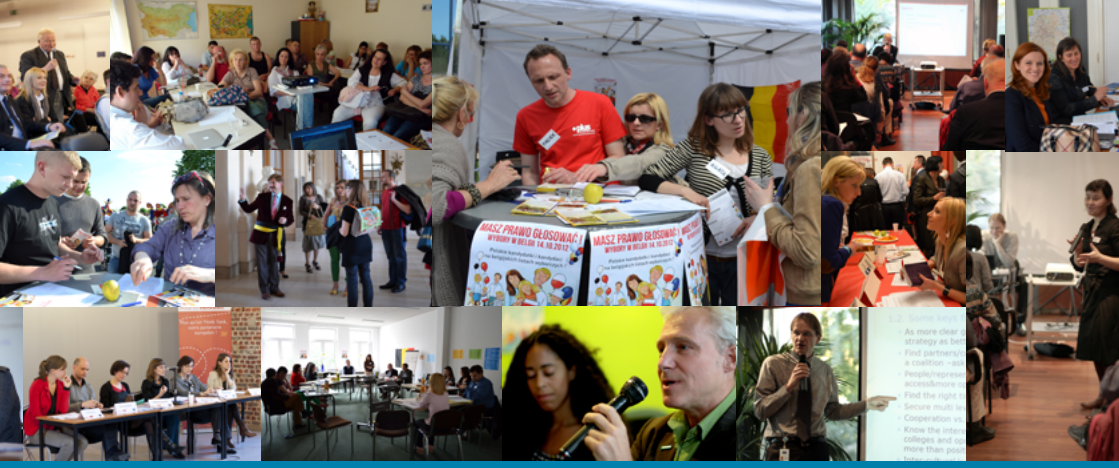

POLITICAL & SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT COMMUNITIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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

Short version

Solidarité
Think Tank européen
Pour la Solidarité

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Short version

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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 synthetic 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

On 19 April 2007, the European Council adopted Decision No 252/2007. This established the specific programme 'Fundamental Rights and Citizenship' as part of the general programme 'Fundamental Rights and Justice'. The aim was to contribute towards the strengthening of freedom, security and justice between 2007 and 2013.

The three key objectives – freedom, security and justice – were to be developed in parallel with the same degree of intensity. This was to enable the development of a comprehensive approach based on the principles of democracy, respect for fundamental rights, freedom and the rule of law.

In order to do so, the European Commission published the call for proposals JUST/2010/FRaC/AG, which aimed to support organisations such as non-profit organisations, voluntary associations, foundations, NGOs and similar bodies in pursuing the general European interest of promoting EU citizenship and strengthening freedom, security and justice.

The European project 'Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for All' was developed in this context, and we wish to express our gratitude for the cooperation of our highly committed partners. The project aims to examine the way in which EU citizens residing in EU member states 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[1], 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, the following study was undertaken; this report is a summary of the wider research available on the Being Citizen web portal (www.beingcitizen.eu).

The comparative study set out in the following is based on empirical data and focuses on the participation of European Union citizens residing in a member state other than their own in municipal and European parliamentary elections. It also concentrates on the participation of representative associations of non-national EU citizens, in particular women's associations, in the democratic life of their host country and of the EU as a whole.

This 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.

1 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.

In regards to the 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 towards non-national EU citizens; 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 research provided the opportunity to examine the lives of five different EU immigrant communities living on the territory of another EU country, and how these people enjoy their civil rights as defined in EU legislation. This was done by bringing together the national studies in order to present a wider view on EU citizenship.

I. BEING CITIZENS

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] Originally, the only people taken into consideration by treaties were workers, as EU legislation guaranteed the free movement of economically active persons, but not necessarily of other people. However, 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 the legislation was designed essentially for workers, the Treaty of Maastricht provided all Europeans with European citizenship. 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 the concept of European citizenship was more symbolic than substantial,[4] but over the years its role has been further developed through judgements made by the European Court of Justice (ECJ).[5]

Furthermore, the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty has further 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

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 Opinion AG Colomer, Case C-228/07, Petersen, [2008] nyr, paragraph 26.

5 In particular, the ECJ has stated that EU citizenship is 'destined to be the fundamental status of Member States' nationals, enabling those who find themselves in the same situation to enjoy within the scope of the Treaty the same treatment in law irrespective of their nationality' (Court of Justice of the European Union, Case C-184/99 Grzelczyk [2001] ECR I-6193, paragraph 31). Accordingly, EU citizenship has enhanced individual rights significantly. In particular, the ECJ has ruled that citizens are entitled to reside in another member state purely because they are citizens of the EU, thus recognising EU citizenship as a source of free movement rights (Cases C-200/02, Zhu and Chen [2004] ECR I-9925, paragraph 26).

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'.

II. EU LEGAL FRAMEWORK

EU Citizenship is the essential link all Europeans have with the European Union. According to the ECJ, European citizenship can be considered the fundamental status of member states' 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[6]. Consequently, EU citizenship has enhanced individual rights significantly. At the same time, this increases people's sense of identification with the EU, helps foster European public opinion and a European political consciousness, as well as the sense of a European identity.[7]

As stated above, an EU citizen is any 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 rights are firmly anchored in primary EU law and have been substantially further developed in secondary law. In particular, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights list (non-exhaustively) a number of rights that are linked to this status:

6 European commission, EU Citizenship report 2010, *Rapport 2010 sur la citoyenneté de l'Union,* COM 2010 603 final, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0603:fr:HTML

7 See http://circa.europa.eu/irc/opoce/fact_sheets/info/data/citizen/citizens/article_7174_en.htm

- The right to move and reside freely within the EU[8]
- The right to vote for and stand as a candidate in European parliamentary and municipal elections[9]
- The right to diplomatic and consular protection[10]
- The right to petition the European Parliament[11]
- The right to complain to the European Ombudsman[12]
- The right to freedom from discrimination based on nationality[13]
- 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 documents under certain conditions
- The right to equal access to the EU civil service
- The right to a good administration
- The right to citizens' initiatives whereby 1 million citizens from at least one quarter of the EU's member states can call on the European Commission to bring forward proposals for legal reform within the framework of the Commission's powers.[14]

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8 Article 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 are specified in Directive 2004/38/EC.

