarian immigrants in election processes, which is very low when compared to the number of Bulgarians who are entitled to vote. These three candidacies are clearly not enough to counter the crisis of representation faced by the Bulgarian community and the low interest shown by Bulgarian immigrants residing in Greece to register on electoral rolls and exercise their voting rights in the European, municipal and regional elections. Although the candidacies are symbolically important, they clearly do not reflect the extent of participation of the actual community in the political life of the country. These candidacies are then better understood as an attempt by these political coalitions to bolster their 'immigrant-friendly' profile, but without substantial follow-up, as neither these candidates nor other Bulgarian immigrants subsequently remained active in these political parties.

The participation of Bulgarian immigrants in the 2009 European elections
According to Presidential Decree 133/97, as amended by Law 2196/94, EU citizens residing in Greece are able to participate equally in municipal and regional elections and in European parliamentary elections. Within this framework, Bulgarian citizens can now vote and stand for office in these election processes. In order to vote EU citizens need to be

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[187] These were: Blagorodna Filevska on the PASOK list in the 2009 European elections; Diliana Bairaktarova on the Panhellenic Citizen Chariot list for the Region of Attica in the 2010 regional elections, and Nedialka Karagiozova with the cooperation of Giorgos Kaminis, who stood for Mayor in Athens in the 2010 municipal elections. None of the three candidates were elected; all three have edited or directed newspapers addressing Bulgarian immigrants in Greece.

registered on the special electoral rolls held by their municipality or community. To do so they have to present their passport or identity card to the local authorities and fill out a registration application.

The 2009 European elections provided Bulgarians residing in Greece with the first opportunity to participate in the political life of the country. However, participation was extremely low, as a mere 163 Bulgarian citizens were registered on the electoral rolls out of a total estimated population of approximately 100,000 Bulgarians living in Greece in 2009. In the list of levels of participation by EU citizens, Bulgarians came eighth: behind the United Kingdom (with 2,071 registered voters), Germany (1,185), Cyprus (528), Italy (463), France (354), the Netherlands (354) and Romania with 190. With regard to the distribution of these voters among electoral regions, most Bulgarians were registered in the regions of Thessaloniki (17), Cyclades (16), Piraeus (15) and the Dodecanese (13).

There were a number of factors that deterred Bulgarians from participating in these elections. This was the first time that Bulgarians residing in Greece were able to exercise their political rights as EU citizens, and there was a lack of awareness about the possibility to participate in the elections. At the same time, an exceptionally short period of just three months (from 1 January to 31 March 2009) was provided to register to vote. This affected Bulgarian immigrants in particular, as they had no idea of what EU citizenship meant nor about the civic, social and political rights accorded by this status to EU citizens living in another EU member state.

The participation of Bulgarian immigrants in the 2010 municipal and regional elections
As was the case with the European elections, EU citizens have to ensure they are registered on the special electoral rolls held by the municipality or community where they reside.[188] As this process is not automatic, and voters have to register themselves, we estimate that the number of registered voters greatly reflects the number of individuals who actually voted in the elections.

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[188] Regarding the elections of November 2010, the right to vote was given to immigrants of third countries legally residing in Greece. The main requirement of Law 3838/2010 (Gov. Gazette Issue 49ᴬ, 24.03.2010) stipulated at least five years of continuous and legal residence in Greece. For the participation of immigrants in the November 2010 elections, see Koustenis, P., "The 2010 Municipal Elections in Athens: LA.O.S. or Kolonaki", *Greek Political Science* Review, Issue 37, Themelio publications, Athens 2011.

Taking this into account, it appears that 2,059 Bulgarian citizens exercised their right to vote in the 2010 municipal elections, out of the more than 100,000 Bulgarians that Bulgarian organisations estimate were living in Greece at the time.[189] At first glance, the number of Bulgarian citizens registered on the electoral rolls appears to have increased by 1.26% compared to 2009; and Bulgarians constituted the third largest group of all the 26 EU states, behind citizens from the United Kingdom (4,015) and Germany (2,159), whose numbers also increased but not at such a significant rate (almost twice that of the number registered for the European elections). However, if participation is calculated on the basis of the population of each community in Greece, proportionally, Bulgarian citizens are far less likely to participate than their British or German counterparts: according to the 2001 Greek census, there were 13,195 British citizens residing in Greece; 11,806 German citizens and 35,014 Bulgarian citizens, without taking into account the large increase in Bulgarian immigration to Greece after 2001 and the 'illegal' immigrants who are subsequently missing from the 2001 census. Consequently, as a proportion of the estimated 100,000 Bulgarians living in Greece, the rate of participation in the most recent municipal elections was approximately 2%; it was over 30% for British citizens and 18% for German citizens.

Similarly, in Athens, the largest municipality in the country, which is estimated to be the home of the majority of the country's Bulgarian residents, participation was also extremely low: under 2% of the estimated population of Bulgarians residing in Athens with the right to vote were registered to do so. It is important to remember that Bulgarians constituted the largest group of EU citizens entered on the electoral rolls in Athens with 316 people, whereas 118 Bulgarians were registered with the surrounding municipalities. These low rates of participation may be initially explained by the inadequate provision of information by the media (both Greek and Bulgarian) about the rights of EU citizens to participate in the elections and their associated processes, as well as the lack of mobilisation by Bulgarian immigrant organisation regarding this issue. These problems mainly appear in large urban centres, since in small communities the lack of organised coverage is often addressed through direct provision of information to interested parties by the municipalities and informal local networks.

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[189] The data of the 2011 population census will be published during the second half of 2012.

The reasons behind Bulgarians' lack of participation in political life

As previously mentioned, the Bulgarian population in Greece is highly mobile, with a majority of the population working seasonally or remaining in Greece for a certain amount of time before returning to Bulgaria due to family or other reasons, and then returning to work in Greece. This form of employment, combined with the belief that Greek political life and Greek institutions do not concern immigrants,[190] are certainly impeding − if not deterring − the politicisation and active participation of the Bulgarian community in local political life.

The crisis in the representativeness of Bulgarian organisations and the lack of adequate information on political and social rights that EU citizenship entails deprives Bulgarians with the means that support active involvement in democratic processes. It is clear that legal changes providing Bulgarian immigrants the right to vote and to stand for office in local and European elections are not enough to ensure that immigrants are mobilised and register themselves on the special electoral rolls. This is particularly problematic due to the fact that they only have a period of three months before the elections to do so. It is extremely important that Greek political parties become aware of the problems facing EU citizens from other members states, and that they make commitments to resolve these problems. However, despite the interest of certain Greek political parties in immigrant problems, at least in policy commitments made during the last elections, these parties cannot usually approach the Bulgarian population systematically due to the lack of large organisations representing this population or other processes of dialogue with immigrant communities and the Bulgarian community in particular. Moreover, the responses by Bulgarian immigrants during the interviews displayed either a lack of a collective political culture or a wish to distance themselves from political life, both in Greece and in general. In direct questions,[191] such as 'Are you interested in politics?', the prevailing answer was a

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[190] In regard to the refusal of the state to allow immigrants to participate in any political decision, see Varouxi, H., *Migration Policy and Public Administration. A human rights approach to social agencies and organisations of Civil Society. Conclusions of field research*, Working Papers 2008/17 within the framework of the research project titled "Athens and Immigration: Us and Others, Others and Us 2005-2007", EPAN/3RD CSF. Available at: http://arxeio.gsdb.gr/wp/wp_varouxi.pdf.

[191] We also posed indirect questions, asking whether the interviewees read newspapers and if so, which ones, whether they watched television shows and if so, which ones. The conclusions drawn from the responses given are similar.

definitive 'no'.[192] The majority of interviewees had never voted, even in Bulgarian elections, even though they are able to vote in Bulgarian elections at the Bulgarian embassy. The main reasons they preferred to distance themselves from political life were "why should I be interested in politics… I'm here for a specific reason: to work, and raise and educate my children", "who has the time for politics?", "I'm a part of politics but politics is far away from me", "I am here out of necessity, I am not part of Greece". As stated above, the prevailing attitude can be summed up in the following manner: 'I am an economic immigrant and therefore unconcerned with political developments in this country' or 'I will be here for a short while so there is no reason to get involved'. We believe that this is a 'blank' field for the future activity of any organisation representing this community.

The factors that contributed to this low rate of participation include inadequate information – not on the part of the Greek administration[193] – but on the part of the Bulgarian press circulated in Greece. In contrast to other issues, such as retirement and pensions, insurance, insurance stamps and establishment of work experience, the four newspapers circulating in Greece demonstrated very limited interest in covering the participation of Bulgarians in elections. In fact, one newspaper provided information only once[194] in the form of an entry by the Ministry of the Interior in Greek(!). The newspaper provided no comment or editorial. However, there was limited reference to the elections in another newspaper, and general information was provided on the participation of EU immigrants from outside of Greece in the local elections.