9 Articles 20, letter b) and 22 TFEU;

10 Articles 20, letter c) and 24 TFEU: This is the right to be protected by the diplomatic and consular authorities of any other EU country. In particular, "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".

11 Articles 20, letter d) and 24 TFEU: "Any citizen of the Union and any natural or legal person residing or having its registered office in a Member State has the right to petition the European Parliament".

12 Articles 20, letter d) and 24 TFEU.

13 Art 18 TFEU.

14 Article 11, Paragraph 4 of the Treaty on European Union: The Lisbon Treaty introduced a new form of public participation of citizens in European Union policy, the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). As required by the Treaty, on a proposal from the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a regulation that defines the rules and procedure governing this new instrument (EU Regulation No. 211/2011) of the European Parliament and of the Council on the citizens' initiative. The organisers of a citizens' initiative, a citizens' committee composed of at least 7 EU citizens who are resident in at least 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

From a legal standpoint, citizenship denotes a link between an individual and a community (usually a state) and a status to which important rights are linked. As underlined by Virginia Leary, citizenship connotes "a bundle of rights – primarily, political participation in the life of a community, the right to vote, and the right to receive certain protection from the community – as well as obligations".[15] In this sense, political participation can be defined as the actions of individual citizens aimed at influencing the configuration of society.[16] The basis of democratic societies is determined by the possibility 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.

competent authorities in the relevant member states. The Commission has 3 months to examine the initiative and decide how to act on it.

15 Virginia Leary, '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.

16 González et a (2007). *Participació 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. Col·lecció Estudis, 22, Barcelona.

III. 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. People who migrate to another territory are called immigrants, while at the departure point they are known as emigrants. This means that roughly one in every thirty-five persons in the world is a migrant.

At EU level, migration has an interregional and internal dimension; it 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.[17] Generally speaking, this freedom enables citizens of one member state to travel to, reside in, and to find employment in another EU member state both permanently and 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. This right has been specified in Directive 2004/38/EC, which extended the right to move and reside within the EU to all members of a person's family, including registered partners. In particular, this directive 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. The scope of the directive was wide as it extended the family reunification rights of EU citizens to their registered partners under certain conditions[18], and granted autonomous rights to family members in case

17 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.

18 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.

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 of residence on grounds of public policy, public security or public health.[19] The directive entered into force in April 2006 and replaced a set of directives and a regulation that had been adopted between 1964 and 1993.

As underlined by the EU Commissioner for Justice, Viviane Reading, on the occasion of 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." 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, interregional migration flows are influenced by labour market conditions and geographical proximity. In several cases, including some of those

19 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.

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; in certain cases these people could even be considered refugees. This left numerous migrants with 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.

The rights connected to EU citizenship are based on a relationship between EU citizens and the EU itself; they are aimed at people who decide to enjoy their EU status and move to or reside in another member state and provide such people with the same status as EU citizens born in that country.

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. The many obstacles standing in the way of EU citizens' enjoyment of their rights is demonstrable from the large number of complaints and enquiries the Commission receives annually as well as recent Eurobarometer surveys.

IV. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

European Union citizens often move to and settle in other EU member states; consequently, the populations of EU countries are becoming increasingly heterogeneous. These changes have 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.

EU citizens who live in a member state other than their own now have the right to vote and stand as candidates in European parliamentary elections.[20] Nevertheless, the participation of EU migrants in the democratic life of their countries of residence remains very low. 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 less than one third, consider themselves 'well' or 'very well' informed about their rights as EU citizens.[21] Despite the fact that the matter was regulated 20 years ago, EU migrants 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

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

21 Flash Eurobarometer 294 'EU Citizenship', March 2010.

states do not adequately inform EU citizens from other member states about their right to participate in elections.

As stated above, 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 low. From 1979, when the first direct European elections were conducted, participation has steadily decreased and the average turnout for the last election in June 2009 was just 43%. As for local elections, in France in 2001, for example, despite a potential of around 1.2 million European citizens that could have taken part in the elections, only 166,122 were registered in the electoral system[22]. 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 including employment, education, social and even fiscal issues. Consequently, the participation of these EU citizens is important; however, their low rates of participation are partly due to a lack of information and incentives.

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

22 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

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.

PART 2
THE COMPARATIVE STUDY

PART 2: THE COMPARATIVE STUDY

Presentation of the communities of EU citizens selected in each partner country

The project 'Access to Rights & Civil Dialogue for ALL' seeks to foster the participation of EU migrants in the democratic and civil life of their host country. Consequently, the project conducted a comparative study of national studies that had been undertaken in the member states involved in the project. Each national study focused on a specific migrant community such as the 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. THE POLISH COMMUNITY IN BELGIUM

(Céline Brandeleer and Elzbieta Kuzma)

PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY ON THE POLISH COMMUNITY IN BELGIUM

› *History*

Poland has a long history of migration to Belgium. There has been a significant number of Polish migrants in the country since 1830. After the fall of the Berlin wall and the opening of the iron curtain, going west became far easier and this led to a new important wave of migration concentrated on Brussels. The progressive removal of all legal and administrative barriers to migration – as part of the processes associated with European integration –strengthened this migration. The subject of this analysis is this latest wave of migration, which mainly consisted of economic migrants who moved to Belgium after 1990. In 1991, Polish people were able to stay for 3 months as tourists in Belgium; they were not permitted to work during this time. However, the majority of Polish people who came to Belgium were more motivated by work than tourism. Consequently, illegal work became common among the growing Polish community and many of these people stayed much longer than was 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 the migrants usually worked for a few months on tourist visas. 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 was no longer 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.

› *The importance of the migrant community*

The importance of the community has varied greatly over time. 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.[23] 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. 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 migrants at 12%, and ahead of Moroccans in fourth place at 8%).[24]

Another important characteristic of the Polish community living in Belgium is its proportion of women. The predominance of women 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 find employment easily, even more so than men, and the domestic jobs they take on are often more stable than those in the construction sector.[25] Nevertheless, the

23 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.

24 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.

25 KUŹMA Elżbieta, 'La communauté transnationale polonaise', in *Migrants de l'Est*, Agenda interculturel, no. 280, Brussels, February 2010.

proportion of women migrants compared to men seems to be evening up over time.