A final factor that inhibited participation appears to be the process of registration of EU citizens in electoral rolls, as non-Greek EU citizens have just three months to complete the process, which must be repeated before each election. We also need to take into account that the electoral participation of Greek voters (who do not have to register for each election) has also been very low in recent years. As such, it should be easy to understand why mobilising immigrants would be even more difficult, especially when many Bulgarians

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[192] This response only differs in the case of graduates of Greek universities interviewed, who are admittedly better able to integrate into Greek society and the Greek labour market. One might assume that their views are not very different from the views of Greek citizens in their social position.

[193] All the editors of Bulgarian newspapers admitted that they had received information concerning the processes and terms of the participation of immigrants in elections from various public services, without having requested any such information.

[194] Three publications at the most were identified in the special press addressing Bulgarian immigrants on this issue.

feel that they are only in Greece 'for a short time' and that they are detached from Greek political life.

5. Recommendations: the needs of the community and what will have to be improved to encourage participation

The main field of intervention concerned public authorities, political parties and bodies belonging to Greek civil society. The responses provided during field research demonstrated that most immigrants do not feel that their participation in democratic institutions and collective action will help resolve the problems they face; they also felt that Greek political life does not concern them.

However, many Greek political parties have recently begun addressing immigrants as a substantial, active part of Greek society, whose concerns and expectations should be taken into account in their policies and campaigns. Similarly, trades unions in Greece often address the problems faced by immigrant workers – albeit as a minor priority – possibly due to the fact that the phenomenon of undeclared labour, which is usually due to exploitation by employers, competes with and negatively affects the interests of local workers. Finally, the Greek authorities responsible for immigration policy have not established systematic processes for dialogue and cooperation with immigrants and their communities; as a result, the issue of their representation through existing organisations is not particularly important.

Organisations such as public authorities, political parties and trades unions need to be addressed with activities aimed at encouraging them to support the processes of dialogue and cooperation with immigrant communities and encourage the participation of immigrants and/or their representation in institutions of collective expression and action, and in democratic processes. This would send a clear message to immigrants, stating that their collective action, either through organisations of their national community or through institutions and organisations based in the host country, has a purpose and can have tangible results. The efforts that began during the recent European and local elections such

as the participation of Bulgarian immigrants in political parties must continue and be expanded: they provided substance to the legal provisions on the rights of EU citizens to stand for office in the member state in which they reside.

The establishment of a cohesive society, particularly during periods of economic crisis, requires the promotion and protection of all of the elements that compose the common interests and common values of the members of that society.

Most Bulgarian citizens residing in Greece lack a culture of collective organisation and assertion. This is reflected in the problems associated with organising, and their reluctance to organise themselves. Despite the fact that several organisations have been set up, they are not representative. These organisations attract little interest among Bulgarian immigrants as immigrants are often unaware that these organisations even exist. At the same time, the organisations rarely succeed in expanding their agenda to issues of social interest, beyond those of education or networking to find employment. This shortcoming in the representativeness and collective expression of the Bulgarian community hinders agencies (the state, political parties, trades unions, and NGOs) from approaching the Bulgarian community institutionally. Moreover, it hinders members of the Bulgarian community from identifying as community members and with these organisations themselves, as well as preventing Bulgarian immigrants from building trust with organisations that seek to represent them. Furthermore, these organisations are often intensely introverted, which adds to their inability to adopt and project a broader concern with the assertion of rights, to combat discrimination, and seek cooperation with political parties, agencies and other immigrant organisations.

In order to overcome these shortcomings, it would be important to raise awareness both at the level of Bulgarian immigrant organisations (such as those promoted within the framework of the project 'Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for All') and at the level of agencies and authorities in the host country. With regard to community organisations and the extent to which they wish to operate as mediators or representatives of Bulgarian immigrants, it would be expedient to empower these organisations so as to enable them to

support their members in asserting and exercising their social, civil and political rights. This empowerment should be directed at the infrastructure and skills of their members and enhancing their abilities to provide information and services to their members, as well as the initial stage of establishment, in order to assist immigrants to organise themselves and develop collective bodies of representation. At the same time, the utilisation of existing information channels (such as immigrant newspapers) must focus on providing substantial and richer information on the rights of EU citizens, particularly in regard to participation in the democratic life of the host country.

PART III

SYNTHESIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PART III: SYNTHESIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has analysed the lives of five different communities of EU immigrants living on the territory of another EU member state, and the extent to which they enjoy their civil rights as set out in EU legislation.

The Polish Community in Belgium

We have seen that Poland has a long history of immigration to Belgium. Since 1830, a significant number of Polish migrants have arrived in the country for political or economic reasons as part of several waves of migration. The first wave peaked in 1920, as many Polish people arrived to work in mines. This pattern of migration changed during and after the Second World War as newcomers were mainly refugees fleeing war or the new regime in Poland. The Cold War led to more sporadic and irregular patterns of migration, but did not make it impossible. The fall of the Berlin wall and the opening of the iron curtain made it easier to travel to Belgium, but migrants also lost the possibility of being granted asylum seeker status, which would have allowed them to work. Polish migration to Belgium then became temporary as migrants usually worked for a few months on a tourist visa – nothing more than a stamp on their passport stating their date of arrival.

Polish accession to the EU in 2004 and the opening of the Belgian labour market in 2009 represent shifts in the status of these migrants. Accession to the EU legalised the residency status of numerous Polish immigrants living in European countries. However, illegal work remained a problem as the Belgian labour market was not opened until May 2009.

Nowadays the Polish community is one of the most important communities in Belgium. There are between 100,000 and 120,000 Poles living in Belgium; the majority are women, and this reflects the situation in Poland, were women constitute the largest unemployed group.

Polish people come to Belgium to work and seeking a better quality of life for themselves and their families. We have seen that the main reason they travel to Belgium is economic.

More precisely, a high unemployment rate in Poland and the prospects of higher incomes are the main factors that push Poles to migrate to Western Europe.

We have also seen that the Polish community has developed its own network that helps newcomers travel to Belgium and grants them access to the informal labour market. Such networks help migrant feel 'at home' and live with Polish relatives or friends; as such there is no need to fully integrate into Belgian society. Moreover, this feeling is reinforced by the fact that migrants often perceive migration as temporary. Although this is changing, integration into Belgian society is consequently far from a top priority for most Poles in Belgium.

As for integration, the Polish community benefits from a relatively positive image in Belgium, although some stereotypes and misunderstandings can still be quite vivid. The Poles living in Flanders feel more discriminated against than those in Brussels, because they are expected to have a good knowledge of Dutch. However, although the majority mainly has Polish friends, socialising with Flemish people seems to occur more rapidly than in Brussels. In both Regions, Polish people who have many contacts with Belgian people (for example, with other parents at their children's school) are less likely to perceive people through stereotypes.

As for participation in European and local elections, the Polish community's turnout in Belgium is low: less than 5% of potential Polish voters participated in the 2009 European elections. Polish immigrants are quite well integrated from an economic point of view but there is still a clear lack of socio-political participation. There are a number of different explanations for their low level of participation, but the language gap seems to be the most relevant: the existence of a Polish transnational community, means that Poles working in Belgium have few incentives to learn French or Dutch as most of them work with other Polish people or only need a basic knowledge of one of the national languages to do their jobs. Furthermore, many Polish people are not even aware of their right to vote in Belgium or fear that they would lose their right to vote in Poland if they did so.

However, the good practices organised by the municipalities of Saint-Gilles and Etterbeek seem to be the right approach towards fostering the integration of this important community.

The Portuguese community in France
Portuguese migration to France began with the First World War. Several contrasting periods of migration can be distinguished between 1916 and the late 1970s. Mass arrivals have tended to be concentrated around specific times and were often followed by periods of significant departures or stagnation. The military coup in May 1926 led to a long dictatorship in Portugal that lasted until 1974; it also brought political exiles to France and during this period the vast majority of immigrants entered France illegally for political reasons.

The Portuguese community in France has hundreds of associations, but they are generally very small. Portuguese people living abroad are not accustomed to group activities, except under special circumstances such as important sporting events in which Portugal is involved.

This community has good relations with French nationals and other communities and their economic and social integration has been rapid and smooth. However, the community has no significant commitment to the issues of (anti)racism and the struggle against discrimination. The focus group demonstrated that the most striking characteristics of Portuguese migrants are their willingness to integrate, work and the importance they place on discretion.

Portuguese immigrants' participation in European and local elections in France (and in other electoral processes) is low. This is due to their lack of democratic experience and suspicious attitude towards politics. Moreover, Portuguese people who move abroad become excluded from the (Portuguese) political arena and as such are held in neutrality. Despite their political passivity, Portuguese immigrants are not apolitical: passivity can also be a form of resistance. However, we have seen that Civica (the Association of Elected

Representatives of Portuguese Origin) plays a very important role in the development of the civic participation of Portuguese and other non-French European citizens living in France, and thus raises awareness among associations, families and government organisations in France and Portugal. Furthermore, even with the low participation in local elections, a good number of Portuguese people do stand as candidates in these elections.

The Romanian community in Italy
Italy only became a country of immigration in the late 1970s after having been a country of emigration since the beginning of the 20th century. According to the 2010 yearly statistical report on immigration issued by Caritas, the overall Romanian population residing in Italy in 2009 reached 887,763 people; this represented 21% of the total foreign population (Caritas, 2010).

The first immigration from Romania to Italy was undertaken to escape from persecution during the presidency of Nicolae Ceauşescu. After 1994, migration from Romania changed: it was predominantly temporary, and was often motivated by career opportunities and chances of higher earnings. After Romania's accession to the EU, Romanians began taking advantage of the liberalisation of the movement of people within the Schengen Area. Large numbers of people left for Spain and Italy after 2003, and these two countries have now become the largest recipients of temporary migrants from Romania. Before EU accession, Romanians had generally entered Italy as tourists, but stayed after their visa had expired; many hoped for an opportunity to legalise their residency.

Romanians in Italy are active and keen to organise themselves in various kinds of associations. At the national level the Romanian community is composed of people who arrived in Italy alone or followed the family network and/or friends in search of employment and better living conditions. The majority of men work in the construction sector and women are generally employed as domestics and carers; however, they are also often employed in shops, hotels and restaurants and social services.

One of the main problems faced by the Romanian community is social exclusion and stigmatisation. In Italy immigrants are stigmatised by the media. Public opinion assumes that certain social groups, particularly Albanians, Roma and Romanians are the main causes of crime and insecurity. In general terms, Italians believe that there are too many foreigners in the country, and associate immigrants with criminals or illegal immigrants, in accordance with the discourse linking immigration to security. In the case of Romanians, this perception is worsened by the presence of Roma, who are often assumed to come from Romania, even if their composition is highly variegated. Roma and Sinti people who are settled in informal camps in small areas with dense populations have always been perceived as problematic for security and social order.

Romanian immigrants' participation in European and local elections in Italy is low. This is mainly due to the scarce information about the right to vote provided to the community, as well as its lack of interest in politics.

The Romanian community in Spain

Spain is the European country that attracts the most Romanian immigrants. We have seen that it is possible to distinguish between three phases of Romanian immigration to Spain before the country's accession to the European Union in 2007. The first Romanian citizens started to arrive in Spain at the beginning of the 1990s with continuous growth until 2006 (211,325 Romanian migrants). After this point a huge number of immigrants arrived in the country due to the Schengen arrangements, and the total number of Romanian immigrants reached 751,668 people in 2009. In 2007, with Romania's accession to the European Union, Spain attracted more Romanian immigrants than any other country.

Romanian immigration to Spain is more temporary than permanent. This is underlined by the latest reports on immigration and the labour market in Spain, which show high returns of Romanians to their country of origin. Although no data is provided to support this hypothesis, it is likely that Romanians are more likely to return to their country of origin that any other nationals. Most Romanian migrants view their migration as temporary although the length of their stay depends on their objectives and circumstances.

Romanians tend to adapt well but are not necessarily willing to integrate themselves into new societies. Networks played an important role in the evolution of Romanian immigration to Spain and to other South-Western European countries. New models of immigration have emerged in the context of globalisation, and these have led to a rise in the number of illegal immigrants; this in turn has increased the importance of social networks. Furthermore, the church plays an important role in patterns of migration and the network-building strategies of Romanian immigrants to Spain.

In the beginning of the 1990s, Romanian immigration was strictly network-based. Since 2002, and particularly with the 2007 accession of Rumania to the European Union, this model has slowly begun to disintegrate.

We have seen that Romanian immigrants generally adhere to traditional patriarchal values. The gendered division of labour is further strengthened by the Spanish labour market, which offers different job opportunities to Romanian men and women, for example, women mostly work as carers and domestics. The network-based strategy of searching for employment acts as a trap for most migrant women and means they are unable to escape sectors traditionally associated with women such as family care, and agriculture. In this sense, we have seen that network-based migration can be useful for the community and economically, but it certainly does not contribute to women's empowerment.

As for their participation in the democratic life of Spain, the participation of Romanian immigrants in local and European elections is low. This phenomenon is rooted in the model of the former political system they experienced during communism and the scepticism and apathy that generally characterises Romanian public opinion about the potential of politicians: in Romania, politicians are generally viewed as unable to bring about change. Furthermore, the lack of participation is also based on the idea that 'Romanians do not stop being Romanians' when they move to another country, and as such they do not wish to vote in a country that constitutes nothing more than a temporary home.

The Bulgarian community in Greece

The Bulgarian community in Greece is the second largest immigrant community in the country following the Albanian community. The first Bulgarians arrived in the country in the early 1990s. The majority of the Bulgarian community is composed of women, while the average age is slightly higher than that of most immigrants residing in Greece. Most Bulgarian immigrants are graduates of secondary education; reside in urban centres and are employed in cleaning and elderly care services. A significant percentage of the Bulgarian population is also employed in agriculture, stock-breeding and in tourism.

The accession of Bulgaria to the EU and the formal acquisition and establishment of the rights of EU citizens by Bulgarian immigrants in Greece neither particularly changed their social nor their labour market positions. Thus, there are still instances of discrimination with regard to working conditions; and there are problems of undeclared labour, unemployment, and numerous immigrants in low quality positions that do not correspond to their qualifications. Bulgarian female immigrants are often victims of discrimination due to the sectors in which they are generally employed (care and cleaning). This is the result of the widespread practices of financial exploitation of immigrants working in these sectors.

The factors that have the greatest impact on the social inclusion of Bulgarian immigrants are duration of residence, knowledge of the language, and the ability to find steady employment.

The Bulgarian community in Greece is characterised by a lack of a culture of collective organisation and assertion. This is reflected in the difficulties the community faces in organising itself, and a general reluctance to do so. Despite the existence of several organisations, they face a crisis of representation, as these organisations do not attract much interest among the majority of Bulgarian immigrants. In fact, the majority is actually often unaware that such organisations even exist. At the same time, these organisations rarely succeed in expanding their agenda to issues of social importance beyond those of education and networking for employment. This shortcoming in the representation and collective expression of the Bulgarian community hinders agencies such as the state, political parties, trades unions, and other NGOs from approaching the Bulgarian community

institutionally. At the same time, it means that members of this community have difficulty identifying with these organisations, and trusting them as representatives. Furthermore, these organisations are often intensely introverted, which adds to their inability to adopt and project a broader concern with asserting rights and/or combating discrimination, seeking cooperation with political parties, agencies and other immigrant organisations.

The participation of Bulgarian immigrants in local and European elections is low. Despite the participation of three representatives of the Bulgarian community in the 2009 European and local elections, the majority of Bulgarian immigrants neither prioritise participation in Greek political life nor in its democratic processes. This is due to the fact that their main concern is safeguarding their employment, while there is no particular awareness of the possibilities of participation and about the possible impacts of collective action. The percentage of Bulgarians registered on Greek electoral rolls is estimated at approximately 2% of the total population of Bulgarian immigrants residing in Greece.

Conclusion

It is clear from this analysis that the communities under study began to migrate before their country's accession to the EU. These patterns of migration were mainly due to economic and political reasons. Most migrants left their countries of origin on tourist visas, although in certain cases they were also classed as refugees. This situation placed numerous migrants in an illegal or quasi-legal situation for many years. However, their country's accession to the European Union legalised their residency and brought with it the civil rights connected to EU citizenship.

Of all the communities under study, the Portuguese in France seem to be the most integrated, probably due to their long presence in their country of residence compared to other communities. [195] However, even in communities with relatively high levels of integration, the political participation of EU immigrants is still low. This partially rebuts the assumption that voting, as demonstrative of citizenship and of being a rights-holder, depends on a person's level of integration, which follows the logic of 'higher integration equates with higher electoral participation'. We have seen that this logic cannot be applied to all of the communities under study. For instance, this was not the case with Portuguese people in France, Polish people in Belgium nor Romanians living in Spain. These immigrants are economically integrated to some extent, but there is still a clear lack of socio-political participation.

However, we share the assumption that voting and participating in local and European elections is linked to the questions of whether immigrants feel like members of the local community, and whether they perceive themselves as members of a united Europe, and as European citizens.

At the beginning of the study we pointed out that EU citizens still face obstacles when exercising their voting rights. For example, some member states require non-nationals to fulfil additional conditions if they wish to vote in European parliamentary and municipal

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[195] The first wave of Polish migration is also relatively well integrated but it was not a focus of this study.

elections, despite the fact that this is not permitted by EU law. This sometimes even includes holding a national identity card issued by the member state in question. Other member states do not adequately inform non-national EU citizens about their electoral rights. At the same time, our research has demonstrated that there are also other barriers to participation. The first is the local language, which is not always spoken or understood by immigrant communities. As such, immigrants are not able to follow political debates and this may lead to political indifference. This can be worsened by the tendency of most immigrants belonging to the communities under study to close themselves within the 'chains' of an immigrant network. Furthermore, this research has also demonstrated that one of the main reasons preventing participation is the lack of information on fundamental rights or on the very notion of European citizenship: many EU citizens from the chosen communities were not even aware that they were able to vote in local elections.