› *The reasons behind migration, and migration patterns*

The main motivation behind Polish migration to Western Europe is economic; it is 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. Polish employment in Belgium is generally concentrated around certain fields such as the construction sector, the domestic sector, health care, and seasonal work in agriculture. These migrants usually send a substantial part of their income to their families in Poland.[26]

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. 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 at a time after which they were replaced by a relative or friend. These repeated, short stays abroad led to the formation of a quasi-community in their host country; at the same time, it still enables Polish migrants to combine a job in Belgium with their family life in Poland.[27] 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.

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26 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.

27 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.

In conclusion, geopolitical events and the progressive enlargement of the European Union played a decisive role in the pattern of migration, which is now mainly economic. 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, these formal changes still need to be translated into attitudes and the current period is an important time for the Polish community, which is now able to come out of the shadows of illegality and play a more important role in Belgian daily life.

› *The organisation of the Polish community in Belgium*

For many years, Polish people stayed illegally in Belgium; 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, their own Polish around shops and haidressers, the daily life of Polish migrants became rather comfortable, especially when compared to that of other undocumented migrants. Their network also helped newcomers travel to Belgium, and enabled them to access 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, which may explain why most

Polish people in Belgium originate from the same region in Poland: Podlasie (in North-East Poland). This network enabled migrants to feel 'at home' and to live with Polish relatives or friends, without the need to integrate into Belgian society. 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.

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 advertisements for items such as housing, job opportunities, Polish products and bus transport to Poland.

› *The Polish community's relationship with Belgian nationals and other communities*

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. Polish migrants' long history of illegality heavily limited their contact to Belgian society as a whole. This was 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.[28] Although the end of their illegal status changed the context of these relationships, the importance of the

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

community and its services can still act as a limiting factor regarding contact with Belgians.

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.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: POLISH CITIZENS IN LOCAL AND EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

› *Formal participation: election turnout*

In both European and local elections in Belgium the overall turnout of Polish migrants is low. In 2006, only 6.1% of the potential Polish voters voted in the local elections. By 2012, this number had decreased to 4.8%, but the number of Polish voters doubled during this period 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 women are more active in Belgian society than men. In addition, a small number of Polish candidates stood for election in the local elections in Brussels in 2012: all six of the candidates were female.

Importantly, these official statistics only take into account Polish people who are locally registered, hence they hide the huge part of the community that is not registered. At the European elections on 7 June 2009, 1,357 Polish people registered to vote (out of a potential number of 28,367).[29] This means than less

29 Direction des Election du SPF Intérieur – Statistiques officielles extraites du Registre national 11 April 2009, Nombre de citoyens européens inscrits en qualité d'électeurs au 1er avril : statistiques par nationalité. Available at: http://elections.fgov.be/index.

than 5% of potential voters were registered to vote in these elections. No further specific data were available; nevertheless, it is still clear that only a tiny proportion of Polish people living in Belgium actually vote.

Furthermore, Polish people are not very active in Belgian civil society either. Only a minority of Polish people (14% in Flanders)[30] plays an active role in Belgian associations. These associations tend to be trade unions, as some unions have even targeted Polish workers through a number of initiatives. This could indicate that economic motivation is still very important for Polish people living in Belgium.

› *Reasons for the low levels of participation*

The unemployment rate is very low among the Polish community in Belgium; Polish people usually work a lot and consequently seem to have little time to think about politics. Migration is seen as a temporary tool to earn money. Integration – hence participation – is not a priority. 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 living in the kingdom for many years.[31] 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 do so. Language is again

php?id=1182&no_cache=1&print=1.

30 Vancluysen K.,Hennau S., Ackaert J. (prom.) «Vanuit Pools perspectief. Een bevraging van de Poolse gemeenschap in Antwerpen», Steunpunt Gelijkekansenbeleid, Consortium Universiteit Antwerpen en Universiteit Hasselt, 2011.

31 Kuźma Elżbieta, 'La communauté transnationale polonaise', in *Migrants de l'Est*, Agenda interculturel, no. 280, Brussels, February 2010.

to blame here, but the fact that many people prefer to vote for national lists is also important.

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.[32]

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.[33] The average level of participation by 'new' member states is significantly lower. This phenomenon can partly be explained by a lack of participatory traditions due to the former communist regimes in these countries, but also by a general lack of trust in politics.

32 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.

33 See: 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.

› *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 at European elections is quite low in Poland: national turnout at the election in 2009 was 24.52%, while the EU average is around 43%. Hence it should not come as a surprise that Polish migrants in Belgium do not seem to have an urgent wish to vote. At the same time, Poland's modern dynamical civil society is actually quite new: over 90% of Polish NGOs have been established since 1989.[34] It seems that Poland suffers from a lack of a democratic tradition due to its historical context.[35] In other words; Polish people are not yet used to participating in elections.

34 ANNA GĄSIOR-NIEMIEC and PIOTR GLIŃSKI *Europeanization of civil society in Poland* Rev. soc. polit., god. 14, br. 1, str 29–47, Zagreb 2007.

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

II. THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNITY IN FRANCE

(Arnaud Breuil)

PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY ON THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNITY IN FRANCE

› *History and the importance of the migrant community*

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: in the 1920s and the 1960s. These periods can be contrasted with the significant declines in immigration during the 1930s and 1940s.

- **1916**: the Portuguese government sends an expeditionary force to France and 20,000 workers are hired as part of a labour agreement. At the end of the war, a number of these people do not return to Portugal, contrary to the stipulated agreement. Some relatives of the people who stay move to France.
- **1921**: there are 10,000 Portuguese workers in France.
- **1926**: a military coup in Portugal brings a large number of Portuguese political exiles to France.
- **1931**: there are now 50,000 Portuguese workers in France working most extensively in chemicals, metallurgy and forestry. These workers are essentially permanent workers, more rarely seasonal. They are particularly numerous in the southern regions, the Paris region and the Nord-Pas de Calais[36]. The

36 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.

vast majority are men, although a number of women move to France soon afterwards and children are born.

- **1931 crisis**: Portuguese arrivals fall dramatically but do not completely stop despite pressure from both governments. The first major phase of naturalisation for Portuguese people occurs.
- **World War 2**: illegal channels of migration rapidly reappear.
- **1947**: Portuguese migration to France decreases, while the number of naturalisations increases.
- **1968**: there are 500,000 Portuguese people in France.
- **1969—1970**: this period is characterised by huge numbers of arrivals, with 80,000 workers arriving in both 1969 and 1970. When the workers' families are taken into account the total number of arrivals for both years reaches 120,000.
- **1974**: the Portuguese become the largest group of immigrants in France. Within a few decades the number of Portuguese people in France has risen from 50,000 to over 700,000[37].