In order to overcome these barriers, some activities and good practices have been implemented by local authorities and private organisations in the countries involved in this project.

In Belgium, the municipality of Saint-Gilles, which has the highest number of people from other member states (30%), set up the *Commission du dialogue sur l'Europe* (Commission of Dialogue on the European Union) in 2004 to organise debates on the Polish presence in Saint-Gilles and on the importance of Poland for the EU. In 2006, during the EU and local elections, local authorities organised awareness campaigns to support and stimulate the participation of EU citizens. They also attempted to reduce administrative burdens and formal obstacles; and informed people about their political rights. Furthermore, they intensified their efforts to encourage the participation of non-Belgian EU citizens living in Belgium, together with the Brussels — Europe liaison Office. A special focus was also placed on Polish residents, and the local authorities organised 'Polish Days' (*les Journées polonaises de Saint-Gilles)* aimed at improving the image of Poland in Belgium, and helping people understand Polish culture and encouraging the Polish community to participate more actively in local social and political life. More than 300 people participated in these activities. Following its success, a new event was organised in 2011.

During the Polish EU presidency, the municipality of Etterbeek also organised cultural events linked to the Polish community in the area. One of the main events was a meeting organised to raise awareness among non-Belgian EU citizens about participation in local elections, the main issues, their goals and how to participate.

In France, we have seen that Civica plays a very important role in the development of the participation of Portuguese people, as well as other European immigrants living in the country. It does so by providing information to associations, families and government organisations in France and Portugal. As such, Civica often works together with embassies and public and private organisations, and organises activities in three main areas: it provides support to candidates, elected officials and municipalities; organises activities related to the French and Portuguese governments; and runs cultural programmes, as well as information and training sessions addressed to Portuguese politicians in France.

In Italy we have seen the implementation of a project to foster collective society among young Romanians. This project is run by a cooperative and has had good results in terms of promoting integration. One of its main difficulties during the start-up stage was gaining the confidence and interest of the immigrant community; eventually, this hurdle was overcome with the help of a local priest held in great esteem by the youngsters and their families.

As for Spain we have seen good practices in representative associations aimed at empowering the people they represent and encouraging them to take part in the democratic life of the country in which they live. In particular, these organisations focused on Romanian migrants as a whole or on Romanian Roma as a specific community with their own particular needs and requirements. In Spain several organisations and associations that were set up by Romanians for Romanians are developing activities aimed at improving the living conditions of Romanian migrants by raising awareness among policy makers, and by promoting the image of Romanian citizens to facilitate the acceptance of migrants. Moreover, the creation of a Romanian political party, PIRUM, which stood for the first time

in Spanish local elections in 2011, was the first case of a political party being set up by EU migrants. Finally, the cooperation between foreign and local institutions and organisations is also important to note. Various activities linked institutions or organisations from the country of origin to those from the host country, including cooperation between the Catholic and Orthodox Church in providing mass to their followers; collaboration between Romanian associations and the local UNESCO Centre, as well as cooperation between town halls and migrant associations.

Finally, in Greece a remarkable number of Bulgarian candidates took part in the 2009 European election and the 2010 municipal and regional elections: three Bulgarian immigrants appeared as candidates on the electoral lists of Greek political parties and the coalition lists.

Recommendations

The 2010 EU citizen report demonstrates that the lack of EU legislation is not the main reason why EU citizens are facing obstacles in the exercise of their rights. Instead, these difficulties are connected to the lack of an effective enforcement of EU rights. Clearly, properly enforcing immigrant rights would make their enjoyment easier in practice, and raise awareness of these rights.

In this sense, this research has identified a number of key recommendations to policy makers and sectoral organisations:

- Disseminate information (through both formal and informal channels) on the importance of political participation. There is a huge lack of information, and many foreigners do not even know they are permitted to vote in local and European elections (in the case of EU citizens!).

- Promote the idea of transnationalism in local political contexts. Previous policies implemented in relation to the integration of migrants into local or national cultures should be redefined to reflect the non-permanent flows of contemporary migration.

- Invest in language skills. Information needs to be provided in the languages most frequently used by migrants to provide them with information they understand. The way internet search engines function also needs to be taken into account to ensure migrants receive the information they need. Local language skills need to be promoted as a path to social integration.

- Mobilise associations and organisations that promote the integration of migrants around participatory matters.

- Engage community media (such as RadioAlpha in the case of the Portuguese community in France) to participate in awareness-raising campaigns to increase participation in local and European elections.

- Enhance the visibility of the communities on social and cultural issues and establish relations with the communities to ensure their involvement in local political life. This could mean creating links between cultural meetings and the mobilisation of

associations and organisations concerned with promoting the integration of migrants, especially around participatory matters.

- Raise awareness among civil servants and the representatives of public authorities about the problems encountered by people of foreign origin.

- Empower women and 'contact' persons by linking social life with political life.

- Develop and encourage initiatives to sustain the political and social participation of immigrants. Help migrants understand the administrative mechanisms for participation in elections and political parties, and promote their involvement in politics.

- Support dialogue and cooperation with immigrant communities and encourage their representation in institutions of collective expression and action, and in democratic processes.

- Support and strengthen social cohesion.

- Promote the image of migrant communities. Promote the social acceptance of migrants by fighting xenophobic discourses and stereotypes particularly in politics, and recognise diversity among the immigrant community.

- Encourage immigrant communities to be more visible and have more influence.

As underlined by the document *Reaching out to citizens*, the EU will only develop and prosper if citizens are involved and well informed about the impact of EU policies on their daily lives.

Finally, we would like to end this report with the words of Jean Monnet: "union between individuals or communities is not natural; it can only be the result of an intellectual process[...] having as a starting point the observation of the need for change. Its driving force must be common interests between individuals or communities".

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ANNEXES

ANNEXE I: BELGIUM

The results from the focus groups and lunch debate

The findings from the first focus group

The first focus group was conducted by PLS in June, and was attended by approximately 15 people. The participants were representatives of Polish associations or media, Polish students, and local civil servants and representatives of municipalities. The participants were divided into two groups according to the language they spoke (French or English). The debate focused on the definition of participation, its importance and goals, and how to improve participation among Polish people residing in Belgium. Polish immigrants are quite well integrated from an economic point of view but there is a clear lack of socio-political participation among Polish people living in Belgium. Therefore, PLS began devising ways of linking political and economic aspects to encourage increased participation.

Definition of participation

Participation is about sharing things in common, taking part in elections but also diversity and the way people live together and their involvement in neighbourhood activities. Participating makes people feel good. In this case, it is also about creating relationships between Belgian and Polish people; something that will only be possible if Belgian society is ready to welcome Polish people as they are.

The Polish community is not homogeneous

The Polish community in Belgium is the result of several waves of immigration and is composed of very different 'little worlds' that do not necessarily have links to each other. An important question we should agree on here is 'Who do we want to involve in participatory processes?'. The answer is important as the resources we mobilise and the activities we organise will have to be adapted to the specificities of the target group. This is linked to the fact that the Polish community is far from being a united body and that its various subgroups have to be approached differently. Moreover, the 'little worlds' that the Polish

community is composed of do not often mix, and this can result in a lack of social diversity in their associative networks.

A well-organised Polish network 'cuts off' the community from Belgian society

There is a widespread assumption in Belgium that Polish people do not want to participate; however, this is far from true. Weak political participation can be explained by a variety of factors, such as a strong and well-organised Polish network, which enables the Polish community to live apart from Belgian society; this is sometimes described as communitarianism. However, it can also be difficult to leave such communities as they offer numerous practical advantages to their members. Although there is a tendency towards a weaker Polish network in Belgium, it is still highly present in society.

The language barrier is one of the most important obstacles to integration and participation

Learning the language(s) of the host country is essential if people wish to involve themselves in participatory activities and enjoy full citizenship. Very few Polish people, however, have enough time to attend language courses, as these courses are spread over a number of years, and are not suitable for working people. Additionally, many Polish people are embarrassed at their inability to (fluently) speak another language. Moreover, many women work as cleaners in private households; as such, they are alone most of the time. This can lead to a lack of contact with Belgian society, something which certainly does not aid learning a language. According to some of the participants, a significant part of the Polish community is not used to attending school, so taking language courses might represent an additional effort that not all of them are ready to make. Clearly, this suggests the usefulness of translating information on political life into Polish, but also on the beliefs and cultural background predominant in Belgian society.