› *How did Portuguese migrants become part of French society?*[38]

Until the mid-1960s, administrators, elected officials and French society as a whole almost 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,

37 Ibid.

38 This section is based on Marie-Christine Volovitch-Tavarès, op. cit.

trades unions, associations and humanitarian activists sought to provide solutions to the problems faced by these new immigrants. For instance, in 1964 the CGT (*Confédération Générale du Travail*), a trades union, became the first to address the Portuguese workers in their own language (*O Trabalhador*). Both FO (*Force Ouvrière*) and 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 oriented towards the Portuguese. They also took on union leaders from the new wave of immigration.

› *The organisation of the Portuguese community in France*

By the mid-1960s, a number of Portuguese associations had emerged. They were very few in number because at that time the restrictions put in place by the 1939 act on the right of association for foreigners were still in force. Moreover, few of these organisations were legally registered, and some only had a *de facto* existence. They were often related to political groups (the PDO is the best example) or to Catholic groups. The latter were deeply divided between supporters of the regime through the Mission of Portugal and Portuguese banks operating in France; and opposition groups, with the most important cluster associated with *Presença Portuguesa*. Alongside these organisations, the first sport clubs (football clubs) and 'friendly bars' began to spring up, often informally. There were also a number of cultural entities, usually based around theatre, both religious and militant.

By 1971 there were about twenty associations. However, their numbers grew steadily as many Portuguese immigrants realised that they would not be returning to Portugal in the near future, and that their children would be growing up in France, at least for the first few years of their lives. These associations were similar to the Portuguese associations that we know today: friendly, family-based organisations that provide space throughout the holidays to 'find the village' and transmit their culture and traditions. The adult members of these associations were still quite attached to their traditions, hence the importance of folk groups. These organisations also regularly provided Portuguese language courses for young people. Thus by 1972 there were already about fifty Portuguese associations; on the eve of the fall of the dictatorship on April 25 1974, there were about eighty. The disappearance of the authoritarian regime in Portugal and the expansion of liberties had a strong impact on the growth of Portuguese associations in France. The disappearance of the last constraints on foreign associations in France in the early 1980s further strengthened this phenomenon.

Today, there are hundreds of Portuguese associations in France, but they are generally very small and the vast majority only have a very small number of members. Portuguese associations are generally restricted to a few small circles of friends, or people with family links or a common interest that provides the 'substance' to a specific activity under the heading of a Portuguese association. It is very difficult to group these associations or find unity among them because of their size, isolation, their means and their specificity.

Contrary to popular belief, Portuguese people living abroad generally have little ability to come together outside of exceptional circumstances, such as sporting events of great magnitude in which Portugal participates.

However, it should be noted that a small number of Portuguese associations established in France, as well as in various other countries, do put a lot of energy into preserving a broad vivid image of Portuguese culture and traditions. One of the best examples of such multi-structured Portuguese associations is the Cultural and Recreational Association of Portuguese people in Fontenay-sous-bois (ARCPF). There is also an umbrella group of Portuguese associations: the Portuguese Federation of France (FAPF); *Cap Magellan*, a Portuguese association oriented to dynamic young Luso-descendants, or Are (Associação de Reencontro dos Emigrantes) which among other things is a defence-oriented association of Portuguese emigrants.

› *The Portuguese community's relationship with French nationals and other communities*

There is currently no significant sign of commitment on the part of the Portuguese community to the struggle against racism and discrimination. There appears to be a number of reasons for this. Despite the difficult living conditions the people faced when they arrived in France such as the existence of slums, most migration took place during the 1960s, a time of strong economic growth. Economic integration in sectors where the Portuguese workforce were important, such as the building sector in particular and industry, did not create any major problems; on the contrary, it resulted in rapid economic and social integration.

On such issues, the answers and the views of Portuguese focus group participants were quite homogenous: a willingness to integrate, work and 'discretion' were the most striking characteristics of Portuguese migrants. The conclusion we drew was that the commitment to create or participate in associations is viewed more of an opportunity to remain in contact with Portuguese culture and shared origins than a 'political' statement of belonging.

To the extent that Portuguese associations are mainly present in cultural, sporting or festive events, they rarely assert broader demands on society. In fact, they generally dissociate themselves from movements or associations of more recent migrants for which questions of integration and the fight against discrimination are highly relevant.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: PORTUGUESE CITIZENS IN LOCAL AND EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

In France, the Portuguese migrant community, which is numerically the largest migrant community in the country, remains proportionately the least likely to participate in municipal and European elections.

Clearly, political participation (defined as voting or standing as a candidate in elections) is only one element of citizenship and the 'invisibility' of the Portuguese community is at least partly offset by other forms of participation, often based around associations.

However, the authors of a study conducted in the late 1980s vividly sum up the situation of Portuguese residents by referring to the community in France as 'resident non-citizens', and as 'missing citizens' in Portugal.[39] Cordeiro was the first to view the issue of the "non-participation of the Portuguese living abroad as a missed electoral act"[40] and criticised the "lack of surveys on the political

39 CARREIRA Teresa Pires, TOME Maria-Alice, Portugais et Luso-Français. Tome I: *Double culture et identite Paris*, CIEMI / Collection Migrations et Changements, 1994, p. 13.

40 CORDEIRO Albano, 'Les Portugais residents à l'étranger. Pourquoi ne votent-ils pas ?', Latitudes, n°10, December 2000, p. 14. CORDEIRO Albano, 'Portugueses de França e Eleiçoes Autarquicas Francesas', *Latitudes*, n°11, May 2001, p. 66. CORDEIRO Albano, 'Comment interpreter la faible participation civique des Portugais en France ? Exception ou conformisme ambiant ?', February 2004, pp. 55—68. CORDEIRO Albano, 'Le non-exercice des droits politiques par les Portugais de France', *Hommes & Migration*, n°1256, July-August 2005, pp. 39—51.

behaviour of Portuguese residents".[41] 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".[42] Similarly, Strudel, using data from Portuguese voter registration 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".[43]

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 included voting in Portuguese presidential elections.

Furthermore, the low participation of Portuguese citizens in elections could also be due to the devaluation of politics and the dispersion of the Portuguese population. Indeed, Cordeiro advances two other arguments to explain the low politicisation of the Portuguese: first, politics is not seen as something essential in their lives; we can assume that the experience of dictatorship caused a trauma in the Portuguese collective memory[44], which is expressed by a disregard for politics. "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

41 CORDEIRO Albano, op.cit., December 2000, p.14.

42 Ibid. p.12

43 STRUDEL Sylvie, 'La participation des Portugais aux elections europeennes et municipales en France', Cahiers de l'Urmis: 'Portugais de France ; immigres et citoyens d'Europe' n°9, February 2004, p.76.

44 BOIS Paul, *Paysans de l'Ouest*, Paris, Flammarion, 1971.

information or exchanges that help form opinions".[45] 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 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.

Despite their low rate of participation in local elections, the large number of Portuguese citizens in France has led a number of Portuguese people to stand

45 ANTUNES DA CUNHA Manuel, 'Pour une etude de la reception de RTP Internacional par les Portugais de France', Cahiers de l'Urmis: 'Portugais de France; immigres et citoyens d'Europe', n°9, February 2004, pp.43 — 54.

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, and numerous Portuguese people stand for election and are elected despite the low levels of Portuguese participation in local elections. Moreover, regardless of their political passivity, it would be wrong to claim that Portuguese people are apolitical: passivity can also be a form of resistance. Furthermore, organisations such as Civica provide information to associations, families and government organisations in France and Portugal and as such play a very important role in the civil participation of Portuguese and other non-French European citizens living in France.

III. THE ROMANIAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

(Bruno Amoroso, Arianna Cascelli, Pierluca Ghibelli, and Chiara Maule)

PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY ON THE ROMANIAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

› *History and the importance of the migrant 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. During the 1990s 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 Block 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.[46] In the late 2000s, Albanians and Romanians became the most numerous immigrant group.

In this framework, immigration from Romania has always been a major issue, both before and after the European enlargement of 2007, when Romania and Bulgaria became EU member States. 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)[47]. According to the yearly statistical report on immigration issued by Caritas, on 31 December

46 Rusconi S., "Italy's Migration Experiences", Network Migration in Europe, 2010 (Online at: http://migrationeducation.de/38.1.html?&rid=178&cHash=b18ff335ad74f6e52754cfcb43318922; accessed: 7-12-2012)

47 OECD, 2007.

2009 there were 887,763 Romanians residing in Italy, this represents 21% of the total foreign population.[48]

Immigration from Romania was first mostly due to personal safety: it has been estimated that around 70,000 Romanians left the country to flee 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.[49] This led to massive departures to Spain and Italy mostly after 2003, and these two countries have now become the largest recipients of temporary migrants from Romania.

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 an opportunity to legalise their residency. Successful 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

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

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

as agricultural areas with a strong demand for seasonal workers.[50] 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.[51] 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 for 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 to remain in Italy.[52]

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 emphasise crimes committed by immigrants. 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 these groups are the main cause of crime and insecurity. In general terms, most Italians consider that 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.[53]

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50 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.

51 Bertazzon L. (2007), "Gli Immigrati Rumeni In Italia e In Veneto", Veneto Lavoro.

52 Pehoiu G., Costache A., "The Dynamics of Population Emigration from Romania - Contemporary and Future Trends", World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology, n° 42, 2010. Torre A.R., (2008), Romania, in A.A. VV., "Migrazione come questione sociale. Mutamento sociale, politiche e rappresentazioni in Ecuador, Romania e Ucraina", CeSPI Working Paper n. 57/2009.

53 Popescu T., (2008), "Immigration discourses: the case of romanian immigrants in Italie", University of Alba Iulia, Romania.

In the case of Romanian immigrants, this perception is 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. 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.[54]

› *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. 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.[55]

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

54 Human Rights Watch, (2011), "Rapport 2011" di Human Rights Watch (HRW).

55 ISTAT, (2011), "1° Gennaio 2011, La Popolazione Straniera Residente In Italia", Roma.

in Italy, the cultural and professional training of young people, and the creation of partnerships between Italy and Romania.

› *The Romanian community's relationship 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 continual 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, are and probably will continue to be the most discussed community, and are frequently accused of abducting children, despite the fact that their alleged involvement in such crimes has never been proven.[56]

According to data issued by the National Observatory on Racism (UNAR), discrimination in work environments (but not exclusively) particular 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'.[57]

The Romanian community is wide and diverse and it is difficult to single out clear patterns concerning its relationship with Italian nationals. In general, Romanians in Italy view themselves as temporary migrants and do not seek to develop strong links with the country in which they live.

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

57 *Idem.*

Moreover, Romanian migrants maintain stronger links with their country of origin than with their country of residency. They tend to resistance the associative model in general, and rarely place their trust in civil society organisations unless there are obvious advantages in doing so. Relations with Italian nationals or other communities are then often superficial.

With reference to the relations established with the country of destination, the prejudice Romanians face in Italian society often leads to a growing devotion to their culture of origin. Romanians tend to adopt typical immigrant community behavioural patterns, and access to the EU has not changed this. This is mostly due to a disillusionment with the benefits of EU accession and the accession process in general. Many Romanians considered themselves to be Europeans years before Romanian accession (as the so-called Bloody Revolution in Bucharest in 1989 demonstrated). As such the long negotiations associated with these processes had a negative impact on the will of Romanians to participate in the EU, even if there is little doubt that accession made life much easier for Romanians seeking to reside in Italy. However, almost every family in Romania has been affected by migration, and Romanians generally still feel more like 'immigrants' than European citizens.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: ROMANIAN CITIZENS IN LOCAL AND EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

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 in 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 the local council in the city in which they live. 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 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 part 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.[58]

The trend in the participation of Romanian migrants does not seem to have changed much for 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, 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.

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 has come as a surprise considering the increased 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, the scarce information about their rights to vote has led Romanians not to vote because of a lack of information.