The economic reasons for migration should be taken into account, as participation may not be a priority for Polish immigrants. However, the recent opening of the labour market may lead to more interest about freedom and human rights

The reasons behind immigration to Belgium are a determining factor that must also be taken into account. Many Polish people choose to migrate for economic reasons, and this is

often done illegally. Therefore, Polish people have not come to Belgium to participate, but to find employment and earn money. Active citizenship is then hardly a priority. Most Polish arrivals do not even consider staying long in Belgium and view their presence in the country as temporary. This could explain the positions taken by the Polish community and its weak involvement in Belgian society. The recent opening of the Belgian labour market (May 2009) legalised the residency of many Polish people living in Belgium, but this − together with the transition towards freedom and rights − will not lead to overnight changes in the way people view each other or their assumptions. However, the idea of remaining in Belgium for an indefinite period is slowly gaining strength. For example, cars belonging to the Polish community are now less likely to be registered in Poland, which also shows that people are not returning to Poland as frequently as before. Similarly, the increasing number of adverts in Polish newspapers for flats and houses for sale in Poland is further demonstrative of this trend.

However, at the moment Polish residents in Belgium rarely express the wish to participate, nor do they even seem to consider doing so. Consequently, if this is to change, residents of foreign origin will have to be encouraged to participate and informed about the advantages of doing so. Or does political integration only occur after economic integration?

Many people do not know how to intervene in local political life − and even less in European politics. Information on participation is currently insufficient
Most immigrants arriving in Belgium are not even aware of their fundamental rights. It is therefore important that they are informed about their social rights and that an associative network is available to support them if needed. For example, the process of naturalisation in Flanders was underlined as an important means of integrating people into Belgian society.

People also need to realise how political participation can change their future. Integrating people from other countries is important for social cohesion and inclusion. One problem is that these people do not always know how to intervene in local political life − and even less in the case of European politics. Do any immigrants at all even imagine that they could become a municipal councillor one day? Yet why should they, when politics seems so

disconnected from their everyday concerns? It is therefore important to remind people from other countries of the very purpose of participation; its advantages, and how it can affect their daily life. It is important to remember that local politics can wield significant political clout, not to mention European politics.

If a Polish immigrant were to stand as a candidate in local elections, s/he would have to have enough time and social capital, as well as a broad personal network to even have a chance of assuming such a position. One person from the Polish community who did wish to run as a candidate abandoned the idea due to a lack of confidence.

Polish people are often suspicious of politics and government due to Polish history

The specific context of Polish history has led many Polish people to become suspicious of politics and government. Misunderstandings, stereotypes and mistrust are still very alive in both Polish and Belgian society. Many Polish people perceive Belgians as unwelcoming, whereas Belgian politics rarely ever encourages Polish people to participate. Some people believe people from other countries will not participate in Belgian society until politicians show an interest in them.

Key recommendations identified during the first focus group

Spread information (through both formal and informal channels) on the importance of participation

There is a huge lack of information, and many foreigners do not even know they are permitted to vote in local elections, and European elections in the case of EU citizens! One way of reaching Polish people in Belgian would be to provide information through shops, churches, journals, representatives, and local politics etc. At the same time, it would be important to explain why participation is necessary and to demonstrate the impact it can have on their daily life. The message would be something similar to 'vote and feel at home (in your host country)'. Ideally, information should be provided through formal and informal channels.

Mobilise Polish associations and organisations that promote the integration of migrants around participatory matters

Cultural events such as official events related to high culture organised by the Polish embassy are a way for Poland to reconstruct its image in Belgium and break down long-lasting stereotypes. According to some estimates, every Belgian has had some form of personal contact with Polish people and it would be a pity if this cultural awareness was to be limited to intellectuals. Therefore, some participants proposed sharing Polish culture at the local level through fun activities such as culinary events.

Raise awareness among civil servants and public authorities about the difficulties encountered by people of foreign origin in participation

Political structures are not always open to the initiatives of associations or to the active citizenship of people from other countries. Civic education can play an interesting role in the promotion of participation, but this is often done in an informal manner due to a lack of resources.

Some associations have already asked for subsidies from the Flemish authorities. In Brussels, there are lots of differences between the municipalities, but each one has specific tools available to support NGOs and associations. Although the Polish community is very well organised in Brussels, this is not the case everywhere in Belgium. As such, a formal campaign to raise awareness could be a way of reaching everybody in a more neutral fashion.

Empower women and 'contact' persons by linking social life with political life

Women are the backbone of Polish society. For example, most Polish participants attending this focus group were women. Women can be a source of mobilisation and participation, especially if we link participation with subjects that directly concern women such as health care, education, social security and family support. Women are in charge of children (and/or the elderly); this is a 'constraint' that needs to be taken into account. Consequently, it would be useful to create meeting spaces that offer child care. This would enable women to discuss local politics, community life, or attend language courses. Through these activities, women could be empowered to promote participation. Clearly such efforts should

not be restricted to the Polish community. Women from other communities should be invited to share their experiences, to debate and to learn from each other. This is important, as the study found that there is a lack of diversity and contact between immigrant communities. For example, parents of different origins (such as Polish, Moroccan and Brazilians) with children who attend the same schools do not communicate with each other very often. In order to change this, meetings could begin with small events such as cooking classes. This could slowly help bring political matters to the discussion table and link social life with political life; doing so would demonstrate the importance of politics for people's daily concerns.

Trust is an important factor. Consequently, it would be useful to find a contact person – an exemplary citizen – with knowledge of both cultures. Concerning language courses, although there are already enough classes, it is clear that after working 10 hours a day that people are unlikely to feel like attending lessons! This points to the importance of integrating language courses and professional training or employment. Although such opportunities do already exist, they are certainly underused.

The findings from the second focus group

The second focus group took place in October with approximately 10 participants including people from each Belgian region (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels), academics specialised in Polish integration and a Polish journalist. Through role playing exercises and specific examples, the focus group tried to identify the necessary skills and competences to encourage the participation of the Polish community, fight against discrimination and stereotypes, and promote the protection of fundamental rights. The focus group also aimed to identify and address the problems faced by people from other countries – and Polish people in particular – who wish to participate in local or European politics through voting, running as a candidate or through the broader dynamics of integration. These practical problems led to a general discussion on useful skills and competences that might help overcome future obstacles and promote the participation of the Polish community in Belgium.

The results of the first focus group were also discussed in the context of the different regional situations. The situation in Flanders and Wallonia is different from that of Brussels; this is partly due to history. For a long time, the coalfields of Wallonia received economic migrants, but since the year 2000 migration has been focused on Brussels, and Flanders to a lesser extent. This means that most Polish people in Wallonia arrived with the older waves of immigration and as such have different socio-economic concerns. Similarly, most of these people are very well integrated or are now naturalised Belgians. These factors help explain why there is a relatively weak associative network in Wallonia, as the need for such a network has faded over time.

In contrast, Polish immigration to Flanders and Brussels mainly began in the early 2000s; however, there are also differences between the two regional situations.

Flemish integration policy is highly concerned with language learning: a sufficient level of Dutch is often a precondition for access to certain services. Polish people seem to be a little less organised in Flanders than in Brussels. Even in Antwerp (the Flemish city with probably the most important Polish population) there are a few Polish shops, a school, a church, but the services provided are quite limited and there is little coordination. There is also a lack of coordination in Brussels, but the network is much more consistent.

It seems that Polish people living in Flanders are more likely to feel discriminated against than those living in Brussels. However, although the majority mainly has Polish friends, socialisation with Belgians living in Flanders occurs more rapidly than in Brussels. In both Regions, a change can often be observed when Polish people have children, due to their contact with other parents in school. These contacts can help break down mutual (mis)conceptions. As such, Polish people with many contacts to Belgians are less likely to think in stereotypes about their country of residence. When asked about their relationship with other foreign communities, Polish people were less positive than Belgians.

Only a minority of Polish people (14% in Flanders) plays an active role in Belgian associations. These associations tend to be trades unions, as some unions have targeted Polish workers through a number of initiatives. This could indicate that economic motives

are still very important for Polish people living in Belgium. The unemployment rate is very low among the Polish community and most Polish people seem quite satisfied with their economic situation. This strong economic activity, linked with the motivation behind their migration partly explains their low level of participation: Polish people usually work a lot and have little time to think about politics.

In order to improve Polish participation in social and political life in Belgium the participants stressed the importance of taking into account the diversity of the Polish community: there are often large socio-economic and cultural differences between the community, including education, gender, age and origin. This sociological diversity then requires different forms of mobilisation due to the specific problems encountered by different people. The diverse sections of the Polish community do not always share similar values or interests. Nevertheless, a common means of mobilising the entire community could be found in the issues of employment and religion.

Identifying competences through concrete examples

Before starting the role playing exercises, the general characteristics a contact person would need were identified as follows:

- fluency in one of the national languages (and in Brussels, a passive knowledge of either French or Dutch)
- a strong, relevant contact network within Belgian society
- an extended contact network within the Polish community.

These characteristics were then further defined using two different examples.

The first example was taken from representative democracy. Participants were asked to think of what a person from another country (if not from Poland) should be like if he or she wished to be elected and represent his or her community at the local level, while still raising issues that generally face people from other countries.