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

IV. THE ROMANIAN COMMUNITY IN SPAIN

(David Dueñas, Juan Pedregosa and Emese Molnár)

PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY ON THE ROMANIAN COMMUNITY IN SPAIN

› *History and importance of the migrant community*

Romania has been a country of migration since the end of the 19th century. During the communist regime freedom of movement was severely restricted. After the fall of the regime, passport requirements were liberalised, although the authorities did maintain restrictive boarder regulations during the 1990s (for example taxes were imposed when crossing the border).

Romanian migration was characterised by a number of different phases before the country's accession to the EU 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 went to 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.

The evolution of Romanian migration to Spain shows a continuous growth until 2006 (211.325 Romanian migrants), and a great explosion after that, due to Schengen arrangements, reaching the number of 751.668 migrants in 2009.[59]

There are a number of basic factors that explain the 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 is recent and marked by the attitude of the state and society regarding migrants. Finally, international factors also play a role, the most important of which are the establishment of the Schengen Area and the regulations concerning the free movement of people.

› *The organisation of the Romanian community in Spain*

Networks of immigrants played an extremely important role in the evolution of Romanian immigration to South West European countries, and Spain is no exception. 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. Emigration from Romania "escalated especially when the mining industry was

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

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".[60] According to Arango, "social networks help to strengthen already existing concentrations and are a key element in the composition and channelling of flows". [61] 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. The migrants' social profile also follows network logic: whereas the first arrivals were able to accumulate a relatively greater social or financial capital, subsequent migrants came from all of the group's sub-layers.

› *The role of networks in migration*

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.

› *Women and citizenship*

Furthermore, our research has shown that the Spanish labour market provides different job opportunities to Romanian men and women, which generally reflects

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

61 Arango 2006 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

a gendered division of labour. For example, women mostly work in the domestic sector. This is further strengthen by local women in Spain who transfer the inequalities they previously faced to migrant women[62]. 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, it would be interesting to examine how this affects 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[63] 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 the free choice of an individual woman. Presumed individual migration is a form of migration understood as a choice, but

62 Parella, Sonia. *Mujer inmigrante y trabajadora: la triple discriminación. Barcelona*: Anthropos, 2003.

63 Suarez, Liliana and Crespo, *Paloma. Families in motion. The case of romanian women in Spain*. Migraciones, num. 21 – 2007 (p. 235-257).

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.

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.

› *The Romanian community's relationship 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. Instead, relationships 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.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: ROMANIAN CITIZENS IN LOCAL AND EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

We understand political participation as actions that individual citizens develop in order to influence the configuration of collective life.[64] This includes participation in elections, in participatory democratic processes or government policy, and in collectives aimed at exerting public influence.

The most remarkable fact related to Romanian migrants, which relates to the first two forms of political participation and to our analysis, is their lack of participation and interest in local political life, as demonstrated by their low level of electoral participation. There are three hypotheses that might explain this phenomenon: first, it is a matter of time. Romanian migration is quite recent, and there may have 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.[65] 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. 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

64 González et al. *Participapció 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. Col·lecció Estudis, 22, Barcelona: 2007.

65 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.

to management, and an election can be viewed as an evaluation of the work politicians have carried out to date. As a result, migrant electors only vote in cases where they wish to pass judgement on local politics. However, there are other elements that also appear to explain Romanian citizens' lack of political participation: the perception of local authorities as institutions that should be shunned in order to "avoid causing problems"; the lack of successful policies developed by institutions and technicians to reduce the stereotypes surrounding migration, and welfare chauvinism; their relation to local languages; their lack of a sense of membership of their own community, which derives from the importance given to the private sphere during communism[66] ; and their structural dependence on support networks, a fact that distances them from local institutions and citizens, while bringing them closer to other Romanian nationals.

› *Does social integration mean political integration?*

Migrants and host countries have different understandings of the concept of 'integration'. The perspective of the host country in this case assumes that integration refers to the process of becoming a 'good Catalan or Spaniard', finding employment, acquiring local habits and languages, and participating in local events. In contrast, the migrant's perspective views integration as oriented towards achieving higher levels of economical welfare, finding employment, housing, social aspects and learning the (economically useful parts of the) local language.

In this context, locals demand policies aimed at increasing levels of 'integration', whereas newly arrived immigrants are not worried by this issue, as political integration is usually linked to a collective need to face some form of collective

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

menace that either has not yet occurred or has not been identified by local policy. Consequently, a lack of interest in local policy should neither be confused with a lack of interest in political participation nor with a general lack of interest in politics.

On the other hand, European political integration can be linked to the creation of a sense of belonging to Europe. Clearly, this has not yet happened or, at least, has not yet been internalised by Romanian migrants, despite the contrast with Northern Europe. Consequently, a sense of belonging to Europe seems to be more linked to national conditions than to individual gains from European migratory laws.

› *The role of associations*

Associations represent a secondary stage of political participation in which individuals become involved in a collective project to satisfy their demands or interests. These can be related to very different topics and gaining political influence is just one possible reason for doing so.

Regarding the internal operations of associations, we found some differences between the institutional expectations and the expectations of the associations' managers or leaders. Institutional expectations tended to favour the local integration of migrants, the development of skills and spaces for integration and helping establish 'bridges' between migrants and local authorities or citizens. In contrast, the expectations of associations' managers tended to be generally oriented towards improving the local citizens' perceptions of migrants, breaking myths or stereotypes, and developing cultural maintenance practices and 'bonding' activities between migrants and the local population.

› *The role of political parties: migrant parties or parties with migrants?*

Finally, integration into political parties is a form of political participation that can be considered as halfway between individual participation and collective configurations of migrants' reality. In Spain there are examples of both of these realities: a total of 586 non-Spanish nationals stood for the Socialist Party and around 500 for the Popular Party in the last local elections, whereas the PIRUM (the Iberian Political Party of Romanians) stood for election for the first time.

Beyond an analysis of PIRUM's experience, it would be interesting to open a debate surrounding the possible future political participation of migrants in their host countries: will they follow the left-right political pattern of their host countries? Will they follow the patterns of nationalism that exist in some parts of their host countries? Or will they follow the direction provided by PIRUM, and create parties based around their own identities?

We assume that future patterns of electoral participation are mostly likely to consist of a mixture of all of these possibilities. However, it is certainly interesting that the case of PIRUM adds a further possible means of political participation to migrants alongside the more traditional forms of participation.