The second example was taken from participatory democracy. This time the approach was different; instead of standing for election, the person was to lobby political representatives about a problem that directly concerned his or her community (for example, the Polish

community). In this case, the person aimed to encourage political representatives to resolve a specific problem – we used the lack of a social interpretation service in their local offices for social support (CPAS).

CASE A: elections and representative democracy

In general, the participants believed that a person wishing to be elected at local level should be familiar with Belgian politics (different power levels, attribution, competences, responsibilities, history, and recent political developments). However, it seems that many Polish people living in Belgium do not know much about the country's electoral system. Hence, in addition to a good knowledge of Belgian institutions, the participants pointed out that a person wishing to be elected should also be able to transmit this knowledge to his or her community. For example, such a person should be able to explain the main differences between Flemish and French-speaking political parties, the relevant issues and powers associated with local institutions, and the value of participating at the local level.

At the same time, being elected means representing a constituency. Hence, this means being able to raise awareness of specific issues touching that community, as well as being highly socially engaged and open to particular problems and needs.

If the person were to be to gain a broader electoral base, it seems likely that he or she would have to be capable of reaching other non-Belgian communities and properly represent people from other countries. This would demand an open mind and great cooperative abilities. Finally, as Belgian politics can be slow, patience would also be an important characteristic.

CASE B: Mobilising a community around a specific issue – participatory democracy

In order to mobilise a community around a particular issue, many competences similar to those identified in Case A were identified, including the ability to convince, an open mind, and familiarity with Belgian institutions. On this last point, the stated capacities were more specific: awareness of organisations and procedures involved in problem-solving processes, a good knowledge of the law (i.e. the ability to gain more information about the law or use

appropriate expertise), and the ability to identify the relevant actors associated with the issue at hand. A good Belgian contact network would also be essential in this case.

As in Case A, an issue should be brought forward by a consistent group of people. It would therefore be important to know the situation of the community well (for example, the Polish situation since 2000); to be able to bring together different cultural groups (the includes an understanding of the complexities and the internal diversity of the community) and to be able to capture the needs and experiences of the group at the appropriate level (proximity).

Finally, participants insisted on the need to be able to share abilities, competences and knowledge; consequently, contact persons would need to take the time to inform their community and act as role models for new participatory practices.

Lunch Debate

The lunch debate was organised in December, along with the end of the Polish presidency of the EU. PLS chose to conduct the debate in the form of a conference and to invite relevant Belgian and Polish speakers, while encouraging interaction with the audience. About 50 people attended the event. The outcome was extremely positive as some local politicians were present and explained their views on the subject (with the local elections of October 2012 in mind), but also as Belgian and Polish citizens were able to mix and talk to each other about stereotypes but also the administrative problems faced by Polish citizens.

ANNEXE II: FRANCE

The results from the focus groups and lunch debates

The two focus groups brought together representatives of Portuguese associations (cultural, familial and religious) in the Paris region. The structures listed below in annex I are those which were most actively involved in the focus groups. The focus groups were organised as open, informal discussions built around the guidelines designed for the workshops. Each participant was asked to speak about an important issue, these included the person's personal history and reasons for migration, employment status, sense of integration into French society (what was meaningful), and the person's level of participation (and the reasons behind their level of participation) in Portuguese associations. Finally, participants were asked whether they participated in local and European elections, and about their understandings of European citizenship.

In contrast, the lunch debate brought together participants from associations with vested interests in the issues of citizenship. A total of 25 people were interviewed; this enabled a wide debate to be conducted on issues such as immigrants from the 1960s, bi-national children and naturalised immigrants. The answers demonstrated a real lack of involvement in electoral matters, but also revealed strong community involvement by the Portuguese associations. This paradox confirms the findings of the research that was used to prepare the study.

Additional information

List of partner associations

CIVICA

Aulnay-Sous-Bois

ASSOCIATION DES ORIGINAIRES DU PORTUGAL

10 Avenue Karl Marx

93000 BOBIGNY

PORTUGAL LUSO

ASSOCATION ASCFP (association socio-culturelle franco-portugaise)

31/51 Rue Paul Eluard

59282 DOUCHY LES MINES

ASSOCATION CEIFEIRAS DO MINHO DE CHELLES-VAIRES

9 RUE DU PARC

77500 CHELLES 77

ASSOCATION CULTUREL LUSO FRANÇESA, RANCHO FOLCLORE

Square De L'hôtel De Ville

78210 SAINT CYR L'ECOLE

ASSOCIATION PORTUGAISE DU BLANC-MESNIL

30 Rue Alexandre Dumas

93150 LE BLANC-MESNIL

ASSOCIATION ADEPBA

6 Rue Sarrette

75014 PARIS

ASSOCIATION CASA DE SANTA MARTA DE PORTUZELO EM PARIS

26 RUE DES ROSIERS

75004 PARIS

ASSOCIATION AMORES DE PORTUGAL

51 Bis Avenue De Saint Mandé

75012 PARIS

ASSOCIATION CULTURELLE PORTUGAISE DE NEUILLY SUR SEINE

2 Bis Rue Du Château

92200 NEUILLY SUR SEINE

List of candidates of Portuguese origin in the regional elections

Alsace (1)

Manuel SANTIAGO (Ecologie)

Aquitaine (2)

Pierre PINTO BICHO (LEXT), Bernard DA COSTA (EUSKADI EUROPAN)

Auvergne (2)

Angel ALMEIDA (LEXG), Maryse CORREIA (LEXG)

Basse-Normandie (2)

Graciela MACHADO (LEXG)

Bourgogne (9)

Sébastien PEREIRA (Modem), Georges SILVA (Verts), José ALMEIDA (PC), Carlos OLIVEIRA
(PC), Nathalie VERMOREL- DE ALMEIDA (PC), José DA SILVA (PC), Philippe MARTINS (LDVG),
Christian RIBEIRO (LDVG), Sylvie FERNANDES (LDVG)

Centre (7)

Alain GAMA (LCOP), Philippe OLIVEIRA (Modem), Adelino DAMASO (LCOP), Silvina
FERNANDES (LCOP), David MENDES (LCOP), Filipe FERREIRA POUSOS (PS), Corinne
LEVELEUX-TEIXEIRA (PS)

Champagne-Ardenne (4)

Bruno SUBTIL (FN), Isabelle SILVA (Modem), Déolinda CARDOSO (LEXG), José CARVALHO
(LEXG)

Franche Comté (4)

Maguy MEREIRA DE PINHO (LEXD – Non aux Minarets), Corinne DA SILVA (Modem), Yoann
PIMENTEL (Modem), Pascal LOUREIRO (LCOP)

Haute Normandie (3)

Stéphanie DA SILVA (LDVD), Marie-Hélène CAVALEIRO (LCOP), Thibault BARBOSA (Modem)

Languedoc Roussillon (2)

Carlos RIBEIRO (LEXG), Jacqueline CORREIA DE MACEDO (LEXG)

Limousin (1)

Flavie ALVES (Modem)

Lorraine (8)

Anne COSTA (LCO), Antoine LOUREIRO-RIAL (LAUT-Voix Lorraine), Laura LOUREIRO-RIAL (LAUT), Claudia LOUREIRO-RIAL (LAUT), Dulciana DOS-SANTOS (LAUT), Denis MARTINS (LAUT), Gloria DA COSTA (LAUT), Francis ESTEVES (LCOP)

Midi Pyrénées (1)

Christophe ALVES (UMP)

Nord Pas de Calais (4)

Paulo-Serge LOPES (Vert), Diana DA CONCEICAO, Marie-Noëlle COSTA (PS), Dora MARQUES (PS)

Pays de la Loire (2)

Patricia CEREIJO, Denise BARBOSA (FN)

Picardie (3)

Anne FERREIRA (PS) 02, Patrice CARVALHO (PS) 02, Micael SEMEDO (Modem)

Poitou Charente (1)

Marie-Christine CARDOSO (FN)

Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur (3)

Marie-Josée PEREIRA (LEXG), Sandrine FERREIRA (Modem), Pierre COSTA (Vert)

Rhônes-Alpes (3)

Véronique MOREIRA (Vert) - 1, Jeanine CURTO (NI) Spartacus, Rose RIBEIRO (NI) Spartacus

Ile de France (22)

Cristela DE OLIVEIRA (UMP), Johnny DA COSTA (UMP), Joëlle LOPES (lcr), Paulo PEREIRA (lcr), Philippe NUNES (lcr), Brigitte DOS SANTOS (fn), Daniel DOS SANTOS (FN), Carlos LOPES (Verdes), José TOMAS (Verdes), Henrique PINTO (Verdes), Georges FERNANDES (Modem), Marylise MARTINS (Modem), Jorge CARVALHO (Modem), Elisabeth DOS SANTOS (Modem), Antonio DUARTE (Eco Ind), Sandra DA SILVA PEREIRA, Sophie CERQUEIRA (PS), Marie-

Christine CARVALHO (PS), Isabelle FERREIRA (NPA), Jean-Marc DOS SANTOS (NPA), Elsa DOS SANTOS (NPA), Alberto GARCIA (NPA)

Results for French politicians of Portuguese origin and Portuguese nationals in the municipal elections held in March 2008

Val de Marne (94): Department with 46 cities; 39 candidates from Portugal (84.78%).