V. THE BULGARIAN COMMUNITY IN GREECE

(Dimitris Micharikopoulos and Maya Stoyanova)

PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY ON THE BULGARIAN COMMUNITY IN GREECE

› *History and the importance of the migrant community*

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[67], when under specific conditions Greece legalised the status of individuals who had otherwise been illegally residing in the country.[68] A second major wave of Bulgarian immigration was recorded around 2001[69] ; the third and final wave was recorded between 2007 and 2009[70], when Bulgaria became a member of the European Union.

Greece was relatively easy to access and a 'cheaper' destination for Bulgarian immigrants than other countries; and as such the country welcomed 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.

67 The first institutional endeavour to legalise illegal immigrants in Greece took place during this period.

68 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 tourist packages. However, these buses would return half-empty, as the 'tourists' remained in Greece. Thus, there were already 7,000 Bulgarians in Greece by 1993, with a steady trend of a continued influx.

69 This constituted the second legalisation of illegal immigrants in Greece.

70 On 1 January 2007, Bulgaria became a full member of the EU; however, exceptions were in place until 1 January 2009 concerning the free movement of persons from the new EU members, *i.e.* Bulgaria and Romania, to a number of countries, including Greece.

At present, unofficial data place the total number of Bulgarians residing in Greece at over 150,000 people. The Bulgarian community in Greece is the second largest immigrant community, followed by the Albanian community. Bulgarians first began emigrating to Greece in the early 1990s. The majority of Bulgarian migrants have settled in the large urban centres of Greece, and 30% are located in Athens and the nearby areas.

The majority of the Bulgarian community is comprised of women, and their average age is slightly higher than that of most immigrants residing in Greece. The majority of Bulgarian immigrants have completed secondary education, and most of those who reside in the urban centres are employed in cleaning and elderly care services. Throughout the rest of Greece, a significant percentage of the Bulgarian population is employed in agriculture/stock-breeding and tourism.

› *Social characteristics of Bulgarian immigrants*

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.[71]

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

71 However, there are recent indications of larger numbers of younger Bulgarian male immigrants in Greece.

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. Most are secondary or technical school graduates, while a small percentage holds degrees.

Most Bulgarian citizens residing in Greece lack a culture of collective organisation and assertion. This is reflected in their difficulty or reluctance to organise themselves. Despite the fact that several organisations have been set up, they fail to be representative. These organisations attract little interest among Bulgarian immigrants as they are often unaware that the organisations even exist. At the same time, the organisations rarely succeed in expanding their agenda to issues of social interest, beyond those of education and networking to find employment. This shortcoming in the representativeness and collective expression of the Bulgarian community hinders agencies (the state, political parties, trade unions, or other NGOs) from approaching the Bulgarian community in 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 characterised by an intense introversion, 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.

There are also professional differences between immigrants settling in Greece for the long-term, and those migrating for a shorter period. In Bulgaria, the first group worked as skilled workers in the public or private sector[72], yet in Greece they were initially employed as unskilled personnel, in most cases at their employer's private

72 Almost all female immigrants who came to Greece before 1997 had worked in the Bulgarian public sector.

premises. 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 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.

The second group of Bulgarian immigrants in Greece – those with relatively short-term prospects of residence – usually find positions as unskilled or skilled labourers in positions similar to those they held in Bulgaria.

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. These children may have been 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 at 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.

› *The Bulgarian community's relationship with Greek nationals and other communities living in Greece*

In general, the accession of Bulgaria to the EU and the formal acquisition and establishment of rights as EU citizens by Bulgarian immigrants in Greece did not particularly change their position in the labour market or in society. Thus, there are still instances of discrimination with regard to working conditions. At the same time, Bulgarian immigrants in Greece are still faced by the problems of undeclared labour, unemployment, and low quality positions that do not correspond to their qualifications. Bulgarian female immigrants, due to the fields in which they are mainly active (care and cleaning services) are often the victims of discrimination. EU citizenship cannot changed this, as this discrimination results from the widespread practices of financially exploiting immigrants working in these sectors. In contrast, the factors that seem to have the greatest impact on the social inclusion of Bulgarian immigrants are the duration of their residence, knowledge of the local language and the ability to find steady employment.

There are no reported cases of particular difficulties between Bulgarian immigrants in Greece either with Greeks or with other national groups. The spatial concentration of Bulgarians in Athens is aligned with that of immigrants from other countries. However, an almost absolute absence of relations was noted between first generation Bulgarians and other nationalities at both the collective and the personal level. In contrast to their parents, the children of Bulgarian immigrants not only often state that their friends are Greek, but also that they have friends from other countries, mainly Albania, Poland and Ukraine.

Relations between Bulgarian immigrants and Greeks can be divided into two levels. The first level includes the relations with Greeks as individuals/private

citizens. In this case, the relation is ambiguous due to the usual Greek perception of Bulgarians as people with a lower status than their own.

The second level is linked to the relations between Bulgarians and Greeks in public spaces.[73] At this level, examples of racism did emerge; however, they were not targeted at a specific nationality, but were actually aimed at immigrants in general.

› *The organisation of the Bulgarian community in Greece*

The participation of Bulgarian immigrants in existing organisations is limited. Bulgarian immigrants generally keep their distance from the collective organisation of their compatriots and from political life in general; on the other hand, the Bulgarian community's 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 did increase during the period before the accession of Bulgaria to the EU, when the issues of safeguarding and enjoying social rights were intense.

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, while its elite are exceptionally active and hold higher education degrees. Older Bulgarian immigrants, who have lived in Greece for a longer time, brought with

73 By 'public spaces', we mean the street, shops, the workplace, etc., as well as interactions with the public administration.

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 the experiences of the 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 a culture 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 trade unionism, etc.).

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 of the substantial recognition of their

organisations as 'mediators' or agencies that advocate their rights and assist in shaping immigration policy. In other words, immigrants' lack of institutional representation in various initiatives weakens the incentives for their 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.

With regard to relations with political parties and agencies, the existing organisations of Bulgarian immigrants could function as a launch pad for members seeking opportunities to participate in Greek social and political life. The research demonstrated that relations between these organisations and Bulgarian authorities have grown stronger in recent years, due to the possibility of financing schools for the children of immigrants residing in Greece.