Seine Saint Denis (93): Department with 38 cities; 25 candidates from Portugal (65.79%).

Hauts de Seine (92): Department with 36 cities; 14 candidates from Portugal (38.89%).

Val d'Oise (95): Department with 185 cities; 38 candidates from Portugal (20.54%).

Seine et Marne (77): Department with 514 cities; 141 candidates from Portugal (27.43%).

Essonne (91): Department with 209 cities; 81 candidates from Portugal (38.76%).

Yvelines (78): Department with 262 cities; 68 candidates from Portugal (25.95%).

Number of electors (grands électeurs) of Portuguese origin in Ile de France in 2011 (French Senate Elections)

Val de Marne (94): Department with 47 Portuguese electoral votes

Seine Saint Denis (93) − 2080 electors and 6 seats : Department with 43 Portuguese electoral votes

Hauts de Seine (92): Department with 23 Portuguese electoral votes

Val d'Oise (95): Department with 40 Portuguese electoral votes

Seine et Marne (77): Department with 173 Portuguese electoral votes

Essonne (91): Department With 104 Portuguese electoral votes

Yvelines (78): Department with 84 Portuguese electoral votes

ANNEXE III: ITALY

The results from the focus groups and lunch debates

The first focus group was held in Rome on 14 June 2011 at the Palazzo della Cooperazione. Among the participants were representatives from both the Romanian community and associations and Italian social cooperatives. Anna Stanescu is the president of a social cooperative inspired by a small group of women from the Romanian community, but its associates include women from several nationalities. Federica Mazzarelli represents CIFE, an association working for the promotion of European integration, and she is involved in a research project about immigrant entrepreneurship. Dana Mihalache is the president of Spirit Romanesc, a Romanian association active in Italy − especially in Rome − and Romania, which promotes Romanian culture in Italy and attempts to improve relations between the two countries. They have implemented a number of projects including the creation of a folk dance group, the promotion of Romanian language courses in schools in Rome, and several projects that promote intercultural activities, women's entrepreneurship, and defend the rights of children. Flavia Piperno is a researcher at the International Policy Studies Centre (Cespi), which has been working on co-development issues since 2005, when circular migration patterns from Romania to Italy gave way to an exchange of social capital between the two countries. Mr Signoretti, on the other hand, is president of a consortium of social cooperatives dealing with immigration issues in Rome, and a number of interpreters from Romania work for the organisation. Further participants included Bruno Amoroso, from the Federico Caffé research centre, which has been cooperating with Romania on training issues and economic remittances; Miruna Cajvaneanu, a journalist who has been following the issues associated with Romanian participation in local and European elections since 2007; Mr Muntean, the secretary of the Romanian Identity Party, and one of the founding members of the party. He joined the party in 2006. This party is committed to promoting civic awareness among the Romanian community, and to expanding political participation, which is deemed to be low because of a widespread utilitarian conception of political issues among the Romanian community. Mr Firenze is responsible for employment policy at the consortium Connecting People, which deals with immigration issues. He

underlined the importance of the inclusion of immigrants and marginalised people in the labour market to enhance their civic and political participation.

During the focus group several issues were discussed; these included relations between the Romanian diaspora, relations with Italian society, factors of inclusion/exclusion, participation in the socio-political life of the country of destination, the role of associations and representatives of the Romanian community, the role of entrepreneurs from Romania, and political, social and economic ties with Romania. The debate focused on the factors that make Italy an attractive country for immigration. The debate made it clear that immigration has changed: with respect to the first wave of 'mass' immigration from Romania, immigration is now more selective and focused. Immigration used to be more influenced by cultural proximity and political factors, but it was badly managed due to the weak administrative controls on illegal migration on the borders before EU accession. There has also been a decrease in the numbers of people arriving from Romania in recent years (from 1 million to 980,000 last year). However, since 2007, circular migration has increased more strongly, meaning that official statistics may not always reflect reality. Circular migration and geographical proximity are two of the main limits to the integration of the Romanian community, as many people spend their entire lives in Italy although they assume their presence will be temporary; as such, their plans and investments are all directed towards life in Romania and not the country in which they live. This leads many people to live in a kind of permanent limbo, and this creates a high degree of insecurity. Importantly, people in this situation are more likely to enter the illegal labour market. One example of this is the high rate of Romanian start-ups, most of which only consist of one person and were created to help legalise that person's status in the country.

The focus group illustrated the three stages that have characterised Romanian immigration to Italy: before 2001, only a small number of people were able to enter the country because of the administrative limitations placed on immigration. However, in 2001 the need for a visa to enter Italy was abolished, and real mass migration began. Finally, since 2007 there has been a growth of circular migration because of the access to the Schengen Area. The focus group also stressed a sharp contrast between immigrants from different generations: whereas for the first generation it was difficult to enter the country, but easier to make a

living in Italy (high numbers of men were employed in the building sector and large numbers of women in care service provision); for those who came afterwards there were less administrative difficulties but also less opportunities.

The focus group also made it clear that factors relating to migration processes mean that levels of economic, social and political participation in particular are quite low. Romanian people are not used to organising themselves in associations or social enterprises. This might be associated with a cultural negation of collective structures as a reaction to the communist regime, but Romanians are also highly individualist. Most of their earnings are used to finance material needs in their country of origin, such as building a house. However, the general disillusionment of the Romanian community can also be linked to the hostility directed towards them on the part of the Italian authorities since the beginning of the immigration process.

The obstacles to integration that stem from the different histories of migration, and which particularly affect young people who have been 'forced' to follow their parents must be considered when dealing with immigration. This is also clear from the difficulties faced by social actors who attempt to involve young Romanians and their families in projects that promote intercultural dialogue; in many cases these potential participants appear estranged and indifferent. As such, public events are rarely attended by the community, with the exception of free parties and concerts.

Although the levels of social and cultural participation are low, political participation is even lower – at around 1%. The fact that some Romanians stood in the last local elections has been explained by the importance of single candidates, who act as a collector of votes from the Romanian community, rather than representing the emergence of real community leaders. The participants also stated that the Romanian Party's political experience had not been adequately promoted among the community, and that this was one of the reasons for its isolation; although not all participants agreed with this. The Romanian government was viewed as having made attempts to strengthen ties between the diaspora and the social and political situation in Romania; as such, it contributes to the lack of long-term planning in the country of destination and maintains control over the Romanian community abroad.

Additional information

List of partner associations

Romanian associations in Rome:

Associazione socio-culturale 'Spirit românesc (Spirito romeno)' Filiale di Roma

Associazione Arci 'Villaggio Romeno'

ARI (Associazione dei Romeni in Italia)

Associazione Italo—Romena Universo 2000

Associazione Sempre Insieme

Associazione Culturale Romania

Associazione Italia—Romania 'Uniti per contare di più'

Associazione Popica Onlus

Associazione socio-culturale Banat

Associazione socio-culturale 'Tricolorul'

Centro multiculturale Risvolti

IRFI Onlus Associazione Italia Romania Futuro Insieme (Asociatia Italia România Viitorul Împreună)

Institutions:

Comune di Roma

Provincia di Roma

Stakeholders:

Caritas

CeSpi – Centro Studi di politica internazionale

Centro Italiano di Formazione Europea

Fieri

IOM – International Organisation for Migration

Trade unions (CGIL, CISL, UIL)

ANNEXE IV: SPAIN

The results from the focus groups and lunch debates

As part of the study, we described the Romanian immigrant community currently living in Spain from a demographic point of view using 2011 data provided by the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE). This project aimed to develop recommendations concerning the low participation of immigrants in the local civic and political life of their host country. Furthermore, it sought to do so by collecting qualitative data provided by cultural and representative associations as well as by EU citizens residing in another EU country. Consequently, we conducted six interviews and held three focus groups with Romanian citizens living in Spain, and with members of Romanian associations and political parties.

Two of the focus group discussions were held with Romanian Roma immigrants living in Santa Coloma, near Barcelona, as we considered it important to reflect on the specific situation faced by Romanian Roma and especially Roma women – their situation is similar not only in Spain, but throughout Europe. Nineteen Romanian Roma women shared their experiences about their current situation in Spain, about managing and surviving everyday life and contributed to the discussion with their thoughts about their own cultural traditions, habits and customs and how all these fit into the day-to-day context of life in Spanish. The participants were selected with the help of an association called SAOROMA, whose members have been working for a long time with women from Vaslui and Ialomiţa from the south of Romania. Due to methodological considerations, but also in order to avoid hierarchies in the groups based around age, we divided the participants into two groups: the participants in group I were aged between 18 and 25, and those in group II were aged between 27 and 35 years old. Given the very low or almost non-existent level of education among the participants, we adapted the questions from the questionnaire for group discussions with Romanian Roma. We divided the questionnaire into four main sections. First, questions referring to legal aspects about their stay (starting from when they arrived, why they had chosen Spain, whether they were documented, registered, or officially recognised from any legal point of view). Second, their interaction with local institutions and local citizens (questions related to their awareness of and participation in different

associations, relations with Catalan and Spanish society, language difficulties and their intentions behind learning the language, proximity relations with neighbours and interactions with other immigrants). Third, electoral participation (their knowledge of the Spanish state and local politics, their right to vote, participation in elections in Spain and Romania), and finally questions related to civil rights and citizenship (racist discourses, racist treatment, confronting stereotypes, women's role in society and the family, and differences between Spanish and Roma women).