Alongside these organisations, it is also important to note that newspapers are published in Athens that address Bulgarian immigrants in Greece. These newspapers are similar to[74] and share a number of characteristics with immigrant organisations. 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 works, and the organisation of visits by prominent Bulgarians, mainly from the field of culture, etc. Finally, they represent the interests of the immigrant community:

74 Or vice versa. It is a case of the well-known question of which came first, the chicken or the egg.

each editor or director[75] of an immigrant newspaper usually forms an association after the newspaper has been established.

Today there are four Bulgarian newspapers available in Greece: *Bulgaria Today*, *Bulgarian Voice*, *KONTAKTI* and *Bulgarian News*, which is prepared and published in Bulgaria and distributed in Greece and Cyprus.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: BULGARIAN CITIZENS IN LOCAL AND EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

› *Bulgarian immigrants in political life and democratic institutions*

The representation of the Bulgarian community in terms of candidates appears impressive; during two elections conducted in Greece following the accession of Bulgaria to the EU (2009 European elections and 2010 municipal and regional elections), in which community citizens were able to participate, three Bulgarian immigrants[76] stood for election as members of Greek political parties and coalitions. However, this fact does not correspond to the proportional participation of Bulgarian immigrants in election processes, which was particularly low when compared to the number of Bulgarians entitled to vote.

Despite the participation of three representatives of the Bulgarian community standing for Greek political parties in the latest European and local elections, the majority of Bulgarian immigrants neither prioritise participation in the political

75 Just as migration from Bulgaria was primarily female in gender, the same was the case for the representation of interests (newspapers and associations).

76 These are: Blagorodna Filevska for PASOK in the 2009 European elections; Diliana Bairaktarova for the Panhellenic Citizen Chariot in the Region of Attica in the 2010 regional elections; and Nedialka Karagiozova with the coalition of candidate Giorgos Kaminis standing for mayor of Athens in the 2010 municipal election. None of the three candidates was elected. All have served as editors or directors of newspapers addressing Bulgarian immigrants in Greece.

life of Greece nor in other democratic processes. Instead, their main concern is safeguarding their employment; there is then no particular awareness of the possible impact of political participation on political developments through collective action. The percentage of Bulgarians registered on the Greek electoral roll is estimated at approximately 2% of the total population of Bulgarian immigrants residing in Greece.

The 2009 European elections provided Bulgarians living in Greece with the first opportunity to participate in the political life of their new country. However, participation was extremely low; a mere 163 Bulgarian citizens were registered to vote, out of a total estimated population of approximately 100,000 Bulgarians living in Greece at the time.

As for the 2010 municipal elections, it appears that 2,059 Bulgarian citizens exercised their right to vote, out of a total population estimated by organisations belonging to the Bulgarian community of over 100,000 people. The participation of Bulgarian citizens is much lower than that of British and German citizens: 30% of British and 18% of German immigrants participated in the most recent municipal elections, compared to approximately 2% of Bulgarian immigrants.

There are various reasons for the low political participation of Bulgarians. The Bulgarian population in Greece is characterised by high mobility, with a majority of the population working seasonally or sectorially. If they do not act as deterrents, sectoral work, combined with the belief that Greek political life and Greek institutions do not concern immigrants[77], are certainly impeding the politicisation and active participation of the Bulgarian community in local political life.

77 On the refusal of the Greek state to allow immigrants to participate in political decisions, see Varouxi, H., *Migration Policy and Public Administration. A human rights approach to social agencies and organisations of Civil Society. Conclusions of field research*,

The crisis of representativeness of Bulgarian organisations and the lack of adequate information on the political and social rights that EU citizenship entails deprive Bulgarians of the means that support active involvement in democratic processes. Moreover, the responses given by Bulgarian immigrants during the interviews carried out showed either a lack of a culture of collective political action or the will to keep a distance from political life, both in Greece and in general. The factors that contributed to the low participation of Bulgarian immigrants also include inadequate information, not on the part of the Greek administration[78], but on the part of the Bulgarian press circulating in Greece. The four newspapers circulating throughout Greece provided limited coverage of the electoral participation of Bulgarians, in contrast to other issues, such as retirement and pensions, insurance, insurance stamps and the establishment of work experience.

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

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.

78 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.

PART 3

CONCLUDING REMARKS & COMMENDATIONS

PART 3: CONCLUDING REMARKS & RECOMMENDATIONS

I. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis of the communities under study demonstrated that these groups' 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; in certain cases, some immigrants obtained the status of refugees. However, this situation led huge numbers of migrants to live in an illegal or quasi-legal situation for many years. However, the accession of their country of origin to the European Union brought about a legalisation of their presence and the recognition of their civil rights as EU citizens.

Among the studied communities the older waves of Polish immigrants in Belgium and Portuguese immigrants in France are the best integrated, probably due to their long presence in France compared to other communities. Despite this, even when integration successfully occurs, political participation among EU migrants remains 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 and Romanians living in Spain. These immigrants are economically integrated to some extent, but there is still a clear lack of socio-political participation.

Migrants and host countries have different understandings of the concept of 'integration'. The perspective of the host country in this case assumes that integration refers to the process of becoming a 'good citizen', finding employment, acquiring local habits and languages, and participating in local events. In contrast, the migrant's perspective views integration as oriented towards achieving higher levels of economical welfare, finding employment, housing, social aspects and learning the (economically useful parts of the) local language. Consequently, a lack of interest in local policy should neither be confused with a lack of interest in political participation nor with a general lack of interest in politics.

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. A sense of belonging to Europe seems to be more linked to national conditions than to individual gains from European migratory laws.

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 elections despite the fact that this is not permitted by EU law. This 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 one is 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, the 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 of 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 place 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, 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 in 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, 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 priest who is held in great esteem by the youngsters and their families in the local area where the project took place.

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 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 coalitions.[79]

79 The three candidates were: Blagorodna Filevska on the PASOK ballot in the 2009 Euro-elections, Diliana Bairaktarova on the Panhellenic Citizen Chariot ballot for the Region of Attica in the 2010 Regional elections and Nedialka Karagiozova with the coalition of candidate Giorgos Kaminis standing for the office of Mayor of Athens in the 2010 Municipal elections.

II. 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 effective enforcement of EU rights, which would make their enjoyment easier in practice, and raise awareness of them.

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 elections, 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 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.
- 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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