As Romanian immigrants living in Spain are generally considered to be relatively well integrated into society, especially when compared with other immigrant groups such as Moroccans, group discussions conducted with Roma women enabled us to generally reflect on the differences and similarities that characterise these two groups, which are perceived as different entities by the majority of Roma and Spanish people. Although neither the framework of the study, nor its objective enabled us to develop broad theoretical assumptions about Romanian and Romanian Roma immigrants living in Spain, we have been able to highlight a number of characteristics shared by both Romanian Roma and other Romanian immigrants regarding their (lack of) participation in local civic and political life in Spain.

The third focus group we conducted included Romanian migrants along with members of local Spanish associations working in the field of migrant integration. We also interviewed members of local institutions whose work was related to the aims of this project (migration management and social participation). The questions posed to the focus group were related to this topic, and this enabled us to compare the different profiles that had been selected: the position of migrants confronted with adaptation to local reality; the difficulties in managing current realities that local institutions have to face; and the in-between role of local associations that interact with institutions and migrants. The six interviews we conducted provided us with an idea of how Romanian immigrants define themselves as a community, of the techniques they employ to integrate themselves, and how they understand citizenship participation, citizen's rights and political and local involvement.

As part of the analysis of the (lack of) participation of Romanian immigrants in local elections in Spain (expressed through the almost non-existence of votes), we conducted an interview with one of the political leaders of the only Romanian political party in Spain: The Iberian Party of Romanians (PIRUM). The other interview, a discussion conducted with the ideological leader of the party, revealed equally interesting facts about the motivation behind their project. Although the party was set up by a small section of the Romanian immigrant community, Romanian immigrants on the whole do not seem to interpret the party as their own.

Interviews were conducted with:

- an association leader and a journalist from a local newspaper aimed at Romanian immigrants in Spain;
- a social worker at an association for refugees;
- the 'ideological leader' of PIRUM: a professor of medieval philosophy and ethics;
- a member of PIRUM who stood for election in Agramunt (Lleida);
- the leaders of SAOROMA, an association that works with Roma immigrants (group interview with 3 people);
- a Romanian PhD Student studying Romanian migration to Spain and poverty.

The focus groups:

1) 21 June 2011

- a Town hall employee responsible for developing and implementing social participation policies;
- a Town hall employee responsible for managing local migration policies;
- a member of a local association that focuses on immigrant integration and empowerment;
- a Romanian immigrant who participated in local elections as a member of
- a Spanish political party;
- a Romanian immigrant studying in Spain;
- and three Romanian immigrants working in Spain.

2) 22 October 2011:

- ten Romanian Roma immigrant women, aged between 25 and 35.

3) 23 October 2011:

- nine Romanian Roma immigrant women, aged between 18 and 25.

ANNEXE V: GREECE

The results from the focus groups and lunch debates

The first focus group was organised in July in order to discuss at depth the key research questions about the participation of the Bulgarian community and their representative associations in the social and political life of Greece, and to verify the findings of the desk and field research. The difficult history of integration and the tensions between migrants and nationals made the debate even more interesting. One of the participants had been a candidate in the European elections: he was the only non-Greek to run as a candidate for the Greek Socialist Party during the EU elections. However, less than ten people arrived to participate in the focus group, and this led the Greek partner to replace the focus group with face-to-face interviews.

In November, after the first draft of the report had been completed, ISI organised a second focus group with members of the Bulgarian community to present and discuss the content of the report. The opinions expressed during this focus group were taken into consideration in the final report, which was completed in December.

Additional face-to-face interviews were organised with members of the Bulgarian community in Greece, however, it should be noted that despite the efforts made to organise a lunch debate, it was not possible to do so as no Bulgarian immigrants were either interested or available to participate. Only two out of the 25 people invited to participate were actually willing to come to a lunch debate; unfortunately we were unable to find a day that was suitable for both of these people.

Methodology

From a methodological point of view, this report is primarily based on a review of the existing literature and available statistical data; it is also based to a great extent on field research findings. For the purposes of this research, we first identified the Bulgarian community's organisations in Greece, and the newspapers published in Athens that address Bulgarian immigrants. The field research began with interviews with the representatives of Bulgarian immigrants' organisations and the editors[196] of two newspapers aimed at Bulgarian immigrants in Greece.

Due to restrictions concerning the scope and resources available for this research, the field research sample only includes Bulgarian immigrants living in Athens, although this does not negate the representativeness of the sample and the validity of the results; approximately one third of the population of Bulgarian immigrants living in Greece resides in Athens.

Within the framework of the field research, over 50 personal interviews were held using a semi-structured questionnaire. Of these, 19 interviews were conducted with Bulgarian immigrants who have participated in various levels of the Greek education system and 32 with Bulgarian immigrants who have had no contact whatsoever with the Greek education system. The first group included both first and second generation Bulgarian immigrants to Greece. By first generation, we mean immigrants who came from Bulgaria to Greece in order to study or seek employment and who have subsequently remained permanently or for long periods of time in Greece; second generation immigrants refer to the children of immigrants who were born in Greece, as well as children who were not born in Greece but came to Greece at an early age to live with parents who had migrated and settled earlier in Greece. The sample of the second group (Bulgarian immigrants who had never participated in the Greek education system) mainly included women employed in domestic labour; they are one of the largest, if not the largest, group of Bulgarians living in Attica and in Greece

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[196] Efforts were made to secure interviews with representatives of the other two newspapers addressing Bulgarian immigrants living in Greece, but they did not respond to the invitation of the research team.

as a whole. Interviews with this group were not open (as was the case with representatives of organisations and immigrant newspapers), but were carried out using a semi-structured questionnaire, in order to facilitate the comparative analysis of responses. The sample also included interviews with immigrants working at recruitment agencies, as well as open interviews with Bulgarian immigrants who stood as candidates for Greek political parties during two elections in Greece: the 2009 European elections and the 2010 local government elections. We also spoke with employees of tourism agencies who organised bus trips between Athens and Sofia, as most Bulgarian immigrants travel to and from Bulgaria by bus. On 7 July 2011, a group discussion was held with a focus group of Bulgarian immigrants living in Greece, and representatives of an organisation of Bulgarian immigrants. The agenda of this discussion included issues concerning the position of Bulgarian immigrants in Greek society and the Greek labour market, as well as their participation in the democratic processes of the country.

Bulgarian immigrant organisations in Greece

- **Athens**

Greek—Bulgarian Association of Friendship and Mutual Aid (association)

President: Dilyana Bayraktarova

Bulgarska Obshnost (Bulgarian Community) (association)

President: Rosen Christov

Buditeli (Enlighteners) (association)

President: Galina Gradeva

Kiril I Metodii (Sunday school)

Director: Daniela Todorova

  (Greek—Bulgarian Cultural Association) (civil, non-profit company)

President: Nina Yaneva

Paisii Chilendarski (Sunday school)

Director: Nina Yaneva

Paisii Chilendarski (Greek—Bulgarian Cultural Association) (association)

President: Blagorodna Filevska

Paisii Chilendarski (Sunday school)

Director: Blagorodna Filevska

Greek-Bulgarian Cultural Association (civil, non-profit company)

President: Lioubomir Bourov

Bulgaria Dnes – (*Bulgaria Today)* (weekly newspaper)

Editor: Nina Kadiiska

Bulgarski Glas – *(Bulgarian Voice)* (fortnightly newspaper)

Editor: Dilyana Bayraktarova

Kontakti – (Contacts) (fortnightly newspaper)

Editor: Valeria Spirova

Bulgarski Novini (Bulgarian News) (fortnightly newspaper) (published and printed in Bulgaria and distributed in Greece)

Editor: Boyka Atanasova

Bulgarite v Gartsia – *Bulgarians in Greece* www.abritus.info – (informative website)

Editor: Victor Petrov

- **Patras**

Chan Asparouch – (Association of Bulgarians of the Peloponnese) (has been inactive for some time)

President: Yordan Dobrev

- **Thessaloniki**

Zograf Monastery Religious Sunday School – Sunday school operating under the auspices of the Bulgarian monastery *Sveti Velikomachenik Georgi Zograf* on Mount Athos (see www.bnuzograf-gr.com)

Director: Dilyana Frangopoulou

Kiril I Metodii – (Association of Greek—Bulgarian Friendship) (association)

Head: Vassilios Frangopoulos